Alex Finch

From: Mermejo, Lauren <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 12:21 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: FW: BLM Revised Sagebrush Focal Area GIS Layer
Attachments: Final_SFA.zip

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Jan 30, 2015 at 5:55 PM
Subject: FW: BLM Revised Sagebrush Focal Area GIS Layer
To: Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>, jmbeck@blm.gov, Joan Suther <jsuther@blm.gov>, Jessica Rubado <jarubado@blm.gov>, Randall Sharp <sharphay@att.net>, Arlene Kosic <akosic@blm.gov>
Cc: lwesch@blm.gov, David Batts <david.batts@empsi.com>

I am sending Frank's message with this Final SFA. zip for our conference call on Monday morning at 11:00 am PT.

From: Quamen, Frank [mailto:fquamen@blm.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 4:24 PM
To: Edwin Roberson; Ellis, Shelley S; Stephanie Carman; Michael Hildner; Jerome Perez; Michael Haske; Timothy Murphy; Peter Ditton; Amy Lueders; James Kenna; Juan Palma; Jenna Whitlock; Jamie Connell; Katherine Kitchell; Mary Jo Rugwell; Buddy Green
Cc: Marci Todd; Nancy Haug; Matthew Magaletti; Lauren Mermejo; Roxanne Falise; Robert Boyd; Anthony Titolo
Subject: BLM Revised Sagebrush Focal Area GIS Layer

Good afternoon,

Attached you will find the BLM revised Sagebush Focal Area (SFA) GIS layer. As instructed by the BLM WO and with direction/concurrence from FWS, the NOC Wildlife Habitat Spatial Analysis Lab:

1. Removed most of the polygon slivers
2. Edge matched (closed the gaps) between state boundaries, and
3. Incorporated the additional negotiated changes as conveyed by BLM WO

Please note:

- Everything inside these polygons will be considered Sagebrush Focal Areas
- However, habitat and management direction will not change *everywhere* inside these polygons
- The guidance that Stephanie sent will inform you where habitat should be reclassified as PHMA and where decisions should be changed

- Direction/clarification will be presented during the conference call on Monday

Also note that this data layer does not currently contain BLM standard metadata. We wanted to get this layer to you as soon as possible and will complete the metadata next week. Please do not share these data outside of BLM/FS until you receive the version with BLM standard metadata.

Thank you,

Frank

--

Frank Quamen, PhD, Wildlife Biology

BLM National Operations Center

Denver Federal Center Building 40

303-236-6310

--

Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

GBR_0000011

Jonathan Hayden

From: Mermejo, Lauren <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2015 3:06 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: Great Basin Federal Register Notice and Briefing Paper
Attachments: GB Region Amendments_ BP_4_9_15 - UT.NV.OR.IDedits md.docx; Great Basin FRN.NV.UT.OR.ID md.doc

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Dillon, Madelyn -FS** <mdillon@fs.fed.us>
Date: Wed, Apr 22, 2015 at 8:17 AM
Subject: RE: Great Basin Federal Register Notice and Briefing Paper
To: Lauren Mermejo <lmermejo@blm.gov>, Stephanie Carman <scarman@blm.gov>, Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>, "mhildner@blm.gov" <mhildner@blm.gov>
Cc: "jmbeck@blm.gov" <jmbeck@blm.gov>, Joan Suther <jsuther@blm.gov>, Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>, Marguerite Adams <maadams@blm.gov>, "Stein, Glen -FS" <gstein@fs.fed.us>

Attached please mostly Forest Service-specific revisions. Thanks.

Madelyn Dillon
Deputy National Greater Sage-grouse Project Manager
Forest Service

Region 4
o: 970-295-5734
c: 720-471-4166
f: 970-295-5885
mdillon@fs.fed.us
2150A Centre Ave Suite 300
Fort Collins, CO 80526
www.fs.fed.us

Caring for the land and serving people

Click on image to visit our greater sage-grouse intranet site.

From: Lauren Mermejo [mailto:lmermejo@blm.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 6:25 PM
To: Stephanie Carman; Matthew Magaletti; mhildner@blm.gov
Cc: jmbeck@blm.gov; Joan Suther; Quincy Bahr; Lauren L. Mermejo; Marguerite Adams; Stein, Glen -FS; Dillon, Madelyn -FS
Subject: Great Basin Federal Register Notice and Briefing Paper

Stephanie, Matt, and Michael –

Here is a draft of the Great Basin FRN and Briefing paper. It should pretty much mirror the Rocky Mountain side. If you have any questions, please call.

Lauren

--
Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

Briefing Paper

Great Basin Region Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments and Final Environmental Impact Statements for the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, Oregon, and Utah Sub-Regions

1. State Office

California, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Oregon, and Utah

2. What is the title of this notice?

Notice of Availability of the Great Basin Region Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments and Final Environmental Impact Statements for the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, Oregon, and Utah sub-regions.

3. What are the key issues raised by the underlying decision documents for this notice?

Based on comments received during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process the following planning issues have been identified:

- General (Process/Policy)
- Lands and Realty
- Livestock Grazing
- Minerals and Energy
- Predation
- Recreation
- Socioeconomic
- Special Management Area Designations
- Special Status Species (Including Greater Sage-Grouse)
- Travel and Access Management
- Vegetation
- Wildland Fire Management
- Wildlife and Fisheries

The BLM has authority on BLM-managed surface and Federal minerals under the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 for multiple use management. The 1976 National Forest Management Act (NFMA), Forest Service Manual (FSM) 1950, 1920, and Forest Service NEPA Regulations (36 CFR 220) direct the Forest Service in implementing NEPA into their planning processes.

4. Who are the primary users affected by or parties interested in the underlying decision or actions? What are their concerns?

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All public land users and local communities will be affected by and interested in the decisions in the GRSG LUP Amendments. The EIS analysis area includes approximately 194.0 million acres of BLM, Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State, local and private lands located in the four Great Basin planning areas. These lands are located in 35 Idaho/SW Montana counties (Ada, Adams, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Bonneville, Butte, Camas, Caribou, Cassia, Clark, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Gem, Gooding, Jefferson, Jerome, Lemhi, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida Owyhee, Payette, Power, Twin Falls, Washington, Montana (MT), Beaverhead Deer Lodge (MT), Freemont (MT), Clark (MT), Madison (MT), Silver Bow (MT), and Box Elder (UT)); eight Oregon counties (Baker, Crook Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur and Union); 20 Nevada/NE California counties (Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lassen (CA), Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Modoc (CA), Nye, Pershing, Plumas (CA), Sierra (CA), Storey, Washoe, White Pine); and 26 Utah/Wyoming counties (Beaver, Box Elder, Cache, Carbon, Daggett, Duchesne, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Iron, Juab, Kane, Morgan, Piute, Rich, Sanpete, Sevier, Summit, Tooele, Uintah, Utah, Wasatch, Wayne, Weber, Sweetwater (WY), and Uinta (WY)).

The BLM and the Forest Service administer approximately 118.8 million surface acres and an additional 2.1 million sub-surface acres in Utah. Cooperating agencies include counties, conservation districts, State agencies, and Federal agencies. The NEPA timeline follows:

Scoping

- Dec. 9, 2011: Notice of Intent published in the *Federal Register*
- Spring-Summer 2012: Update alternatives based on the National Greater Sage-Grouse Strategy
- Fall-Winter 2012: Assess updated alternatives
- Jan.-Feb. 2012: Public open house meetings were held across California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Utah
- May 2012: National GRSG Planning Strategy Scoping Summary Report was released.

Notice of Availability of Draft EIS/LUPA dates

- Nov. 1, 2013 – Idaho/SW Montana Draft LUP Amendment/EIS Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register*.
- Nov. 26, 2013 – Oregon Draft LUP Amendment/EIS Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register*.
- Nov. 1, 2013 – Nevada.NE California Draft LUP Amendment/EIS Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register*.
- Nov. 1, 2013 – Utah Draft LUP Amendment/EIS Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register*.

The BLM and USFS received approximately 4,990 substantive comments, contained in 74,240 submissions during each of the four Draft EISs' comment periods.

5. <u>Is tribal consultation appropriate under E.O. 13175 or other authorities? Will the proposed action potentially impact tribes or tribal lands, or generate their interest</u>. <u>If so, what consultation or other communication/outreach has been conducted</u>?

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The BLM and the Forest Service initiated consultation with the tribes for this planning effort in December 2011. The BLM and Forest Service would like to continue consultation with the tribes in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Executive Order 13007 on Indian Sacred Sites, and Executive Order 13084 on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments.

6. Will this notice be controversial?

Yes. The LUP Amendments have received significant interest since the NOI was published in 2011. The BLM and the Forest Service conducted several meetings with cooperating agencies on each of the four Greater Sage-Grouse Amendments since initiating the NEPA process. These groups expressed a broad range of opinions throughout the process. Alternatives B, C, D, and E include management actions that could be considered controversial, including but not limited to: various levels of closure to fluid mineral leasing, various levels of right-of-way exclusion areas, surface disturbance caps, and a no-grazing alternative (Alternative C). During the DEIS comment period, the BLM and the Forest Service conducted 29 public meetings across California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Utah.

7. What will the underlying decision or action change? (Summarize changes to policy, management practices, allowable uses, differences between draft EIS and final EIS, etc.).

This planning effort will amend the following Resource Management Plans (RMP) and Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP):

California

- Alturas RMP (2008)
- Eagle Lake RMP (2008)
- Surprise RMP (2008)

Idaho

- Birds of Prey NCA RMP (2008)
- Bruneau RMP revision (and existing 1983 Bruneau MFP)
- Challis RMP (1999)
- Craters of the Moon NM RMP (2006)
- Four Rivers RMP revision (and existing 1988 Cascade and 1983 Kuna and Bruneau MFPs)
- Jarbidge RMP revision
- Lemhi RMP (1987)
- Owyhee RMP (1999)
- Pocatello RMP revision Shoshone-Burley RMP revision (and existing 1980 Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, 1985 Cassia, 1975 Magic, 1985 Monument, 1981 Sun Valley, and 1982 Twin Falls MFPs/RMPs)
- Upper Snake RMP revision (and existing 1983 Big Lost, 1985 Medicine Lodge, 1981 Big Desert, and 1981 Little Lost-Birch Creek MFPs/RMPs)
- Boise National Forest LRMP (2003)

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- Curlew National Grassland Management Plan (2002)
- Caribou National Forest Revised LRMP (2003)
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Targhee National Forest LRMP (1997)
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, Challis National Forest LRMP (1987)
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, Salmon National Forest LRMP (1988)
- Sawtooth National Forest Revised LRMP (2003)

Montana

- Dillon RMP (2006)
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest LRMP (2009)

Nevada

- Battle Mountain RMP revision (and existing 1997 Tonopah and 1986 Shoshone-Eureka RMPs)
- Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon NCA RMP (2004)
- Carson City RMP revision (and existing 2001 Carson City Consolidated RMP)
- Elko RMP (1987)
- Ely RMP (2008)
- Wells RMP (1985)
- Winnemucca RMP revision (and existing 1982 Paradise-Denio MFP and 1982 Sonoma-Gerlach RMP)
- Humboldt National Forest LRMP (1986)
- Toiyabe National Forest LRMP (1986)

Oregon

- Andrews RMP (2005)
- Baker RMP revision (and existing 1989 Baker RMP)
- Brothers-LaPine RMP (1989)
- Lakeview RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Lakeview RMP)
- Southeastern Oregon RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Southeastern Oregon RMP)
- Steens RMP (2005)
- Three Rivers RMP (1992)
- Upper Deschutes RMP (2005)

Utah

- Box Elder RMP (1986)
- Cedar/Beaver/Garfield/ Antimony RMP (1986)
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan (2000)
- House Range RMP (1987)
- Kanab RMP (2008)
- Park City Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1975)
- Pinyon MFP (1978)
- Pony Express RMP (1990)
- Price RMP (2008)

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- Randolph MFP (1980)
- Richfield RMP (2008)
- Salt Lake District Isolated Tracts Planning Analysis (1985)
- Vernal RMP (2008)
- Warm Springs RMP (1987)
- Dixie National Forest LRMP (1986)
- Fishlake National Forest LRMP (1986)
- Uinta National Forest Revised LRMP (2003)
- Wasatch-Cache National Forest Revised LRMP (2003)
- Ashley National Forest LRMP (1986)
- Manti-La Sal National Forest LRMP (1986)

The LUP Amendment analyzes conservation measures aimed at conserving, enhancing, or restoring Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Some of the high profile issues addressed include: Greater Sage-Grouse habitat management, energy development, lands and realty (including transmission), special designation areas, and range (livestock and wild horse and burro management.

Alternative A would retain the current management goals, objectives and direction specified in the BLM field office RMPs and the Forest Service LRMP.

Alternative B is based on the conservation measures developed by the National Technical Team (NTT) planning effort in IM-2012-044. As directed in the IM, the conservation measures developed by the NTT must be considered and analyzed, as appropriate, through the land use planning process and NEPA by all BLM state and field offices that contain occupied Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Most management actions included in Alternative B would be applied to Priority Habitat Management Areas.

Alternative C is based on a citizen group recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse and is applied to all occupied Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Alternative C would limit commodity development in areas of occupied Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. The Utah LUP Amendment/Draft EIS combined this alternative with Alternative F (discussed below).

Alternative D provides opportunities to use and develop the planning area while providing protection of Greater Sage-Grouse habitat based on scoping comments and input from Cooperating Agencies involved in the alternatives development process. Protective measure would be applied to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat.

Alternative E is the alternative provided by the State or Governor's offices for inclusion and analysis in the EISs. It incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies and emphasizes management of sage-grouse seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives. This alternative was also identified as a co-Preferred Alternative in the Idaho/SW Montana Draft EIS.

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Alternative F is also based on a citizen group recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse and defines different restrictions for PHMA and GHMA. Alternative F would limit commodity development in areas of occupied Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. This alternative does not apply to the Utah sub-regional planning effort, as it was combined with Alternative C.

Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies, as well as additional management based on the NTT recommendations. This alternative emphasizes management of sage-grouse seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives.

8. Will this notice need Communications Materials, e.g., a press release, or a Communications Plan? If so, enclose these materials with the notice package submitted.

Yes. A press release and communications plan are enclosed.

9. What are the reasons for the timing of the notice and the consequence, if any, of delaying or canceling the release?

The timing of this notice is critical in order to give the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service time to review and consider new regulatory mechanisms contained in these amendments when considering their listing decision for Greater Sage-Grouse. Delaying or canceling the release would directly affect the BLM's ability to stay on schedule.

BLM policy/regulation is to issue a notice of availability (NOA) for a proposed Land Use Plan Amendment (Proposed LUP Amendment)/final environmental impact statement (FEIS).

Publication of the NOA must be closely coordinated with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) weekly publication of their list of FEIS documents. The EPA's publication of the NOA of this Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS initiates the 30-day protest period.

10. How has this action been analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

The Notice of Intent for this was published on December 9, 2011 and cooperating agencies were active in alternative development. Internal and cooperating agency comments were received and evaluated. Public meetings were held for the DEIS. Comments on the LUPA/Draft EIS received from the public, cooperators, and internal BLM review were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the proposed plan.

The LUP Amendments/Final EISs were prepared by the BLM for the Oregon sub-region and by the BLM and the Forest Service for the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, and Utah sub-regions in accordance with BLM planning regulations and guidance under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 – Land Management Planning Handbook. The BLM and the Forest Service

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developed EISs associated with the RMP/LRMP Amendments to meet the requirements of the NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations.

11. Is there any additional pertinent, descriptive information that reviewers need to know or would increase understanding?

All four of these EISs are part of a total of 15 separate EISs that comprise the BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy.

12. List the names and positions of the people who have prepared, reviewed, and approved the notice and the underlying decisions and documents.

The notice was prepared by Lauren Mermejo, GRSG Great Basin Regional Coordinator and reviewed by:

Bureau of Land Management
Jon Beck, GRSG Planning Lead, Idaho State Office
Joan Suther, GRSG Planning Lead, Oregon State Office
Lauren Mermejo, GRSG Planning Lead, Nevada State Office
Quincy Bahr, GRSG Planning Lead, Utah State Office
Amy Lueders, Acting Assistant Director, Resources & Planning

Forest Service
Madelyn Dillon, Forest Service National Greater Sage Grouse Team, Deputy Project Manager

13. Authorizing signature of State Office or Center Budget Officer, or Washington Office Resource Advisor certifying that the cost code on the Federal Register notice is accurate and valid.

(LLXXXXX0000 L16100000.DP0000.LXSISGST0000)

_____
(signature)

_____
(print name and date)

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4310-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLXXXXX0000 L16100000.DP0000.LXSISGST0000]

Notice of Availability of the Great Basin Region Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments and Final Environmental Impact Statements for the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, Oregon, and Utah Sub-Regions.

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: 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 Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) have prepared Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments (LUPA) and Final Environmental Impact Statements (FEIS) for planning units in Idaho, Southwest Montana, Nevada, Northeast California, Oregon, and Utah. There are four separate FEISs being conducted in the Great Basin Region and this notice is announcing their availability.

DATES: BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the BLM's and Forest Service's Proposed LUP/Final EIS. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. In accordance with 36 CFR 219.59, the Forest

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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.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, Oregon and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendments/Final EISs have been sent to affected Federal, State and local government agencies, and to other stakeholders, tribal Governments and members of the public who have requested copies.

Copies of the Idaho/SW Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Idaho State Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709
- Boise District Office, 3948 Development Avenue, Boise, ID 83705
- Owyhee Field Office, 20 First Avenue West, Marsing, ID 83639
- Idaho Fall District Office, 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, ID 83401
- Salmon Field Office, 1206 South Challis Street, Salmon, ID 83467
- Challis Field Office, 1151 Blue Mountain Road, Challis, ID 83226
- Pocatello Field Office, 4350 Cliffs Drive, Pocatello, ID 83204
- Twin Falls District Office, 2536 Kimberly Road, Twin Falls, ID 83301
- Shoshone Field Office, 400 West "F" Street, Shoshone, ID 83352
- Burley Field Office, 15 East 200 South, Burley, ID 83318
- Coeur d' Alene District Office, 3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
- Cottonwood Field Office, 1 Butte Drive, Cottonwood, ID 83522
- Montana State Office, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101
- Butte District Office, 106 North Parkmont, Butte, MT 59701
- Dillon Field Office, 1005 Selway Dr., Dillon, MT 59725-9431

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- Caribou-Targhee National Forest Headquarters, 1405 Hollipart Kr., Idaho Falls, ID, 83401
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge Supervisor's Office 420 Barrett St., Dillon, MT, 59725
- Salmon-Challis Supervisor's Office, 1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID, 83467
- Boise Supervisor's Office, 1206 Vinnell Way, Suite 200, Boise, ID, 83709
- Sawtooth Supervisor's Office, 2647 Kimberly Rd. East, Twin Falls, ID, 83301

Copies of the Nevada/NE California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV, 89502
- BLM Winnemucca District Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV, 89445
- BLM Ely District Office, 702 North Industrial Way, Ely, NV, 89301
- BLM Elko District Office, 3900 E. Idaho Street, Elko, NV, 89801
- BLM Carson City District Office, 5665 Morgan Mill Road, Carson City, NV, 89701
- Battle Mountain District Office, 50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, NV, 89820
- BLM California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623, Sacramento, CA, 95825
- BLM Alturas Field Office, 708 W. 12th Street, Alturas, CA, 96101
- Eagle Lake Field Office, 2950 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA, 96130
- Surprise Field Office, 602 Cressler Street, Cedarville, CA, 96104
- Austin Ranger District, 100 Midas Canyon Road, Austin, NV, 89310

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- Carson Ranger District, 1536 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV, 89701
- Ely Ranger District, 825 Avenue East, Ely NV, 90301
- Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Headquarters, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV, 89431
- Jarbidge Ranger District, 140 Pacific Avenue, Wells, NV 89835
- Modoc National Forest, 225 West 8th, Alturas, CA, 96101
- Mountain City Ranger District, 2035 Last Chance, Road, Elko, NV 89801
- Santa Rosa Ranger District, 1200 East Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV, 89445
- Tonopah Ranger District, 1400 S. Erie Mian Street, Tonopah, NV, 89049

Copies of the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM, Oregon State Office, 1220 S.W. 3rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97204
- BLM, Baker Resource Area Office, P.O. Box 947, Baker City, OR 97814
- BLM, Burns District, 28910 Hwy 20 West, Hines, OR 97738
- BLM, Lakeview District 1301 S. "G" Street, Lakeview, OR 97630
- BLM, Prineville Office. 3050 N.E. 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754
- BLM, Vale District 100 Oregon St., Vale, OR 97918

Copies of the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Utah State Office, 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT, 84101

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- BLM Cedar City Field Office, 176 East D.L. Sargent Drive, Cedar City, UT 84721
- BLM Fillmore Field Office, 95 East 500 North, Fillmore, UT 84631
- BLM Kanab Field Office and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, 669 South Highway 89A, Kanab, UT 84741
- BLM Price Field Office, 125 South 600 West, Price, UT 84501
- BLM Richfield Field Office, 150 East 900 North, Richfield, UT 84701
- BLM Salt Lake Field Office, 2370 S. Decker Lake Blvd., West Valley City, UT 84119
- BLM Vernal Field Office, 170 South 500 East, Vernal, UT 84078
- Ashley National Forest, 355 N. Vernal Ave., Vernal, UT, 84078
- Dixie National Forest, 1789 N. Wedgewood Ln., Cedar City, UT, 84721
- Fishlake National Forest, 115 East 900 North, Richfield, UT, 84701
- Manti-LaSal National Forest, 599 West Price River Dr., Price, UT, 84501
- Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, 857 W. South Jordan Prkwy., South Jordan, UT, 84095

Commented [MCD1]: Please add:
Intermountain Region – Attn Lee Jacobsen, Federal Building, 324 25th, Ogden, UT 84401

This is on the print list.

In order to reduce the costs of printing and shipping, as well as to preserve resources and diminish our carbon footprint, limited printed copies of these EISs will be made. There will be CDs available by request at the BLM State Offices listed under the "For Further Information Contact" section below. Interested persons may also review the Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS on the internet at http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse.html. All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

GBR_0000025

Regular Mail:	Overnight Delivery:
BLM Director (210)	BLM Director (210)
Attention: Protest Coordinator	Attention: Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 71383	20 M Street SE, Room 2134LM
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383	Washington, D.C. 20003

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For the Idaho Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS: Jonathan Beck, BLM Idaho State Office GRSG Planning Lead, telephone 208-373-4070; address 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709; jmbeck@blm.gov.

For the Nevada/NE California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS: Lauren Mermejo, BLM Nevada State Office GRSG Project Lead, telephone 775-861-6580; address 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno NV, 89502; email lmermejo@blm.gov.

For the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS: Joan Suther, BLM Oregon State Office GRSG Planning Lead, telephone 541-573-4445; address BLM Burns District, 28910 Hwy 20, West Hines, OR, 97738; email jsuther@blm.gov.

For the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS: Quincy Bahr, BLM Utah State Office GRSG Project Lead, telephone 801-539-4122; address 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1345; email qfbahr@blm.gov.

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

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM and Forest Service prepared the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse LUP Amendments and EISs to address a range of alternatives focused on specific conservation measures across the range of the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG). The Oregon EIS was prepared solely by the BLM because there were no National Forest System lands involved. All four of these EISs are part of a total of 15 separate EISs that make up the BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy. These four EISs will amend the following BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) in the Great Basin Region:

California

- Alturas RMP (2008)
- Eagle Lake RMP (2008)
- Surprise RMP (2008)

Idaho

- Birds of Prey NCA RMP (2008)
- Bruneau RMP revision (and existing 1983 Bruneau MFP)
- Challis RMP (1999)
- Craters of the Moon NM RMP (2006)
- Four Rivers RMP revision (and existing 1988 Cascade RMP and 1983 Kuna and Bruneau MFPs)
- Jarbidge RMP revision
- Lemhi RMP (1987)
- Owyhee RMP (1999)

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- Pocatello RMP revision Shoshone-Burley RMP revision (and existing 1980 Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, 1985 Cassia, 1975 Magic, 1985 Monument, 1981 Sun Valley, and 1982 Twin Falls MFPs/RMPs)
- Upper Snake RMP revision (and existing 1983 Big Lost, 1985 Medicine Lodge, 1981 Big Desert, and 1981 Little Lost-Birch Creek MFPs/RMPs)
- Boise National ~~N~~Forest, Land and Resource Management Plan~~ID 2003 Boise NF Plan~~ (2003)
- Curlew National Grassland Management Plan, ~~-~~Land and Resource Management Plan (2002) ~~(FS)~~
- Caribou National Forest, Revised Land and Resource Management Plan ~~Forest Plan~~ (2003) ~~(FS)~~
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest,~~ ID- 1997~~ Targhee National Forest LRMP~~NF~~ (1997)~~Plan~~
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, ~~F, ID 1987~~ Challis National Forest LRMP (1987)~~Plan~~
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, ~~F, ID 1988~~ Salmon ~~NF~~ National Forest LRMP (1988) ~~Plan~~
- Sawtooth National Forest, Revised LRMP ~~Forest Plan~~ (2003) ~~(FS)~~

Montana

- Dillon RMP (2006)
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge ~~NF, MT~~National Forest, ~~2009~~ LRMP ~~Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (NF) Plan~~(2009)

Nevada

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- Battle Mountain RMP revision (and existing 1997 Tonopah and 1986 Shoshone-Eureka RMPs)
- Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon NCA RMP (2004)
- Carson City RMP revision (and existing 2001 Carson City Consolidated RMP)
- Elko RMP (1987)
- Ely RMP (2008)
- Wells RMP (1985)
- Winnemucca RMP revision (and existing 1982 Paradise-Denio MFP and 1982 Sonoma-Gerlach RMP)
- Humboldt National Forest, LRMP ~~Land and Resource Management Plan~~ (1986) ~~(FS)~~
- Toiyabe National Forest, LRMP ~~Land and Resource Management Plan~~ (1986) ~~(FS)~~

Oregon

- Andrews RMP (2005)
- Baker RMP revision (and existing 1989 Baker RMP)
- Brothers-LaPine RMP (1989)
- Lakeview RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Lakeview RMP)
- Southeastern Oregon RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Southeastern Oregon RMP)
- Steens RMP (2005)
- Three Rivers RMP (1992)
- Upper Deschutes RMP (2005)

Utah

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- Box Elder RMP (1986)
- Cedar/Beaver/Garfield/ Antimony RMP (1986)
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan (2000)
- House Range RMP (1987)
- Kanab RMP (2008)
- Park City Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1975)
- Pinyon MFP (1978)
- Pony Express RMP (1990)
- Price RMP (2008)
- Randolph MFP (1980)
- Richfield RMP (2008)
- Salt Lake District Isolated Tracts Planning Analysis (1985)
- Vernal RMP (2008)
- Warm Springs RMP (1987)
- Dixie National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Fishlake National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Uinta National Forest, Revised LRMP ~~Forest Plan~~ (2003)
- Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Revised LRMP ~~Forest Plan~~ (2003)
- Ashley National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Manti-La Sal National Forest, LRMP (1986)

The planning areas for all four EISs includes approximately 194.0 million acres of BLM, National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State, local, and private lands located in 35 Idaho/SW Montana counties (Ada, Adams, Bear Lake, Bingham,

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Blaine, Bonneville, Butte, Camas, Caribou, Cassia, Clark, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Gem, Gooding, Jefferson, Jerome, Lemhi, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida Owyhee, Payette, Power, Twin Falls, Washington, Montana (MT), Beaverhead Deer Lodge (MT), Fremont (MT), Clark (MT) Madison (MT), Silver Bow (MT), and Box Elder (UT)); 20 Nevada/NE California counties (Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lassen (CA), Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Modoc (CA), Nye, Pershing, Plumas (CA), Sierra (CA), Storey, Washoe, White Pine); eight Oregon counties (Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur and Union); and 26 Utah/Wyoming counties (Beaver, Box Elder, Cache, Carbon, Daggett, Duchesne, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Iron, Juab, Kane, Morgan, Piute, Rich, Sanpete, Sevier, Summit, Tooele, Uintah, Utah, Wasatch, Wayne, Weber, Sweetwater (WY), and Uinta (WY)). Management decisions made as a result of these Proposed LUP Amendments/Final EISs will apply only to BLM administered and National Forest System lands in the planning area. The planning area is defined as those BLM-administered and ~~Forest Service-administered~~ National Forest System lands and Federal mineral estate within the following habitat management categories:

- Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) — Areas identified as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable GRSG populations; includes breeding, late brood-rearing, and winter concentration areas.
- Important Habitat Management Area (IHMA) (applicable to Idaho only) — Areas identified as having generally moderate to high conservation value habitat and/or populations that provide a management buffer for the PHMA and to connect patches of PHMA.

- General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) — Areas of seasonal or year-round habitat outside of core and connectivity habitat.

The Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California, Oregon and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendments/EISs was published in the Federal Register on December 9, 2011. A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Idaho/SW Montana, Nevada/NE California and Utah Draft Land Use Plan Amendments/EISs was published in the Federal Register on November 1, 2013. The Oregon Draft Land Use Plan Amendments/EISs was released to the public on November 26, 2013.

Comments on the Draft LUP Amendments/EISs received from the public and internal BLM~~/~~ and Forest Service review were considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Proposed Plan.

The alternatives presented in Proposed LUP Amendments/Final EISs are described below:

- Alternative A would retain the current management goals, objectives and direction specified in the existing BLM RMPs and the Forest Service LRMPs.
- Alternative B is based on the conservation measures developed by the National Technical Team (NTT) planning effort in Washington Office Instructional Memorandum (IM) Number 2012-044. As directed in the IM, the conservation measures developed by the NTT must be considered and analyzed, as appropriate, through the land use planning process and NEPA by all BLM state and field offices that contain occupied Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Most management actions included in Alternative B would be applied to Priority Habitat Management Areas.

- Alternative C is based on a citizen group recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for GRSG and is applied to all occupied GRSG habitat. Alternative C would limit commodity development in areas of occupied GRSG habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. The Utah LUP Amendment/Draft EIS combined this alternative with Alternative F (discussed below).
- Alternative D, which was identified as the Preferred Alternative in the Draft EIS, provides opportunities to use and develop the planning area while providing protection of GRSG habitat based on scoping comments and input from Cooperating Agencies involved in the alternatives development process. Protective measures would be applied to GRSG habitat.
- Alternative E is the alternative provided by the State or Governor's offices for inclusion and analysis in the EISs. It incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies and emphasizes management of sage-grouse seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives. This alternative was also identified as a co-Preferred Alternative in the Idaho/SW Montana Draft EIS.
- Alternative F is also based on a citizen group recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for GRSG and defines different restrictions for PHMA and GHMA. Alternative F would limit commodity development in areas of occupied GRSG habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. This alternative does not

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apply to the Utah sub-regional planning effort, as it was combined with Alternative C.

- The Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies, as well as additional management based on the NTT recommendations. This alternative emphasizes management of sage-grouse seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives.

The BLM and Forest Service received approximately 4,990 substantive comments, contained in 74,240 submissions during each of the four Draft EISs' comment periods. Based on comments received during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the following comment topics were frequently identified:

- General (Process/Policy);
- Lands and Realty;
- Livestock Grazing;
- Minerals and Energy;
- Predation;
- Recreation;
- Socioeconomic;
- Special Management Area Designations;
- Special Status Species (Including Greater Sage-Grouse);
- Travel and Access Management;
- Vegetation;
- Wildland Fire Management;

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- Wildlife and Fisheries.

For the Idaho/SW Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Murphy, Idaho Falls, Salmon, Pocatello, Twin Falls, and Boise in Idaho and Dillon in Montana during January 2014. For the Nevada/NE California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Cedarville and Susanville, California, and in Reno, Tonopah, Ely, Elko, and Winnemucca, Nevada in early December 2013. For the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS, the BLM conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Baker City, Burns, Durkee, Jordan Valley, Lakeview, Ontario and Prineville, Oregon during January 2014. For the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUP Amendment/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted eight public meetings. These meetings were held in Cedar City, Panguitch, Price, Randolph, Richfield, Salt Lake City, Snowville, and Vernal, Utah during November and December 2013. Comments on the Draft LUP Amendments/Draft EISs received from the public and internal BLM and Forest Service review were carefully considered and incorporated as appropriate into the proposed plan amendments. Public comments resulted in the addition of clarifying text, but did not significantly change proposed land use plans decisions.

The BLM and Forest Service, via the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team, will develop a Regional Mitigation Strategy to guide the application of the mitigation hierarchy to address impacts within that Zone. The Regional Mitigation Strategy should consider any

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State-level Greater Sage-Grouse mitigation guidance that is consistent with the requirements. The Regional Mitigation Strategy will be developed in a transparent manner, based on the best science available and standardized metrics.

Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the Proposed LUP Amendments/Final EISs may be found in the "Dear Reader" Letter of the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments/ FEISs and at 43 CFR 1610.5-2. All protests must be in writing and mailed to the appropriate address, as set forth in the "ADDRESSES" section above. 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 and Forest Service will consider an emailed protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM and Forest Service with such advance notifications, please direct emails to protest@blm.gov.

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

_____

Amy Lueders

Acting Assistant Director, Resources & Planning

AUTHORITY: 36 CFR 219.59, 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10, 43 CFR 1610.2; 43 CFR 1610.5

GBR_0000037

Jonathan Hayden

From: Mermejo, Lauren <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2015 1:25 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: SG Direction

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Mar 18, 2015 at 9:14 AM
Subject: SG Direction
To: Randall Sharp <sharphay@att.net>, Joan Suther <jsuther@blm.gov>, jmbeck@blm.gov, Jessica Rubado <jarubado@blm.gov>, Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>

Here is what was sent out for SG direction on RDFs and definitions….(in yellow)

On Mon, Mar 16, 2015 at 12:20 PM, Carman, Stephanie <scarman@blm.gov> wrote:

A few updates on sage-grouse planning:

- Communications: we will discuss the Comm Plan during the call Thursday, as well as direction on sharing hard copies with your state and federal (FWS and FS) partners. Megan will send the Comm Plan late Wednesday.

- Implementation - the second half of the call Thursday will focus on the outcomes from the Implementation meeting last week.

- RDFs - there has been some confusion and inconsistency about RDFs. Per the April 2014 NPT guidance, RDFs in the plans should include the BMPs which were in the appendices of the NTT, and should be applied to PHMA and GHMA as outlined in the NTT (West Nile virus, locatable minerals, and fire and fuels - appendices c, e, f - in PHMA; oil and gas - appendix d - as outlined for PHMA and GHMA). Please give me a call if you have any questions about this.

- Definitions: these should be added to the glossary for the plans

Net Conservation Gain: the actual benefit or gain above baseline conditions.

Baseline: the pre-existing condition of a defined area and/or resource that can be quantified by an appropriate metric(s). During environmental reviews, the baseline is considered the affected environment that exists at the time of the review's initiation, and is used to compare predictions of the effects of the proposed action or a reasonable range of alternatives.

Many thanks!

Stephanie Carman

Bureau of Land Management

Sage-Grouse Project Coordinator (Acting)

office 202-208-3408

mobile 202-380-7421

scarman@blm.gov

On Wed, Mar 11, 2015 at 4:59 PM, Carman, Stephanie <scarman@blm.gov> wrote:

Many thanks to you and your staff as we push forward on the sage-grouse plans. Attached is information regarding the upcoming WO Reviews and below are a couple items which were discussed on the SG Planners call today, for your information. Please let me or Steve know if you have questions or concerns.

- WO Reviews - the attached details the approach for the WO Consistency (April 12-17) and Washington Office Program Leads Reviews (April 24-May 8). State planners and project managers are expected to be available during these review times as noted.

- High Voltage should be defined as 100 kV and above

- We have been discussing with the state planners requests for consistency on Required Design Features, a definition of Net Conservation Gain for the glossary, and clarification on the Vegetation Objectives Table. Guidance on these will be coming out soon, hopefully by the end of the week.

Thanks again.

Stephanie Carman

Bureau of Land Management

Sage-Grouse Project Coordinator (Acting)

office 202-208-3408

mobile 202-380-7421

scarman@blm.gov

--
Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

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Jonathan Hayden

From: Mermejo, Lauren <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 5:28 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: Just a Bit More Work Before Going to the WO
Attachments: Master Drop-In Langauge_2 6 15 (2).Colored.docx; Issues Resolved_NV 1 30 15 - final.colored.docx

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 11:11 AM
Subject: Just a Bit More Work Before Going to the WO
To: jmbeck@blm.gov, Joan Suther <jsuther@blm.gov>, Jessica Rubado <jarubado@blm.gov>, Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>, Randall Sharp <sharphay@att.net>
Cc: Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>

Hi All –

This is putting a slightly extra burden on all of you (including me)…..but as you go thru your PP prior to sending it to the WO, could you please highlight in the turquoise blue that I have used in the examples above, where these decisions are in your PP. The Master Drop-In Language should be the same for everyone….I have highlighted those that should be in the Proposed Plan. For the Issues Resolved….I have used Nevada as the example….so be sure and go back to your specific Issues Resolved paper from 1/30/15 to do the same thing.

This will make it much easier on the WO quick review for next week…..and really, it only takes a few minutes.

Thank you!

Lauren

--
Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

Issue	Applies To	Where to incorporate	Language
Land Retention	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Lands and Realty – Land Tenure	Include drop-in language: *"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 gain 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."*
Prescribed Fire	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Wildland Fire Management – Pre-Suppression	Include drop-in language: *"If prescribed fire is used in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, the NEPA analysis for the Burn Plan will address:* • *why alternative techniques were not selected as a viable options;* • *how Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives would be met by its use;* • *how the COT Report objectives would be addressed and met;* • *a risk assessment to address how potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat would be minimized.* *a) Allow prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment in Wyoming big sagebrush sites or other xeric sagebrush species sites, or in areas with a potential for post-fire exotic annual dominance only after the NEPA analysis for the Burn Plan has addressed the four bullets outlined above. Prescribed fire could be used to meet specific fuels objectives that would protect Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in PHMAs (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).* b) *Allow prescribed fire in known winter range only after the NEPA analysis for the Burn Plan has addressed the four bullets outlined above. Any prescribed fire in winter habitat would need to be designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and designed to protect winter range habitat quality."*
Conifer Removal	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Vegetation – Conifer Encroachment	Include drop-in language: <u>For Great Basin</u> *"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 (Chambers et. al., 2014) will help refine the location for specific areas to be treated."* <u>For Rocky Mountain</u> *"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 principles like those included in the FIAT report (Chambers et. al., 2014) and other ongoing modeling efforts to address conifer encroachment will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated."
TTM Temp Closures	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management	Include drop-in language: *"In PHMA and GHMA, 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."*
Recreation Facilities	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Recreation and Visitor Services	Include drop-in language: *"In PHMA, do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g., campgrounds, trails, trailheads, staging areas) unless the development would have a net conservation gain to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating recreation, diverting use away from critical areas, etc.), or unless the development is required for visitor health and safety or resource protection."*
WH&B	Utah, Oregon, Nevada, Idaho ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Wild Horses and Burros	Include drop-in language (Oregon, Nevada, Idaho will include language highlighted in yellow prioritizing WHB management actions in SFAs) : *"Management Action 1: Manage herd management areas (HMAs) in GRSG habitat within established AML ranges to achieve and maintain GRSG habitat objectives (Table 2-X).* *Management Action 2: 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;* *3. HMAs containing only GHMA;* *4. HMAs containing sagebrush habitat outside of PHMA, IHMA. and GHMA mapped habitat;*

			5. HMAs without GRSG habitat. *Management Action 3: 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 not allocated as Herd Management Areas and occupied by wild horses and burros in SFAs followed by PHMA, as these areas are to be managed for zero wild horses and burros.* *Management Action 4: In SFAs and PHMA outside of SFA, 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 .* *Management Action 5: In SFAs and PHMA outside of SFA, monitor the effects of WHB use in relation to GRSG seasonal habitat objectives on an annual basis to help determine future management actions.* *Management Action 6: 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.* *Management Action 7: 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.* *Management Action 8: 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.* *Management Action 9: 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."*
Split Estate	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Fluid Minerals	Include drop-in language: *"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 in that management area, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner."* *"Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-federal ownership in PHMA 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."
Technical/ Economically Feasible	All ADPPs	Glossary	Include drop-in language: *"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 BLM's sole responsibility to determine what actions are technically and economically feasible. The BLM 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."* (Modified from the CEQ's 40 Most Asked Questions and BLM NEPA Handbook, Section 6.6.3)
RDFs	All ADPPs	Appendix, Glossary	Insert as introductory text in the RDF Appendix, and as an entry in the glossary under "Required Design Feature" *Required Design Features (RDFs) are required for certain activities in all GRSG habitat. RDFs establish the minimum specifications for certain activities to help mitigate adverse impacts. However, the applicability and overall effectiveness of each RDF cannot be fully assessed until the project level when the project location and design are known. Because of site-specific circumstances, some RDFs may not apply to some projects (e.g., a resource is not present on a given site) and/or may require slight variations (e.g., a larger or smaller protective area). All variations in RDFs would require that at least one of the following be demonstrated in the NEPA analysis associated with the project/activity:* • *A specific RDF is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity (e.g.due to site limitations or engineering considerations). Economic considerations, such as increased costs, do not necessarily require that an RDF be varied or rendered inapplicable;* • *An alternative RDF is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;* • *A specific RDF will provide no additional protection to GRSG or its habitat.*
PACs/COT	All ADPPs	Chapter 1 (exact location TBD, will vary for each ADPP)	Include drop-in language: ***Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Objectives: Priority Areas for Conservation and how they correlate with Priority and General Habitat Management Areas*** *In 2012, the Director of the USFWS asked the Conservation Objectives Team (COT), consisting of state and USFWS representatives, to produce recommendations regarding the degree to which the threats need to be reduced or ameliorated to conserve GRSG so that it would no longer be in danger of extinction or likely to become in danger of extinction in the foreseeable future. The COT Report (USFWS 2013a) provides objectives based upon the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of its release. The BLM/FS planning decisions analyzed in the LUP/EISs are intended to ameliorate threats identified in the COT report and to reverse the trends in habitat condition. The COT Report can be viewed online at the following address:* *http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/sagegrouse/COT/COT-Report-with-Dear-Interested-Reader-*

			Letter.pdf *The highest level objective in the COT Report is identified as meeting the objectives of WAFWA's 2006 GRSG Comprehensive Strategy of "reversing negative population trends and achieving a neutral or positive population trend."* *The COT Report provides a WAFWA Management Zone and Population Risk Assessment. The report identifies localized threats from sagebrush elimination, fire, conifer encroachment, weed and annual grass invasion, mining, free-roaming wild horses and burros, urbanization, and widespread threats from energy development, infrastructure, grazing, and recreation (USFWS 2013a, p. 18).* *Key areas across the landscape that are considered "necessary to maintain redundant, representative, and resilient populations" are identified within the COT Report. The USFWS in concert with the respective state wildlife management agencies identified these key areas as Priority Areas for Conservation (PACs).* *Within the [insert name of planning area here], the PACs consist of a total _____ acres. Under the Proposed Plan, the PACs are comprised of _____acres of PHMA managed by the BLM/FS, _____acres of GHMA managed by the BLM/FS, and _____acres of non-habitat managed by the BLM/FS [adapt to each particular ADPP, such as include IHMA in Idaho and "other mapped habitat" in Nevada].*
SFA	All ADPPs that have SFA	Section 1.1.1 (for amendments), will vary for revisions	Include drop-in language: *"On October 27, 2014, the FWS provided the BLM/FS a memorandum titled "Greater Sage-Grouse: Additional Recommendations to Refine Land Use Allocations in Highly Important Landscapes". The memorandum and associated maps provided by the FWS identify areas that represent recognized "strongholds" for GRSG that have been noted and referenced by the conservation community as having the highest densities of GRSG and other criteria important for the persistence of the species. These areas have been incorporated into the Proposed Plan as Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA) (Map X), and 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.* [Note: item #1 will need to be adjusted for WY to say: *"Recommended for withdrawal from the General Mining Act of 1872, subject to valid existing rights, the lands show in Map Y (x acres)*] *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 SOL will work with the BLM Subregional Teams to draft language that address specifically how non-habitat within SFAs was handled in ADPPs. Idaho, Nevada, and Utah ADPPs will likely need more specific language.
		Glossary	Include drop-in definition for "Sagebrush Focal Area": *"Areas identified by the FWS that that represent recognized "strongholds" for GRSG that have been noted and*

			referenced by the conservation community as having the highest densities of GRSG and other criteria important for the persistence of GRSG."
All Allocations	All ADPPs	Chap 1, Planning Criteria Section	Include drop-in language as a separate planning criterion: *"Where more restrictive land use allocations or decisions are made in existing RMPs, those more restrictive land use allocations or decisions will remain in effect and will not be amended by this LUPA."*
		Chap 2, Management Common to All Alternatives	Include drop-in language as a management action common to all alternatives: *"Where more restrictive land use allocations or decisions are made in existing RMPs, those more restrictive land use allocations or decisions will remain in effect and will not be amended by this LUPA."*
Buffers	All ADPPs except for those in WY	Section 1.1.1 (for amendments), will vary for revisions	Include drop-in language: *"On November 21, 2014 the USGS published "Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse—A Review" (USGS 2014). The USGS review provided a compilation and summary of published scientific studies that evaluate the influence of anthropogenic activities and infrastructure on GRSG populations. The BLM has reviewed this information and examined how lek buffer-distances were addressed through land use allocations and other management actions in the Draft [Insert Plan Name]. Based on this review, in undertaking BLM management actions, and consistent with valid and existing rights and applicable law in authorizing third party actions, the he BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances in the USGS Report "Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage Grouse-A Review (Open File Report 2014-1239)" in both GHMA and PHMA as detailed in [Appendix X]."* .
Mitigation Framework	All ADPPs	Mitigation Appendix	There was a typo on page 1 of the Mitigation Framework that was distributed on January 30th. At the bottom of the page, the following sentence should be corrected to read: *This is also consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species Management, Section .02B, which states "to initiate **proactive** ~~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.* This corrected sentence accurately quotes BLM Manual 6840.
Livestock Grazing	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.2, Livestock Grazing	There was an error in the Livestock Grazing issue direction distributed on January 30th. Under the "Livestock Grazing" issue, the "and/or" needs to be replaced with "and". The revised second bullet point drop-in now reads: "*The NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing permits/leases that include lands within 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."*
Introduction	All ADPPs	Section 2.6.1 (for	**PENDING:** Consistent language for Chap 2.6.1 that states why the PRMPs changed from what was in the DRMP

of Alternatives		amendments), will vary for revisions	pref. alternative, and generally explain BLM's approach. This will be distributed on 2/11.

BLM-NEVADA

Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Issues for the BLM Planning Teams to Insert and Analyze in Administrative Draft Proposed Plans (ADPPs)

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.*

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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 ADPP will also reiterate the SFA decisions in the locatable minerals, fluid minerals, and livestock grazing sections of Chapter 2.

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*:
  - WSAs and Wilderness Areas in non-habitat – The current management in these areas is generally protective of GRSG. As applicable, these will continue to the managed so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness, or under the terms of the Wilderness Act, to preserve wilderness character, and they will not be included in the SFAs.
    - 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 even that Congress releases the areas from WSA status
- *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* – while private/state 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 under 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.

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Issue: **Mitigation**

Direction: 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: **Mapping**

Direction: The BLM Nevada will use the State of Nevada's updated GRSG habitat map. The BLM Nevada will present the rationale for this decision in the final EIS.

Issue: **Disturbance**

Direction: Nevada will use the Disturbance Management Protocol described below. In addition, Attachment II will also be included in the Final EIS for the rangewide disturbance cap direction.

Disturbance Management Protocol

The Disturbance Management Protocol (DMP) is intended to provide for a 3% limitation on disturbance, except in situations where a biological analysis indicates a net conservation gain to the species.

Such discretionary activities that would cause disturbance in excess of 3% at the project or BSU scale would be prohibited, unless a technical team described below determines that new or site-specific information indicate the project could occur without significant impacts to sage-grouse or that the project could be modified to result in a net conservation gain at the BSU level. Factors considered by the team will include sage-grouse abundance and trends, habitat amount and quality, extent of project disturbance, location and density of existing disturbance, project design options and other biological factors.

Any exceptions to the disturbance cap 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 NDOW, the USFWS, and the BLM unanimously find that the proposed action satisfies the conditions stated in the above paragraph. Such finding shall initially be made by the technical 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 BLM State Director, USFWS State Ecological Services Director, and NDOW Director for final resolution. In the event their recommendation is not unanimous to grant the exception, the exception will not be granted.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT LANGUAGE

The Disturbance Management Protocol and associated disturbance threshold shall be evaluated annually. As a result of such evaluation, the DMP or threshold (at either the project or BSU scale) may be modified in the event that new science or information indicates that other approaches to assess habitat function and availability are more effective or appropriate.

Issue: **Vegetation Objectives**

Direction: 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: **Livestock Grazing**

Direction: 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 IV provides guidance as to how the BLM will incorporate GRGS decisions from the Sage-Grouse RMP/Amendments into grazing permits/leases.

Issue: **Mineral Materials (Salable Minerals)**

Direction: As directed in the NPT guidance, all Priority Habitat Management Areas will be closed to new mineral materials development.

The following management action will be applied to the ADPP:
"PHMAs are closed to new mineral material sales. However, these areas remain "open" to free use permits and the expansion of existing active pits, only if the following criteria are met:

- *the activity is within the Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) and project area disturbance cap;*
- *the activity is subject to the provisions set forth in the mitigation framework [Appendix X];*
- *all applicable required design features are applied; and [if applicable] the activity is permissible under the specific sub-regional screening criteria [site location in ADPP where this screening process is present].”*

Issue: **High-voltage Transmission and Major Pipeline ROWs and Corridors**
Direction: 1) Apply the recommended NPT allocation guidance for PHMA and GHMA of avoidance.

2) 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.”

Issue: **Coal Suitability**
Direction: Not Applicable to Nevada.

Issue: **Fluid Mineral Resources (Including Geothermal)**
Direction: The ADPP will include the following conservation objective for leasing and development outside of GRSG habitat:

“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.”

In developing language for the exception to the fluid mineral NSO for geothermal energy development in PHMA, BLM NV should include prioritization language.

Issue: **No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Exception Language**

Direction: Follow NPT guidance for Priority Habitat Management Areas, with the exception of geothermal energy development – *specific language forthcoming*.

No-surface-occupancy stipulations will be included in new oil and gas leases at the time of leasing only and may not be applied to existing oil and gas leases that did not include no-surface-occupancy stipulation at the time of leasing. Include the following language into the ADPP:

Oil and Gas Exceptions

No waivers or modifications to an f oil and gas lease no-surface-occupancy stipulation will be granted. The Authorized Officer may grant an exception to an oil and gas 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 oil and gas 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."

Geothermal Exceptions
In the portions of the PHMA outside of the SFA, geothermal projects may be considered for authorization if all of the following conditions are met:

- *A team comprised of BLM, FWS, and NDOW specialists advises the BLM State Director on appropriate mitigation measures for the project and its ancillary facilities, including lek buffer distances using the best available science.*
- *Mitigation actions are consistent with this Plan's mitigation strategy such as the Nevada Conservation Credit System, and;*
- *The footprint of the project is consistent with the Disturbance Management Protocols identified in this Plan.*

Issue: **Adaptive Management**

Direction: 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

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and will invoke the appropriate plan response. Adoption of any further actions at the plan level may require initiating a plan amendment process.

Issue: **Application of Lek Buffers**

Direction: 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 V) 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."*

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Allocation Direction

	NV/NE CA
Solar - Priority	Exclusion
Solar – General	Exclusion
Wind – Priority	Exclusion
Wind – General	Avoidance
HV Transmission Lines and Large Pipeline ROWs - Priority	Avoidance
HV Transmission Lines and Large Pipeline ROWs - General	Avoidance
Minor ROWs – Priority	Avoidance
Minor ROWs – General	Open
Fluids – Priority	NSO
Fluids – General	Open with Moderate constraints
Non-energy Leasables - Priority	Closed
Non-energy Leasables - General	Open
Mineral Materials – Priority	Closed
Mineral Materials – General	Open

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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)

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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

Disturbance Calculations for the BSUs and for the Project Analysis Areas:

- For the BSUs: **% Degradation Disturbance = (combined acres of the 12 degradation threats*) ÷ (acres of all lands within the PHMAs in a BSU) x 100.**
- For the Project Analysis Area: **% Degradation Disturbance = (combined acres of the 12 degradation threats[1] plus the 7 site scale threats[2]) ÷ (acres of all lands within the project analysis area in the PHMA) x 100.**

[1] see Table 3. [2] see Table 2

Project analysis area method for permitting surface disturbance activities:

- Determine potentially affected occupied leks by placing a four mile boundary around the proposed area of physical disturbance related to the project. All occupied leks located within the four mile project boundary and within PHMA will be considered affected by the project.

- Next, place a four mile boundary around each of the affected occupied leks.
- The PHMA within the four mile lek boundary and the four mile project boundary creates the project analysis area for each individual project. If there are no occupied leks within the four-mile project boundary, the project analysis area will be that portion of the four-mile project boundary within the Priority Habitat Management Area.
- Map disturbances or use locally available data. Use of NAIP imagery is recommended.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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

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Table 2. The seven additional features to include in the disturbance calculation at the project scale

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[2], State, Local	State, Local
	Formula (Measure 2a):	12 Degradation Threats / PHMAs in Populations	12 Degradation Threats / PHMAs in BSUs	12 Degradation Threats + 7[7] / PHMAs in Proj.[6]
	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	Updated EVT or State data	
	Formula (Measure 1a):	Existing Updated Sagebrush / PHMAs in Populations	Existing Updated Sagebrush / 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):	Well Pads and Mines[1] / Square Mile		Well Pads and Mines[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
BpS = 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 footnot 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 project boundary combined with a 4-mile lek boundary for leks within the 4mi project boundary in PHMA (DDCT 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/SUMMER[1] (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		
WINTER[1] (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 heath 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

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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) within1.2 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.

From: Mermejo, Lauren [lmermejo@blm.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 11:42 AM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: Review of ACEC Map and Apendix

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 14, 2013 at 8:11 AM
Subject: Review of ACEC Map and Apendix
To: Melvin Tague <jtague@blm.gov>, sharphay@att.net, "Ralston, Brent E" <bralston@blm.gov>, "Suther, Joan M" <jsuther@blm.gov>, Margaret Langlas Ward <mlanglasward@blm.gov>

Hi Folks –

As a result of reviewing Quincy's ACEC Map and Appendix yesterday – and in accordance with GRSG-5 which states "The Regional Project Managers for the given Subregion will review all preliminary relevance and importance evaluations for final approval during its review of the draft alternatives", I am asking that you please forward me your ACEC map(s) and your ACEC appendix so that I can review and provide the final approval to ensure that it is in accordance with our guidance.

Thanks – getting that to me today would be great.

Lauren L. Mermejo

Great Basin GRSG Project Manager

BLM Nevada State Office

775 861-6580 (Office)

775 223-2770 (Cell)

--

Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

From: Mermejo, Lauren [lmermejo@blm.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 2:26 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: Some Potentail Additions to Your ADPPs

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Tue, Jul 29, 2014 at 9:18 AM
Subject: Some Potentail Additions to Your ADPPs
To: "Melvin (Joe) Tague" <jtague@blm.gov>, "Suther, Joan" <jsuther@blm.gov>, Brent Ralston <bralston@blm.gov>
Cc: Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>, David Batts <david.batts@empsi.com>, Matthew Magaletti <mmagalet@blm.gov>

Hi All –

I worked thru the Federal Family Meeting Review with Quincy this afternoon and went thru his ADPP with him.

I would like to share with you some language that I think would help embellish all of our planning efforts.

If you recall, the RDFs are a planning decision unless we can document in our site-specific NEPA documents why we are not using them. The following language from the Utah Plan provides that clarification:

For example, under Unleased Fluid Mineral Estate…..if an exception is granted by the State Director, the following should be added:

"In addition, the RDFs identified in Appendix J, Required Design Features for Fluid Minerals, would be applied during the permitting process, unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;

- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;

- 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."

Under Leased Fluid Mineral Estate, the following language – close to the above – but tied to Conditions of Approval is as follows:

"In PPMA, the RDFs identified in Appendix J and Appendix L would be attached as mandatory COAs during development of a lease, unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;

- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;

- 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."

As a reminder, the same type of language needs to accompany any time that you refer to the RDFs….for fire, fuels, west nile virus, etc.

In addition, the Utah ADPP has a few other proposed management decisions that may add strength to the Leased Fluid Minerals sections of your plans for purposes of the FWS:

1. " 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 and habitat."

2. " In PPMAs, operators must submit a site-specific plan of d3evelopment for roads, wells, pipelines and other infrastructure prior to any development being authorized. The BLM will evaluate thesite-specific plan through the NEPA process."

Also, as a reminder, we all agreed to use a version of the following recreation language at our last FFM – or we could be more restrictive such as in Nevada where their plan just states that none would be allowed:

1. "In PPMA, do not construct new recreation facilities (e.g. campgrounds, trails, trailheads, staging areas) unless the development would have a neutral effect or be beneficial to GRSG habitat (such as concentrating recreation, diverting use away from critical area, etc.), or unless the development is required for visitor safety or resource protection."

Just sending this forward in case we want a discussion on this at our call this morning.

Lauren

--
Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

From: Mermejo, Lauren [lmermejo@blm.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2015 5:36 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: WO Direction for Glossary Items

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lauren Mermejo** <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Apr 1, 2015 at 1:59 PM
Subject: WO Direction for Glossary Items
To: Quincy Bahr <qfbahr@blm.gov>, Joan Suther <jsuther@blm.gov>, jmbeck@blm.gov, "Lauren L. Mermejo" <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Cc: Holly Prohaska <holly.prohaska@empsi.com>, Peter Gower <peter.gower@empsi.com>, Randall Sharp <sharphay@att.net>, mdillon@fs.fed.us, Glen Stein <gstein@fs.fed.us>, Marguerite Adams <maadams@blm.gov>

The WO has asked that we add these – verbatim – into your glossaries.

Definitions: these should be added to the glossary for the plans:

Net Conservation Gain: the actual benefit or gain above baseline conditions. Actions which result in habitat loss and degradation include those identified as threats which contribute to Greater Sage-Grouse disturbance as identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its 2010 listing decision (75 FR 13910) and shown in Table 2 in the attached Monitoring Framework (Appendix X).

Baseline: the pre-existing condition of a defined area and/or resource that can be quantified by an appropriate metric(s). During environmental reviews, the baseline is considered the affected environment that exists at the time of the review's initiation, and is used to compare predictions of the effects of the proposed action or a reasonable range of alternatives.

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Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

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1.1
06/02/2015

Laura Long

From: Lauren Mermejo <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 5:04 PM
To: Randall Sharp; jmbeck@blm.gov; Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado; Quincy Bahr
Cc: Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Derek Holmgren; David Batts; Matthew Magaletti
Subject: Chapter 2 Template Change
Attachments: Amendments_PROPOSED_CH2_TEMPLATE_FINAL_2_25_14.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi All –
Please see Matt's apology below, and put Table 2-X where it really belongs!
Thanks
Lauren

From: Magaletti, Matthew [mailto:mmagalet@blm.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 4:59 PM
To: Ruth Miller; Erin Jones; Bridget Clayton
Cc: Lauren Mermejo
Subject: Fwd: Question on Comment #112

Ok - I admit it, I screwed up. You or your contractors may have already caught this, but when I was incorporating the new Table 2-X into the updated Ch. 2 Amendment Template, the table jumped to section 2.6.1. The intent was for the intro language and table to be in section 2.5.1. If you have already uploaded your ch. 2s to the Sharepoint site for WO, do not worry about it (WO probably wont even catch). I just wanted to bring this to your attention.

The revisions' GRSG habitat management section template is still ok.

-Matt

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Magaletti, Matthew** <mmagalet@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 1:44 PM
Subject: Re: Question on Comment #112
To: "West, William" <wwest@blm.gov>
Cc: Pamela Murdock <pmurdock@blm.gov>

Hi William - Sorry for the confusion. This was my fault as I forgot to delete the old language and inserted the table and the language in the wrong location. My attempt to help just became confusing Please place the language below before table 2-1 and ensure the below language and table are within Section 2.5. I corrected and attached the template for clarity purposes.

Thank Bryan for the catch!

Table 2-1: BLM Programs for Addressing Greater Sage-Grouse Threats
The direction for managing GRSG habitat in this document is focused on responding to the threats identified by the USFWS's in their 2010 warranted but precluded finding on listing the GRSG, as well as their Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. The USFWS threats do not necessarily align with BLM or Forest Service resource program areas, and are often integrated into several different

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resource program areas. Table 2-1, USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats, provides a cross-walk between each of the 2010 warranted but precluded finding and COT identified threats and the BLM/Forest Service program areas addressing these threats, with references to specific sections of the LUPA/proposed plan."

Pam - the revision template was not impacted by this error, so we are good still with Buffalo and Bighorn.

On Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 12:30 PM, West, William <wwest@blm.gov> wrote:
Hi Matt,

I received the following questions from our contractor regarding introduction of Table 2-1 (threats).

How should I answer them?

Thanks

William West
Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Rock Springs Field Office, BLM
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901
wwest@blm.gov
Office 307-352-0259

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---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Klyse, Bryan [USA]** <klyse_bryan@bah.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 10:18 AM
Subject: Question on Comment #112
To: "West, William" <wwest@blm.gov>
Cc: "Middleton, Pamela [USA]" <middleton_pamela@bah.com>

William:

Below is comment #112 from batch 5. The direction is to include this text immediately before Table 2-1, which would put this text in Section 2.6.1. However, there is already similar/same text in Section 2.5. Should I replace the existing Section 2.5 text with the text below? I assume this is the correct course of action, but wanted to confirm with you. Also, does this include change the Section 2.5 heading, which currently includes "BLM/Forest Service" and "Resource Programs." Please advise on the desired changes.

Thanks,
Bryan

"Immediately before the new table 2-1 insert the following text:

Table 2-1: BLM Programs for Addressing Greater Sage-Grouse Threats

The direction for managing GRSG habitat in this document is focused on responding to the threats identified by the USFWS's in their 2010 warranted but precluded finding on listing the GRSG, as well as their Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. The USFWS threats do not necessarily align with BLM or Forest Service resource program areas, and are often integrated into several different resource program areas. Table 2-1, USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats, provides a cross-walk between each of the 2010 warranted but precluded finding and COT identified threats and the BLM/Forest Service program areas addressing these threats, with references to specific sections of the LUPA/proposed plan."

Bryan Klyse
Booz | Allen | Hamilton

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--
Matthew Magaletti
Rocky Mountain Region Sage Grouse Coordinator (Acting)
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(307) 775-6329

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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

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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 1.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 1.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

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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

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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 1**).

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 1.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

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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 1.X.X**);
- Fulfill the purpose and need for the LUPA (outlined in **Section 1.X**, Purpose and Need); and

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- 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.

2.5 BLM/Forest Service Resource Programs for Addressing GRSG Threats

The direction for managing GRSG habitat in this document is focused on responding to the threats identified by the USFWS's in their 2010 warranted but precluded finding on listing the GRSG, as well as their Conservation Objectives Team (COT) Report. The USFWS threats do not necessarily align with BLM or Forest Service resource program areas, and are often integrated into several different resource program areas. Table 2-X, USFWS Threats to GRSG and Their Habitat, Applicable BLM and Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment Resource Program Areas Addressing these Threats, provides a cross-walk between each of the 2010 warranted but precluded finding and COT identified threats and the BLM/Forest Service program areas addressing these threats, with references to specific sections of the LUPA/proposed plan.

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[*NOTE: revise Table 2-X accordingly*]

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	BLM: Wildland Fire Management (see section X) Forest Service: Fire Management (see section X)
Invasive Species	Nonnative, Invasive Plants Species	BLM: Vegetation Management(see section X), Range Management (see section X), Wildland Fire Management (see section X), and Recreation (see section X) Forest Service: GRSG Habitat (see section X), Fire Management (see section X), and Roads and Transportation (see section X)
Oil and Gas For wind energy development, see *Infrastructure – power lines/pipelines, roads (below)*	Energy Development	BLM: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Fluid Minerals (see section X) Forest Service: Lands and Realty (see section X) and Fluid Minerals (see sections X)
Prescribed Fire	Sagebrush Removal	BLM: Vegetation Management (see section X) and Wildland Fire Management (see section X) Forest Service: GRSG Habitat (see section X) and Fire Management (see section X)

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Grazing	Grazing	BLM: 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) Forest Service: Livestock Grazing (see section X) and Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X),
See *Grazing Management (above)*	Range Management Structures	BLM: Range Management (see section X) Forest Service: Livestock Grazing (see section X)
No similar threat identified	Free-Roaming Equid Management	BLM: Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X) Forest Service: Wild Horse and Burro Management (see section X)
Conifer Encroachment	Pinyon and/or Juniper Expansion	BLM: Wildland Fire Management (see section X) and Vegetation Management (see section X) Forest Service: Fire Management (see section X) and GRSG Habitat (see section X)
Agriculture & Urbanization	Agricultural Conversion and Ex-Urban Development	BLM: Lands and Realty (see section X) Forest Service: Lands and Realty/Land Ownership Adjustments (see section X)
Hard Rock Mining	Mining	BLM: Lands and Realty (see section X), Locatable Minerals (see section X), Salable Minerals (see section X), and Non-energy Leasable Minerals (see section X) Forest Service: Coal Mines (see section X), Locatable Minerals (see section X), Non-energy Leasable Minerals (see sections X), and Mineral Materials (see section X)
See Infrastructure, Roads	Recreation	BLM: Recreation (see section X) and Trails and Travel Management (see section X)

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		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	*There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.*
Weather	No similar threat identified	*There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.*
Predation	No similar threat identified	BLM: All applicable programs Forest Service: GRSG Habitat (see section X), Land and Realty (see section X), and Minerals (see section X)
Disease	No similar threat identified	BLM: All applicable programs Forest Service: Minerals/Fluid Mineral Operations
Hunting	No similar threat identified	*There is no BLM or Forest Service resource program in the proposed plan addressing this threat.*

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Contaminants	No similar threat identified	BLM: Public Health and Safety (see section X) Forest Service: Mineral (see section X)

Source: USFWS 2010, 2013

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2.6 .PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT

2.6.1 Development of Proposed LUPA

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

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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.

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

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    - 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

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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*].

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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.

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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.

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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 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

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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 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.

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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.

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.

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[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 acreages or other quantitative value (e.g., AUMs)]	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:

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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
	GHMA: [insert acreages or other quantitative value (e.g., AUMs)]					
Livestock Grazing [Example]						
AUMs	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:	PHMA: GHMA:
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.

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- 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

Alterative 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:

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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 *(No Action)*	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	BLM Proposed Plan Amendment	Forest Service Proposed Plan Amendment
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE					
LANDS AND REALTY					

GBR_0000143

GBR_0000144

GBR_PUB_1576
1.1

From: Quamen, Frank
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2014 5:18 PM
To: Kathryn Stangl; Matthew Magaletti
Cc: Vicki Herren; Anthony Titolo; Lauren Mermejo
Subject: ADPP NPT Compliance Atlases - Version 2 GB
Attachments: GreatBasin_ADPP_NPT_Compliance_Atlas_v2.pdf

--
Frank Quamen, Wildlife Biologist
BLM National Operations Center
Denver Federal Center Building 40
303-236-6310

Great Basin Region

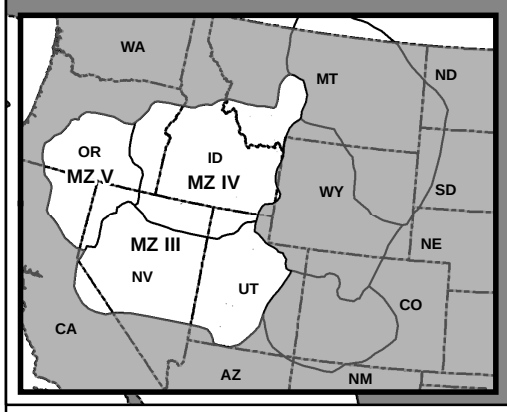
Greater Sage-grouse

National Policy Team Guidance

Administrative Draft Proposed Plan

NPT Compliance Atlas

Map Guide:



Solar Energy and BLM/FS Greater Sage-Grouse Priority, General, and Idaho Important Habitat Management Areas (PHMA, GHMA and IHMA)

-ADPP-

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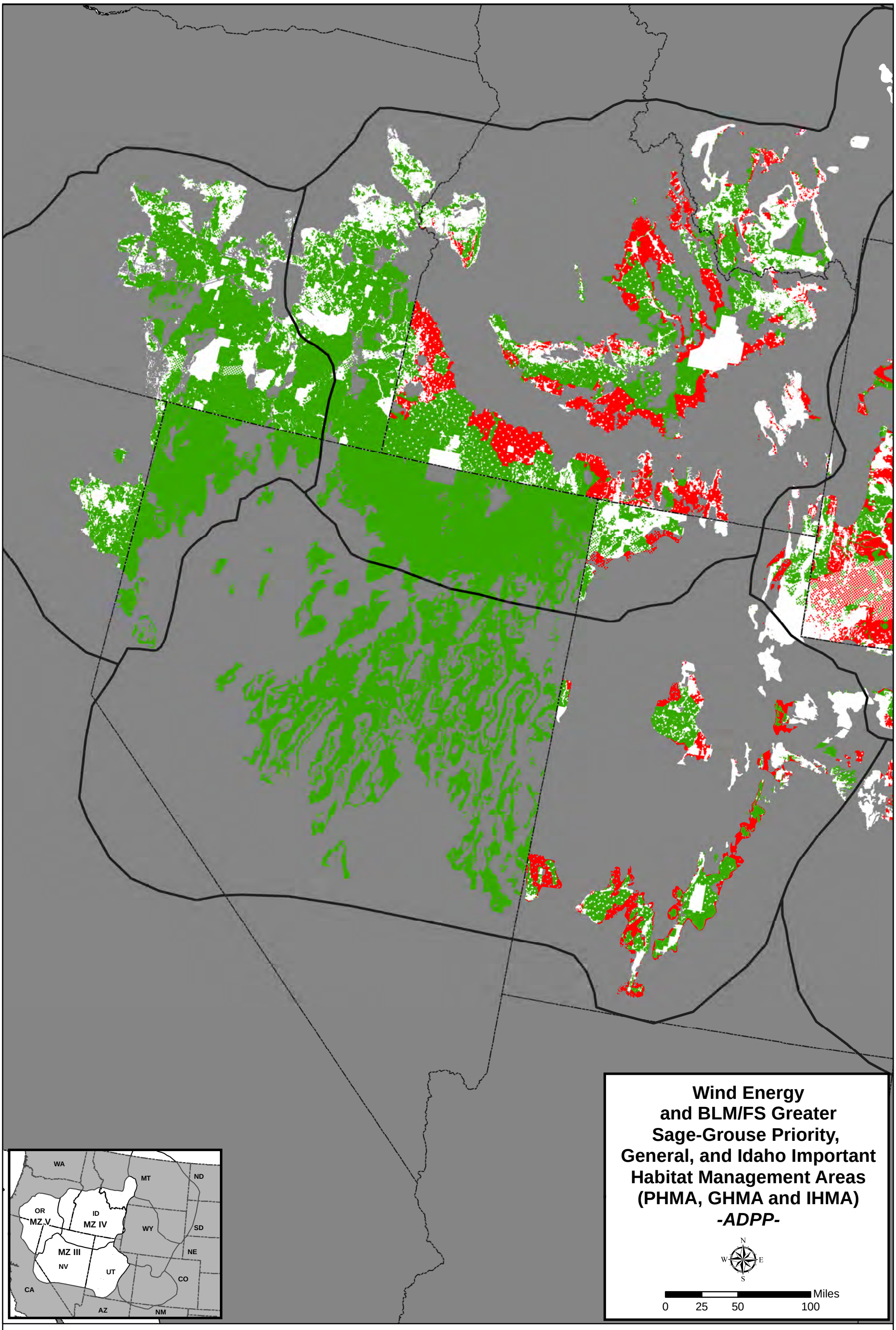
Legend

- Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- Non-Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- HMAs Outside of BLM/FS Management Jurisdiction and/or Threat Not Identified as an Issue for Analysis
- WAFWA Management Zones
- State Boundaries

GBR_0000147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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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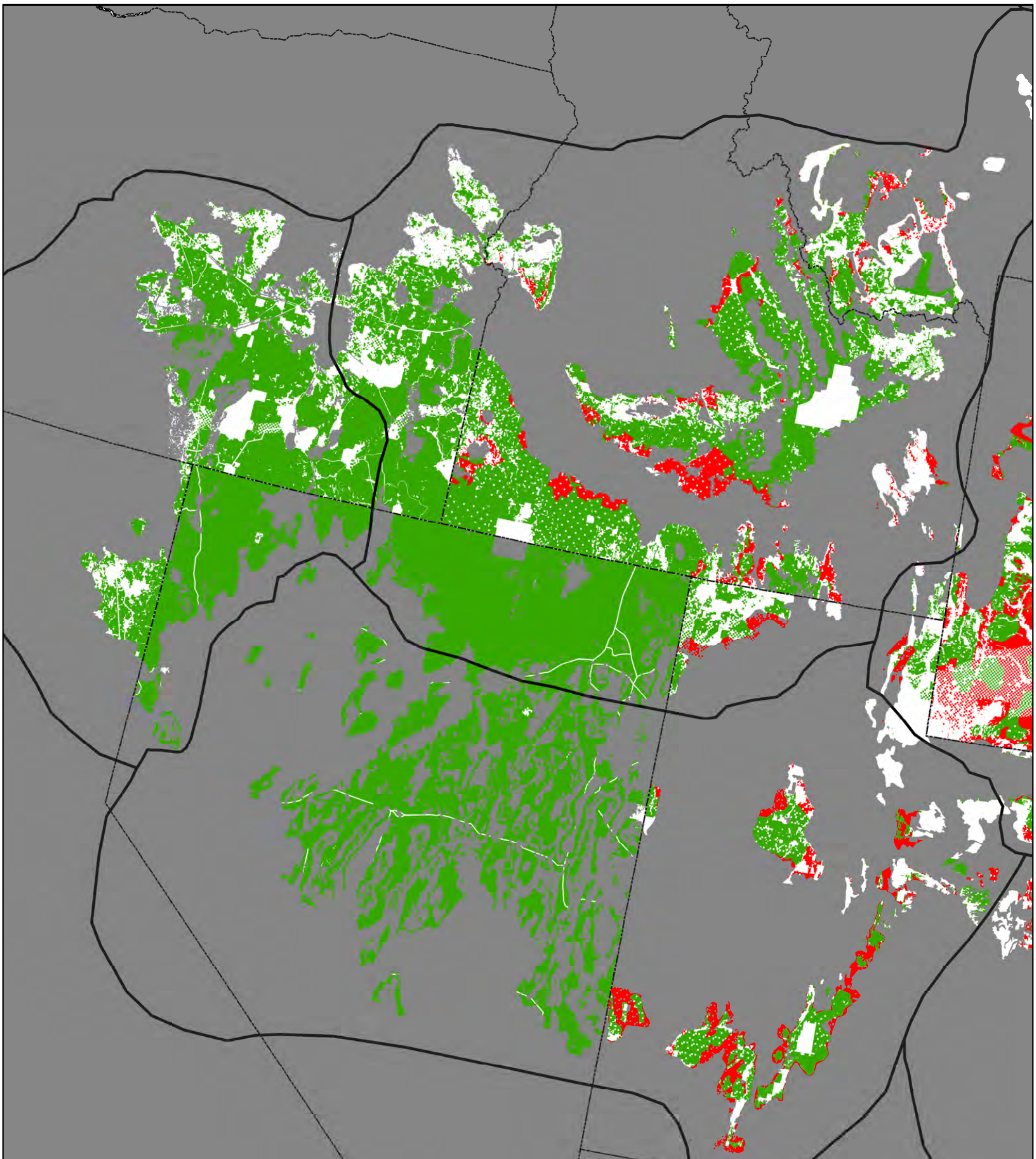
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Rights-Of-Ways
and BLM/FS Greater
Sage-Grouse Priority,
General, and Idaho Important
Habitat Management Areas
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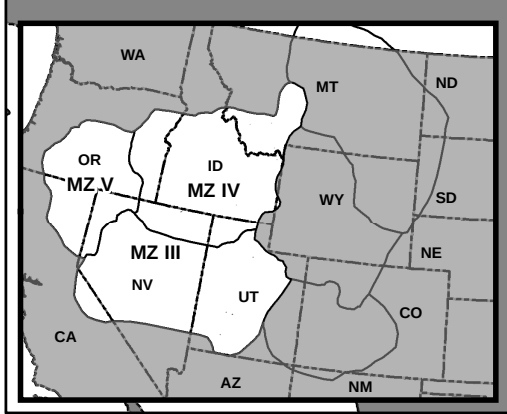
Non-Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
HMAs Outside of BLM/FS Management Jurisdiction
WAFWA Management Zones
State Boundaries
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MARCH 3, 1849
NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

GBR_0000149

Fluid Mineral Leasing (Oil and Gas) and BLM/FS Greater Sage-Grouse Priority, General, and Idaho Important Habitat Management Areas (PHMA, GHMA, and IHMA)

-ADPP-



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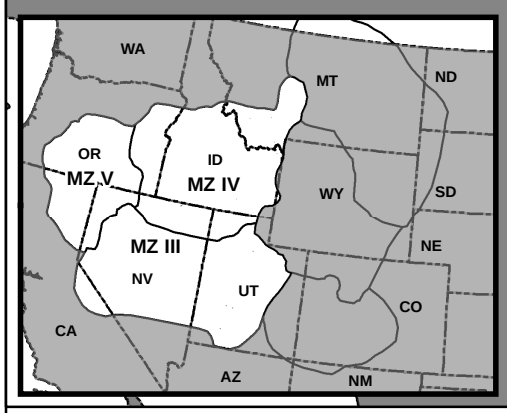
Legend

- Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- Non-Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- HMAs Outside of BLM/FS Management Jurisdiction
- WAFWA Management Zones
- State Boundaries

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

GBR_0000150

Non-Energy Leasable Minerals and BLM/FS Greater Sage-Grouse Priority, General, and Idaho Important Habitat Management Areas (PHMA, GHMA and IHMA)
-ADPP-



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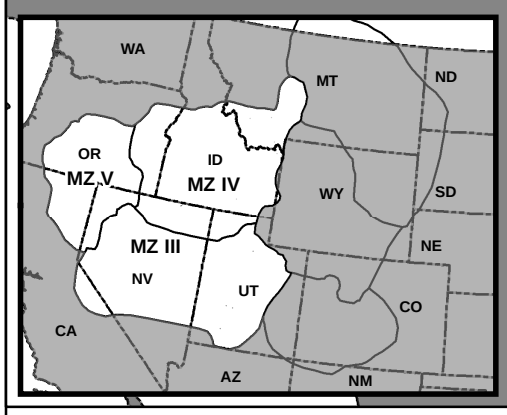
Legend

- Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- Non-Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- HMAs Outside of BLM/FS Management Jurisdiction
- WAFWA Management Zones
- State Boundaries

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

GBR_0000151



Salable - Mineral Materials Disposals and BLM/FS Greater Sage-Grouse Priority, General, and Idaho Important Habitat Management Areas (PHMA, GHMA, and IHMA)

-ADPP-

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Legend

- Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- Non-Compliant with National Policy Team Guidance
- HMAs Outside of BLM/FS Management Jurisdiction
- WAFWA Management Zones
- State Boundaries

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR MARCH 3, 1849

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

GBR_0000152

GBR_PUB_1578
1.1

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 10:31 AM
To: Kathryn Stangl; Stephen Small; Vicki Herren
Cc: Matthew Magaletti
Subject: FW: GREAT BASIN ALLOCATIONS ROLL-UP TABLE 1
Attachments: GREAT BASIN ALLOCATIONS ROLL-UP TABLE 1.docx

Hi All –
Thought you could all use this information….it is updated and you can now see that Idaho has gone NSO with one exception in Core and Important Habitat.
Lauren

Greater Sage-Grouse
Great Basin Region LUP/EIS

TABLE 1: GREAT BASIN SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS						
ALLOCATION	**HABITAT**	**NV-CA**[3.]	**OR**	**ID**	**SW MT**	**UT (BLM)**
SOLAR	PPMA (Core)	Exclusion [1]	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion
	Important			Avoidance		
	PGMA	Exclusion [1]	Avoidance	Open	Open	Exclusion
WIND	PPMA (Core)	Exclusion [1]	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion
	Important			Avoidance		
	PGMA	Exclusion [1]	Avoidance	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]
ROW						
UTILITY COORIDORS	PPMA (Core)	Open[2]	OPEN	Open	Open	Open [UT-2]
	Important			Open	Open	
	PGMA	Open[2]	OPEN	Open	Open	Open [UT-2]
HIGH-VOLTAGE / MAJOR PIPELINES	PPMA (Core)	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance
	Important			Avoidance		
	PGMA	Avoidance	Avoidance	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]
OTHER (MINOR) ROWs & PERMITS	PPMA (Core)	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance	Avoidance
	Important			Avoidance		
	PGMA	Avoidance	Open	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]
FLUID MINERALS (includes GEOTHERMAL)	PPMA (Core)	NSO (with single NPT Exception)	NSO (with single NPT Exception)	NSO (with single NPT Exception)	NSO (with single NPT Exception)	NSO (BLM with 3 specific exceptions)
	Important			NSO (with single NPT Exception)		

DRAFT

TABLE 1: GREAT BASIN SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS						
ALLOCATION	**HABITAT**	**NV-CA**[3.]	**OR**	**ID**	**SW MT**	**UT (BLM)**
	PGMA	NSO (with waivers, modifications, stipulations)	Open w/1 mi NSO around leks + CSU, TL	Open with CSU and TL	Open with CSU and TL	Varies [UT-1]
NON-ENERGY LEASABLES	PPMA (Core)	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed [UT-3]
	Important			Open		
	PGMA	Closed	Open	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]
SALABALE MINERALS	PPMA (Core)	Closed (expansion OK with mitigation, RDFs, and within Cap. Free use OK)	Closed (limited expansion for Federal Highway ROWs with mitigation and other stipulations)	Closed to new sites (existing sites open)	Closed to new sites (existing sites open)	Closed (expansion and new free-use sites OK, though not within 1 mile of a lek, and they require mitigation, RDFs, be within the cap, and other stipulations)
	Important			Closed to new sites (existing sites open)		
	PGMA	Closed	Open	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]
RECREATION (TRAVEL MANAGEMENT)	PPMA (Core)	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited to Designated Routes[IDswMT-1]	Limited to existing routes (where not already closed or limited to designated routes)
	Important			Limited To Existing Routes		
	PGMA	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited To Existing Routes	Limited to Designated Routes[IDswMT-1]	Limited to existing routes (where not already closed or limited to designated routes)
LOCATABLE MINERALS	PPMA (Core)	Open[3]	Open[OR-1] direction to work	Open	Open	Open (direction to work with claimant

DRAFT

TABLE 1: GREAT BASIN SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS						
ALLOCATION	**HABITAT**	**NV-CA[3.]**	**OR**	**ID**	**SW MT**	**UT (BLM)**
			with claimant to implement various measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts			to implement various measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts)
	Important			Open		
	PGMA	Open[3]	Open [OR-1]	Open	Open	Varies [UT-1]

Footnotes:

[1.]Use of solar and wind to power existing facilities OK if no impacts to GRSG or habitat is documented.

[2.] No new utility corridors allowed; some wide corridors reduced to maximum width of 3500 feet.

[3.]All disturbances to GRSG habitat must follow State of Nevada avoid-minimize-mitigate procedures to attain no net unmitigated loss of habitat.

[UT-1:] PGMA is for BLM-UT is managed according to the existing LUP allocations (O&G- open, CSU, NSO, closed; ROWs: open, avoidance, exclusion, mineral materials and non-energy leasables: open, closed; other allocations: etc.). In addition to whatever the existing LUP includes, there is an added requirement for no net unmitigated loss of GRSG habitat that would be applied to both PPMA and PGMA.

[UT-2:] Several new ROW corridors were identified in the ADPP as a mean to focus future development from collocating with any existing line on the landscape to be located in areas where they would do less damage to GRSG. Additionally, the decision in the ADPP for ROW corridors is to avoid GRSG habitat entirely, if possible, but if that is not feasible, to locate in the corridors and apply a variety of other stipulations to minimize impacts, including mitigation.

[UT-3:] Per NPT, closed unless adjacent to existing operations, where it could be allowed with mitigation and within the disturbance cap. Utah went further and wouldn't allow expansion within 1 mile of lek, and would require mitigation to be completed before the project is initiated, as well as other stipulations such as to eliminate impacts from noise and tall structures.

[OR-1:]Open except where closed in existing plans

[IDswMT-1]: Southwest Montana BLM areas have already completed travel management planning and identified designated roads and trails.

DRAFT

From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 10:56 AM
To: Quincy Bahr; Lauren Mermejo; Jennifer Fleuret; Jonathan Beck; Joan Suther
Cc: Stephanie Carman
Subject: SHPO Language for the RODs

Hello again Great Basin PLs,

I just obtained this suggested paragraph for the Great Basin ROD from our SOLs. Can you all look it over and let me know if it is or is not an accurate reflection of your coordination with your state's SHPO. This paragraph is not currently in the Draft Great Basin ROD I just sent to all of you, but I plan to place it in Section 4.3 if it is accurate.

As part of the NEPA scoping and consultation process, the BLM notified the Idaho, Montana, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Utah State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) seeking information about the identification of historic properties in consideration of land use planning decisions included in these ARMPAs. The ARMPAs do not require compliance with NHPA Section 106 because the ARMPA's management decisions regarding Greater Sage-Grouse do not authorize specific activities that have the potential to cause effects on historic properties. The BLM will comply with the requirements of NHPA Section 106 at a later stage, i.e., for implementation-level decisions such as project proposals, which will include adequate consultation with SHPOs, THPOs, Native American Tribes, and other interested parties.

Thanks for all your help!

--
Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management, WO-210
(202) 912-7085

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2014 8:42 AM
To: Meredith Zaccherio; Chad Ricklefs; Lauren Mermejo; gstein@fs.fed.us; Matthew Magaletti; Quincy Bahr; jsuther@blm.gov; Brent Ralston; sharphay@att.net; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Holly Prohaska; Peter Gower; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; Sarah Shattuck; Stephen Small; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; mdillon@fs.fed.us; Kathryn Stangl; David Batts
Cc: Frank Quamen; Morris, Craig -FS; Mickelsen, Robert -FS; Johanna Munson
Subject: Today's PL Call Handout
Attachments: GRSG Avoidance Criteria - with final team input_20140512.docx

Hi All –
Attached is the ROW Avoidance Criteria for incorporation into all of the subregional EISs in the Great Basin. We will review today.

Also – another issue of discussion concerns "tall structures"….. what are they and how are they defined? What consistent language can we use across the range in the Great Basin. Quincy will lead this discussion and here are his thoughts:

> "a tall structure is any man-made structure that has the potential to disrupt lekking or nesting birds by creating new perching/nesting opportunities and/or decrease the use of an area; a determination as to whether something is considered a tall structure would be made based on local conditions such as vegetation or topography"

Let's talk thru and see if we have any other ideas that we can all capture and use based on science.

We will also add to a future agenda a discussion of Adaptive Management Triggers and share what we are all doing. Perhaps today we can share some thoughts for a few minutes.

And the low hanging fruit is what we are all applying as lek buffers by program (which are all over the board right now, and will make for extremely difficult cumulative effects analysis).

Thanks….talk with you in a few…….
Lauren

Rights-of-Way

Where avoidance is not possible, placement of new ROWs would be allowed under the following conditions:

- development does not exceed the 3 percent disturbance limit (see ____) in Priority Habitat;
- only issue RoWs after documenting that the RoWs will 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 Priority and General Habitat;
- new anthropogenic disturbance does not occur within ___-mile of an occupied lek in Priority Habitat, and ___-mile of an occupied lek in General Habitat except in designated corridors;
- development meets noise restrictions (see _____) in Priority and General Habitat;
- provide seasonal protection so that development does not occur during sensitive seasonal periods (i.e., breeding and nesting, brood rearing, and winter) (see _____) in Priority and General Habitat. During any sensitive seasonal period, manage discretionary surface disturbing activities and uses within _____ miles of active GRSG leks to prevent surface disturbance within GRSG habitat and disruption of GRSG activities (e.g. lekking and nesting). Seasonal protection is identified for the following: Seasonal Protection within _____ miles of active GRSG leks from March 1 through June 15, Seasonal protection of GRSG wintering areas from November 1 through March 31, Seasonal protection of GRSG wintering areas from November 1 through March 31, and Seasonal protection of GRSG brood-rearing habitat from May 15 to August 15 (***Note***: dates are subject to change based on sub-regional geographic differences).
- mitigation is implemented to offset impacts to GRSG and their habitats (see Appendix X, Mitigation Framework) in Priority and General Habitat;
- all disturbance is subject to no net unmitigated loss (see _____) in Priority and General Habitat;
- all new permits/ROWs or re-authorizations will follow Required Design Features in Priority and General Habitat; and
- 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 GRSG.

PRIORITY HABITAT	**GENERAL HABITAT**
1. Wind and Solar Utility/Commercial Scale Exclusion Area	1. Wind and Solar Utility/Commercial Scale ID/MT – avoidance for wind and solar UT – exclusion for solar, wind TBD NV/CA – exclusion for wind and solar OR – avoidance for wind and solar If Avoidance: If possible, meteorological towers should be constructed without guy wires. If guy wires are necessary, they should be marked with anti-strike devices. All NEPA documents for ROW applications within General Habitat would require analysis of potential alternative site locations outside of GRSG habitat.
2. High Voltage Transmission and Major Pipelines outside of Designated Corridors Avoidance Area	2. High Voltage Transmission and Major Pipelines outside of Designated Corridors Avoidance Area
3. Designated Corridors Open	3. Designated Corridors Open

4. Other ROWs/Land Use Authorization/Permits Avoidance Area	4. Other ROWs/Land Use Authorization/Permits UT and OR – Open NV/CA – Avoidance ID - Avoidance
<u>Road Rights-of-Ways:</u> New road ROWs would be authorized only when necessary for public safety, administrative access, or subject to valid existing rights. If the new ROW is necessary for public safety, administrative access, or subject to valid existing rights and creates new surface disturbance, then avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts. New road ROWs would be allowed if the ROW applicant is pursuing a Title V FLPMA ROW grant, <u>including</u> on an RS 2477 road, and would create no new surface disturbance.	Nevada/NE California Only: Only allow use of existing roads, or realignment of existing roads, when renewing or amending existing authorizations in general habitat.
Only allow use of existing roads, or realignment of existing roads, when renewing or amending existing authorizations.	Same as Priority Habitat
Co-locate new ROWs as close as technically possible to existing ROWs or where it best minimizes GRSG impacts. Use existing roads, or realignments, 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.	Same as Priority Habitat
Existing Federal Highway Act (FHWA) Appropriation ROWs will be managed as valid existing rights, and new FHWA ROWs would continue to be considered and subject to all GRSG ROW plan restrictions.	Same as Priority Habitat

<u>Other Rights-of-Way:</u> High voltage transmission lines (100kV or greater) would be placed in designated corridors where technically feasible. Where not technically feasible, lines should be located adjacent to existing infrastructure. Outside of designated corridors, new transmission lines must be buried where technically feasible. Where burying transmission lines is not technically feasible: • new transmission lines must be adjacent to existing transmission lines; and • would be subject to GRSG ROW avoidance criteria. If a higher voltage transmission line is required: • the existing transmission line must be removed within a reasonable amount of time after the new line is installed and energized; and; • the new line must be constructed in the same alignment as the existing line unless an alternate route would benefit GRSG or GRSG habitat. Where determined to have a negative impact on GRSG or its habitat, existing guy wires should be removed or appropriately marked with bird flight diverters to make them more visible to sage-grouse in flight. Major pipelines (greater than 24 inches) would be placed in designated corridors where technically feasible. Where not technically feasible, pipelines should be located adjacent to existing infrastructure. New proposals for power lines, access roads, pump storage, and other hydroelectric facilities licensed by FERC would be subject to all GRSG ROW avoidance criteria.	New high-voltage transmission lines in general habitat will be constructed as close as technically feasible to existing infrastructure (e.g. transmission lines and pipelines) to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint Same as Priority Habitat Same as Priority Habitat New pipelines in general habitat will be constructed as close as technically feasible to existing infrastructure (e.g. transmission lines and pipelines) to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint Same as Priority Habitat
<u>Communication Sites:</u> New communication towers must be located where technically feasible within an existing communication site, New sites would be considered where necessary for public safety.	Same as Priority Habitat
<u>ROW Grants:</u> When a ROW grant expires, is relinquished, or terminated, required rehabilitation is a term and condition of the FLPMA ROW grant, in compliance with 43 CFR 2805.12(i). • the lease holder will be required to reclaim the site by removing overhead lines and other infrastructure, and; • eliminate existing raven nesting opportunities	Same as Priority Habitat

created by anthropogenic development on public lands (e.g., remove powerline and communication facilities no longer in service).	
During renewal, amendment or reauthorization of existing permits, work with existing ROW holders to mitigate impacts of existing power lines. Where technically feasible, require ROW holders to bury or relocate existing lines to minimize long-term impacts on GRSG habitat. Where the potential long-term impacts of the mitigation (e.g. relocation or burying) would be greater than the existing impacts of the line, do not pursue the mitigation. If mitigation is not feasible or would result in severe short-term or greater long-term impacts on GRSG habitat, incorporate additional terms and conditions in the ROW authorization for protection of GRSG habitat.	Same as Priority Habitat
Work with ROW holders to retrofit existing towers with perch deterrents or other anti-perching devices, where appropriate, to limit sage-grouse predation.	Same as Priority Habitat
Corridors: Existing designated ROW corridors are identified on Map 2.X, Designated ROW Corridors–Proposed Plan, and would continue to be designated corridors.	Same as Priority Habitat
Placement of new ROWs in priority habitat should be avoided if at all possible. Where avoidance is not possible, allow new above and underground linear ROWs in designated corridors. New ROWs constructed in designated corridors will be constructed as close as technically feasible to existing linear ROW infrastructure to limit disturbance to the smallest footprint.	Same as Priority Habitat

REQUIRED DESIGN FEATURES:

- Limit noise to less than 10 decibels above ambient measures (20-24 dBA) at sunrise at the perimeter of a lek during active lek season.
- Where technically and financially feasible, bury distribution powerlines and communication lines within existing disturbance.
- Utilize existing roads, or realignments of existing roads to the extent possible.
- Design roads to an appropriate standard no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended purpose.
- 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.
- development meets site specific tall structure restrictions (see _____) in Priority and General Habitat;
- new ROW structures will be constructed with perch deterrents or other anti-perching devices, where needed.

IDMT_PUB_8449
1.1

Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 11:27 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado; jmbeck@blm.gov; Randall Sharp
Cc: Quincy Bahr; Matthew Magaletti
Subject: RE: Questions on Secretarial Order
Attachments: SO Themes and tps_Jan62015.docx

Sorry All – Mitch had attached this other file as well that I neglected to attach before….
L

From: Lauren Mermejo [mailto:lmermejo@blm.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 10:21 AM
To: Brent Ralston; Joan Suther; Jessica Rubado; jmbeck@blm.gov; Randall Sharp (sharphay@att.net)
Cc: Quincy Bahr; Matthew Magaletti
Subject: Questions on Secretarial Order

Hi Everyone –
There has been some questions to some of the PLs from the press on the Secretarial Order. Mitch Snow from External Affairs in the WO sent this information forward:

"Hello all.
All press calls on this are to be referred to the Office of the Secretary's Public Affairs shop. Refer them to Jessica **Kershaw,** 202 208-5338.
For your use, I've attached the materials that NIFC put together on this. They should help answer any questions you have.
Mitch"

I have attached the Secretarial Order, the WO Press Release and the Q and As that NIFC put together. Please be sure to send any press related questions forward to Jessica Kershaw, and share this information with your External Affairs specialists. Thanks!

Lauren

GBR_0000232

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
U.S. Department of the Interior

www.doi.gov
News Release

Date: January 6, 2015
Contact: Jessica Kershaw, Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Secretary Jewell Launches Comprehensive Strategy to Protect and Restore Sagebrush Lands Threatened by Rangeland Fire

Builds on work with federal, state, tribal and non-government partners to protect economic activity and wildlife habitat vital to the Western way of life

WASHINGTON, DC – Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell today issued a Secretarial Order calling for a comprehensive science-based strategy to address the more frequent and intense wildfires that are damaging vital sagebrush landscapes and productive rangelands, particularly in the Great Basin region of Idaho, Utah, Nevada, Oregon and California.

The strategy will begin to be implemented during the 2015 fire season. Goals include reducing the size, severity and cost of rangeland fires, addressing the spread of cheatgrass and other invasive species, and positioning wildland fire management resources for more effective rangeland fire response.

"Targeted action is urgently needed to conserve habitat for the greater sage-grouse and other wildlife in the Great Basin, as well as to maintain ranching and recreation economies that depend on sagebrush landscapes," said Secretary Jewell. "The Secretarial Order further demonstrates our strong commitment to work with our federal, state, tribal and community partners to reduce the likelihood and severity of rangeland fire, stem the spread of invasive species, and restore the health and resilience of sagebrush ecosystems."

The Secretarial Order establishes a top-level Rangeland Fire Task Force, chaired by Interior's Deputy Secretary Mike Connor, includes five assistant secretaries, and lays out the goals and timelines for completing the Task Force's work.

The Task Force will work with other federal agencies, states, tribes, local entities and non-governmental groups on fire management and habitat restoration activities. This includes enhancing the capability and capacity of our partners' fire management organizations through improved and expanded education and training. The Task Force also will encourage improved coordination among all partners involved in rangeland fire management to further improve safety and effectiveness.

The Order builds on wildland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efforts to date, including the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, which provides a roadmap for achieving "all hands—all lands" cooperation, and the President's wildland fire budget proposal to change how fire suppression costs are budgeted to treat extreme fire seasons the way other emergency disasters are treated. The budget proposal would provide greater certainty in addressing growing fire suppression needs while better safeguarding prevention and other non-suppression programs, such as fuels reduction and post-fire rehabilitation.

The accelerated invasion of non-native grasses and the spread of pinyon-juniper, along with drought and the effects of climate change, increased the threat of rangeland fires to the sagebrush landscape and the more than 350 species of plants and animals, such as mule deer and pronghorn, that rely on this critically important ecosystem. The increasing frequency and intensity of rangeland fire in sagebrush ecosystems has significantly damaged the landscape on which ranchers, livestock managers, hunters and outdoor recreation enthusiasts rely. This unnatural fire cycle puts at risk their economic contributions across this landscape that support and maintain the Western way of life in America.

Efforts to conserve and protect sagebrush habitat are the centerpiece of an historic campaign to address threats to greater sage-grouse prior to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's court-ordered 2015 deadline whether to propose the bird for Endangered Species Act protection.

Secretary Jewell is working with Western governors to improve wildland fire-fighting capacity at all levels, highlighting the proactive voluntary partnership with ranchers, farmers and other landowners to conserve the sagebrush landscape on private and public lands. Interior's November 5-7, 2014, conference in Idaho, *The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Fire in the Great Basin*, brought together fire experts and land managers at the federal, state and local levels who underscored the need for a comprehensive, landscape-scale strategy to rangeland fire suppression and prevention.

At the December 6, 2014, Western Governors' Association winter meeting, Jewell directed her Department's leadership to develop a comprehensive strategy to fight rangeland fire with an eye toward protecting rural communities, sagebrush landscapes and habitats essential to the conservation of the sage-grouse and other wildlife.

"These efforts will help Governors, state, tribal and local fire authorities, and those landowners on the ground – including rangeland fire protection associations and rural volunteer fire departments – make sure they have the information, training and tools to more effectively fight the threat of rangeland fires," said Jewell. "To protect these landscapes for economic activity and wildlife like the greater sage-grouse, we need a three-pronged approach that includes strong federal land management plans, strong state plans, and an effective plan to address the threat of rangeland fire."

Because about 64 percent of the greater sage-grouse's 165 million acres of occupied range is on federally managed lands, Interior's Bureau of Land Management and the Department of Agriculture's U.S. Forest Service are currently analyzing amendments to existing land use plans

to incorporate appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance and restore greater sage-grouse habitat by reducing, eliminating or minimizing threats to the habitat.

State and private lands, which make up a significant portion of the priority and general habitat for the greater sage-grouse, are also critical for the species. As a result, the Department is working in an unprecedented partnership with the states to provide strong habitat protection and conservation measures on the lands they administer. As part of her efforts with Western governors, Secretary Jewell encouraged, assisted and highlighted the proactive, voluntary state and federal partnership with ranchers, farmers and other landowners to conserve the sagebrush landscape on private and public lands.

The rangeland fire Secretarial Order will help frame the third part of the greater sage-grouse conservation strategy by encouraging further federal, state, tribal and local protection for those vulnerable sagebrush lands in the Great Basin states.

Greater sage-grouse once occupied more than 290 million acres of sagebrush in the West, but the bird, known for its flamboyant mating ritual at sites called leks, has lost more than half of its habitat since then. Settlers reported that millions of birds once took to the skies; current estimates place population numbers between 200,000 and 500,000 birds. The species now occurs in 11 states and two Canadian provinces. More information on the greater sage-grouse and the ongoing, collaborative work to conserve the sagebrush landscape is available at: http://www.fws.gov/greatersagegrouse/

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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3336

Subject: Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management and Restoration

Sec. 1 **Purpose**. This Order sets forth enhanced policies and strategies for preventing and suppressing rangeland fire and for restoring sagebrush landscapes impacted by fire across the West. These actions are essential for conserving habitat for the greater sage-grouse as well as other wildlife species and economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, associated with the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin region. This effort will build upon the experience and success of addressing rangeland fire, and broader wildland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efforts to date, including the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, and ensure improved coordination with local, state, tribal, and regional efforts to address the threat of rangeland fire at a landscape-level.

Sec. 2 **Background**. The Department of the Interior is entrusted with overseeing the management of Federal lands for the benefit of current and future generations as well as the protection and recovery of imperiled species of flora and fauna and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Rangeland fires in the Great Basin of the Western United States have increased in size and intensity in recent years. The accelerated invasion of non-native annual grasses, in particular cheatgrass and medusahead rye, and the spread of pinyon-juniper across the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, along with drought and the effects of climate change, have created conditions that have led to the increased threat of rangeland fires to the sagebrush landscape and the more than 350 species of plants and animals, such as mule deer and pronghorn antelope, that rely on this critically important ecosystem. As a result, the increasing frequency and intensity of rangeland fire also poses a significant threat to ranchers, livestock managers, sportsmen, and outdoor recreation enthusiasts who use the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, and puts at risk their associated economic contributions across this landscape that support and maintain the American way of life in the West.

In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) found that the invasion of annual grasses and the loss of habitat from fire in the Great Basin is a significant threat to the greater sage-grouse in that portion of its remaining range. The USFWS is now considering whether protections under the Endangered Species Act are warranted. In response to this finding, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service are currently undertaking land use plan revisions and amendments to incorporate appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore greater sage-grouse habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. More targeted actions to reduce the likelihood and severity of fire, to stem the spread of invasive species, and to restore the health and resilience of the landscape are necessary to preserve, protect, and restore greater sage-grouse habitat in the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, and address important public safety, economic, cultural, and social concerns. This includes enhanced coordination and collaboration with partners and stakeholders, including rangeland fire protection associations.

Sec. 3 **Authorities**. This Order is issued under the authority of Section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat.1262), as amended. Other statutory authorities related to this Order include

and are not limited to the following:

a. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*

b. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

c. The Migratory Bird Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 715 *et seq.*

d. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, 16 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*

e. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*

f. The Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*

g. The Federal Land Assistance Management and Enhancement Act of 2009, Title V of Division A of P.L. 111-88.

Sec. 4 **Policy**. Protecting, conserving, and restoring the health of the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem and, in particular, greater sage-grouse habitat, while maintaining safe and efficient operations, is a critical fire management priority for the Department. Allocation of fire management resources and assets before, during, and after wildland fire incidents will reflect this priority, as will investments related to restoration activities.

Sec. 5 **Developing an Enhanced Fire Prevention, Suppression, and Restoration Strategy**. To accomplish protection, conservation, and restoration of greater sage-grouse habitat the Department, through the Rangeland Fire Task Force established in accordance with Section 6, will:

a. Work cooperatively and collaboratively with other Federal agencies, states, tribes, local stakeholders, and non-governmental organizations on fire management and habitat restoration activities, including: (i) Enhancing the capability and capacity of state, tribal, and local government, as well as non-governmental, fire management organizations, including rangeland fire protection associations and volunteer fire departments, through improved and expanded education and training; and (ii) Improving coordination among all partners involved in rangeland fire management to further improve safety and effectiveness.

b. Utilize risk-based, landscape-scale approaches to identify and facilitate investments in fuels treatments, fire suppression capabilities, and post-fire stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration in the Great Basin.

c. Seek to reduce the likelihood, size, and severity of rangeland fires by addressing the spread of cheatgrass and other invasive, non-native species.

d. Commit wildland fire management resources and assets to prepare for and respond to rangeland fires.

e. Advance the development and utilization of technologies for identifying areas of high ecological and habitat value in sagebrush-steppe ecosystems to enhance fire prevention and sage-grouse habitat protection efforts.

f. Apply science and research to improve the identification and protection of resistant and resilient sagebrush-steppe landscapes and the development of biocontrols and other tools for cheatgrass control to improve capability for long-term restoration of sagebrush-steppe ecosystems.

g. To the extent practicable, utilize locally-adapted seeds and native plant materials appropriate to the location, conditions, and management objectives for vegetation management and restoration activities, including strategic sourcing for acquiring, storing, and utilizing genetically-appropriate seeds and other plant materials native to the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem.

h. Encourage efforts to expedite processes, streamline procedures, and promote innovations that can improve overall rangeland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efficiency and effectiveness.

i. Explore opportunities to pilot new strategies to reduce the threat of invasive, non-native plant species and rangeland fire to sagebrush-steppe ecosystems and greater sage-grouse conservation, including enhanced use of veteran fire crews and youth conservation teams, and efforts to further public-private partnerships to expand capacity for improved fire management.

j. Establish protocols for monitoring the effectiveness of fuels management, post-fire, and long-term restoration treatments and a strategy for adaptive management to modify management practices or improve land treatments when necessary.

Sec. 6 **Rangeland Fire Task Force**. A Rangeland Fire Task Force (Task Force) is hereby established and is chaired by the Deputy Secretary. Members of the Task Force shall include: Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget, Assistant Secretary – Land and Minerals Management, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Assistant Secretary – Water and Science, and Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs. The Task Force will do the following:

a. Develop a science-based strategy to reduce the threat of large-scale rangeland fire to habitat for the greater sage-grouse and the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem through effective rangeland management (including the appropriate use of livestock), fire prevention, fire suppression, and post-fire restoration efforts at a landscape scale.

b. Conduct a comprehensive review of the existing programs, policies, and practices associated with current efforts to prevent, suppress, and restore rangeland fire-impacted sagebrush-steppe, including the outcomes of the recent rangeland fire conference *The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Fire in the Great Basin*, and utilize the experience of the conference participants; and the expertise of the practitioners and senior policy groups in this effort.

c. Seek input from the U.S. Geological Survey and individual Bureau Fire Directors in the Department; the U.S. Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the

Department of Agriculture; various state wildland fire agencies and programs; the offices of the governors in the states most threatened by rangeland fire, including California, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, and Idaho, as well as the Western Governors' Association; affected American Indian tribes; scientists; and local, community-based fire organizations such as the rangeland fire protection associations, weed collaboratives, native seed production organizations, soil and water conservation districts, and various stakeholder groups with interest and expertise in rangeland fire prevention, suppression, and rangeland restoration.

Sec. 7 **Implementation Plan, Deliverables and Report.**

a. No later than February 1, 2015, the Task Force will provide a detailed plan for implementing this Order that includes a process for tribal consultation.

b. The Task Force will provide to the Secretary two reports that outline actions that can be accomplished prior to the onset of the 2015 Western fire season, actions that can be accomplished prior to the onset of the 2016 Western fire season, and actions that will require a longer period for implementation. At a minimum, these actions are to include the following: (i) Design and implement comprehensive, integrated fire response plans for the Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool evaluation areas in the Great Basin subject to fire and invasive species; (ii) Provide clear direction on the prioritization and allocation of fire management resources and assets; (iii) Expand the focus on fuels reduction opportunities and implementation; (iv) Fully integrate the emerging science of ecological resilience into design of habitat management, fuels management, and restoration projects; (v) Review and update emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation policies and programs to integrate with long-term restoration activities; (vi) Commit to multi-year investments for the restoration of sagebrush-steppe ecosystems, including consistent long-term monitoring protocols and adaptive management for restored areas; (vii) Implement large-scale experimental activities to remove cheatgrass and other invasive annual grasses through various tools; (viii) Commit to multi-year investments in science and research; and (ix) Develop a comprehensive strategy for acquisition, storage, and distribution of seeds and other plant materials.

c. No later than March 1, 2015, the Task Force will present its initial report on actions that will be implemented prior to the 2015 Western fire season. Individual bureaus are also encouraged to take immediate action to implement improvements within their respective areas of responsibility before the initial report is issued.

d. No later than May 1, 2015, the Task Force will present its final report on activities that will be implemented prior to the 2016 Western fire season, and longer term actions to implement the policy and strategy set forth in this Order, including to ensure continued implementation of approved actions associated with the strategy.

Sec. 8 **Implementation**. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for implementing all aspects of this Order. This responsibility may be delegated as appropriate. This Order does not alter or affect any existing duty or authority of individual Assistant Secretaries or bureaus.

Sec. 9 **Effect of the Order**. This Order is intended to improve the internal management of the

Department. This Order and any resulting report or recommendations are not intended to, and do not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

Sec. 10 **Expiration Date**. This Order is effective immediately. It will remain in effect until its provisions are converted to the Departmental Manual, or until it is amended, superseded or revoked, whichever occurs first.

Sally Jewell

Secretary of the Interior

Date: JAN 5 2015

Secretarial Order Questions and Answers

January 6, 2015

Q: Why take this action?

A: We are at a critical juncture on the western rangelands regarding the preservation of important sage-steppe ecosystems and particularly the repeating cycle of wildfire and the spread of invasive species such as cheatgrass. It is vitally important for local economies, public land users and our natural resources that we get a better handle on this situation and stem the spread of invasives, which will aid in reducing the damage and threats caused by wildfire.

Q: Is this being driven entirely by the potential listing of the sage-grouse as endangered?

A: Stemming the loss of sage-grouse habitat and averting a listing is the centerpiece. But there also are some 350 species of plants and wildlife that depend on these rangeland environments. There are a variety of businesses and livelihoods, from ranchers to recreational interests, who also depend on healthy rangelands.

Q: Didn't the recently-passed Omnibus legislation delay a decision about listing the sage-grouse?

A: Regardless what happens in other arenas, conditions on the ground remain the same. We are at a point where serious and significant actions are required if we are to stem the tide toward economic and natural resource losses, and restore and preserve the health of the landscape and rangeland ecosystems, particularly in the Great Basin.

Q: Is this Secretarial Order a result of November's Wildfire and Sage-Grouse conference in Boise?

A: The conference in Boise brought together leading scientists, policy-makers and fire operations practitioners. Those few days really highlighted the challenges we face, the conditions on the land, and the fact that we have a lot of good science to implement on the ground. This Secretarial Order builds on good work already done, strengthens our efforts as a natural resource priority and moves us toward major actions toward improving the conditions in the field.

Q: Don't you already contain more than 90 percent of wildfire starts within the first day, before they get large. Can you achieve a higher percentage?

A: Depending on the year and area, the average is more in the range of 95 to 97 percent of fires caught quickly; and this is due to our own fire crews, as well as to the agreements and partnerships we have with rural fire departments and rangeland fire protection associations. But still, these fires move fast and create a path for cheatgrass to further encroach.

In some areas the fire regime, or frequency of fire occurrence, has gone from once every 60 to 100 years to once every 3 to 5 years. This repeated cycle of fire leading to invasives,

which are flammable and lead to more fire, takes its toll over time and needs to be interrupted.

Q: What will the Task Force established by the Order do?

A: The Task Force, chaired by the Deputy Secretary, is composed of high-level policy and management leaders. This group is charged with designing a path forward, looking at using science and best management practices to effect some real change for the better on the ground. They will look at what actions can be implemented prior to the 2015 fire season and longer-term actions that might be implemented beginning in 2016. The group will have reporting dates for progressively more detailed direction beginning February 1 this year; another March 1 and a final reporting due date of May 1.

Q: Aren't these rangeland health and habitat issues broader than just the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management?

A: Yes, and this work and efforts to design and implement improvements will require increased cooperation, collaboration and partnering with private and governmental entities at the local, state, county and regional levels. But this Secretarial Order provides the leadership and direction for accomplishing much on the ground.

Q: Does this portend a move from protecting property to making natural resources a priority?

A: The safety and protection of firefighters' and citizens' lives will always be our top priority. With this Order, we will see more funds for fuels management projects go into areas of critical concern. We will also see a more strategic movement of crews, as conditions allow, into rangeland areas of high priority to conduct fuels projects and fight wildfires.

We have long stressed the need for homeowners and communities to take necessary measures to better protect their homes and properties from wildfire and we will continue to educate and assist in those efforts.

Q: Haven't fire programs been working on improving the response to wildfire in sage-grouse areas for several years; what makes this different?

A: There have been tremendous strides made, particularly on the operations side, from how they are dispatched and respond to these fires; the equipment they use and more. We hope to fine-tune those best management practices even further, but more so to make significant strides in post fire rehabilitation and restoration efforts. We believe the science exists to do so and we are working to apply that science on the ground.

GBR_0000242

Q: **How much land did BLM's fuels program treat for invasive species in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in FY 2014 and how much did it cost?**

State	Acres of treatments of invasive species funded by the BLM fuels program – accomplished in FY14*	Amount spent in FY14*
CA	876	$0
CO	1,892	$256,600
ID	56,675	$3,416,350
MT	6,624	$498,525
NV	10,829	$755,867
OR	11,045	$123,000
UT	20,213	$419,500
WY	4,808	$288,750
Total	112.962	$5,758,592

*Source for data is the National Fire Plan Operations & Reporting System (NFPORS).

Q: What has BLM done to prevent fire is Greater Sage-Grouse habitat?

A: A recent statistical analysis showed that 28% of all fires that burn sage-grouse habitat are human-caused. In 2014, BLM used Fire Prevention Teams in Idaho, Oregon and Washington which incorporated habitat conservation messages into public education and outreach efforts.

In addition, the BLM completed fuel treatments to reduce wildfire impacts to sage-grouse habitat and promote habitat conservation. Treatments mainly focused on building and maintaining fuel breaks (14,000 acres), reducing conifer encroachment (112,000 acres), and treating invasive species to reduce wildfire hazard (112,000 acres).

State	Fuel treatment acres on BLM lands to conserve sage grouse habitat accomplished in FY14*
CA	7,010
CO	3,390
ID	77,355
MT	10,622
NV	23,001
OR	51,979
UT	57,222
WY	8,449
Total	239,028

*Source for data is NFPORS. Including: (1) treatments in sagebrush to address conifer encroachment; (2) fuel breaks; and (3) treatments to address invasive species.

In California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Montana, cumulative investments by BLM for weed treatments in 2012-2014 have ranged from $5.7 million to $7.3 million.

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Q: How much Greater Sage-Grouse habitat managed by the BLM has been burned?

A: Millions of acres of sage-grouse habitat on BLM lands have been burned in the past few years. The 2012 fire season was quite active:

2012 – 1,994,718
2013 – 251,473
2014 – 314,969 (as of FY end - 9/28/2014)

Q: What is BLM doing to restore Greater Sage-Grouse habitat after a fire?

The BLM plans to stabilize and rehabilitate hundreds of thousands of acres of land that were burned during the 2014 fire season. These treatments may be implemented through FY17:

State	Stabilization acres planned treatment*	Costs	Rehabilitation acres planned treatment*	Costs
CA	9,478	$313,373	22,676	$87,120
CO	100	$10,000	324	$43,122
ID	57,464	$1,621,273	38,553	$227,279
NV	26,266	$2,101,265	30,146	$942,135
OR/WA	249,541	$7,859,303	134,433	$11,888,137
UT	9,586	$896,014	3592	$40,000
TOTAL	352,435	$12,801,228	229,724	$13,227,793

*Source for data is NFPORS and the Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation System (ESRS). Multiple treatments may occur on the same acres.

DRAFT

Secretarial Order; Themes and Talking Points

Themes

- The Department of the Interior is entrusted with overseeing the management of federal public lands for the benefit of current and future generations, as well as the protection and recovery of imperiled species of flora and fauna and the ecosystems upon which they depend.
- The Bureau of Land Management, a bureau within the Department, manages 245 million acres of public land, more than any other agency, including more than half the sage-steppe ecosystem providing critical habitat for sage-grouse.
- The Department and the BLM recognize that frequent range fires and increasing spread of invasive species such as cheatgrass are among the leading threats to sage-steppe ecosystem health, and the preservation of sage-grouse habitat and local, state and regional economies.
- The Department and BLM also recognize that economic and resource issues and solutions regarding the preservation of sage-grouse habitat cross land ownership jurisdictions and public and private landscapes; and effective progress will require close cooperation and collaboration among all economic and natural resource interests.
- We are at a critical juncture regarding the condition of the Great Basin landscape and the Department will take aggressive and science-based action to stem the spread of invasive species and reduce the adverse effects of rangeland fire.

Talking Points

- The Secretarial Order provides direction for enhanced policies and strategies to prevent and suppress rangeland fire, to address the accelerated spread of invasive species such as cheatgrass and to restore sagebrush landscapes damaged by fire and invasives separately and together.
- The elements of the path forward, as set forth in the Order are essential for conserving sage-grouse habitat as well as other wildlife species and economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, associated with the critically important sagebrush-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin region.
- Although the recently passed Omnibus legislation delays a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision whether or not to list the sage-grouse as endangered, originally scheduled for September this year, the conditions on the ground have not changed, nor has the Department's plan to aggressively pursue solutions and improvements across the Western landscape.
- The Secretarial Order establishes a Rangeland Fire Task Force, chaired by the Deputy Secretary and including top Department managers, to accomplish specific objectives prior to

the 2015 fire season. These objectives, as outlined in the Order, provide an urgent and detailed response to the need for action in addressing deteriorating conditions on the land and related to sage-steppe ecosystems, fire and fuels management, and sage-grouse habitat.

- The Order directs actions that build upon the experience, success and best management practices of addressing rangeland fire prevention, suppression and restoration of the sage-steppe ecosystem.

- The Order also directs improved coordination, collaboration and partnering with local, state, tribal and regional efforts to address rangeland fire and invasives threats at a landscape level.

- The potential economic impacts at local, state and regional levels should the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list the sage-grouse as endangered, with accompanying required protections, necessitate urgent and aggressive action from all interests to improve conditions on the land and reduce the threats from rangeland fire and invasive species.

- The Secretarial Order is a bold step forward to address the increasing threat of rangeland fire and associated invasive species; and to better protect and preserve livelihoods in and dependent upon ranching, outdoor recreation and others, as well as habitats for not only sage-grouse, but for more than 350 species of plants and animals depending on the sage-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin.

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From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2014 4:29 PM
To: Melvin (Joe) Tague; Randall Sharp; Brent Ralston; Joan Suther
Cc: Quincy Bahr; Matthew Magaletti; Kathryn Stangl; David Batts
Subject: Application of RDFs...ect.
Attachments: GRSG7 - Draft GRSG Mandatory BMP_06112012.docx

Hi All –
In reviewing the Utah Draft Proposed Plan, I found some language that I believe we should all be using concerning RDFs. If you recall from about two years ago, we had a NPT Guidance under GRSG7 entitled "Mandatory Implementation-Level Decisions and Best Management Practices" . I attached a draft of this guidance, but can't get into the AR sharedrive that has the final. Anyway – there was later direction that turned the NTT BMPs into RDFs **for all but locatable minerals**. Along with the GRSG Guidance was a discussion about what if the RDF is not reasonable or applicable. We agreed that in the implementation level NEPA document that we would describe why a specific RDF may not be reasonable or applicable for the specific situation. We need to get this clarification into our planning documents, or we will be doing amendments every time we deviate from an RDF. I have not seen this described in any of the Great Basin draft PPs except for in Utah during my review.

Under ROWs Utah has:

ROW Required Design Features
In PPMA, for new permits/ROWs or re-authorizations, apply the following RDFs at the site-level unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
- An alternative design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
- 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.

Under non-energy leasables, Utah has this language:

In PPMA, for existing non-energy leasable mineral leases, apply the applicable solid minerals RDFs (Appendix I, Best Management Practices for Locatable Minerals and Required Design Features for Other Solid Minerals) and Fluid Minerals RDFs (Appendix J, Required Design Features for Fluid Minerals) when permitting site-specific projects on the lease unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;

- 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.

Under Locatable Minerals Utah has (notice the difference because it is for locatables):

In PPMA, apply the BMPs identified in Appendix E (of the NTT report) (included as Appendix I of this LUPA/EIS), to the extent allowable by law, unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
- 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.

Under fluid mineral leased estate he has the following (also a bit different):

In PPMA, the RDFs identified in Appendix J and Appendix L would be attached as mandatory COAs during development of a lease, unless at least one of the following can be demonstrated in the NEPA analyses associated with the specific project:

- A specific design feature is documented to not be applicable to the site-specific conditions of the project/activity;
- A proposed design feature or BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;
- 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.

Although in the Utah Wildfire section it only references the RDFs in Appendix H…..I think that the same language needs to be used for the Fire RDFs as well.

Perhaps something you all can discuss during next week's PL call?!!

Happy Weekend to All….
Lauren

GRSG7

Mandatory Implementation-Level Decisions and Best Management Practices

A number of the conservation measures drafted by the NTT are not measures typically adopted in RMPs; rather, they are usually considered at the implementation stage. The NTT report included a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and included a number of conservation measures making applicable BMPs mandatory for consideration in BLM's land use planning process. Whether described as "Mandatory Conditions of Approval" or "Mandatory Best Management Practices" or "Design Features" or "Standards and Guidelines" an RMP can make such measures mandatory.

There have been a number of questions about whether BMPs and other similar measures can be made mandatory in a land use plan. There has been recent precedent in other BLM large-scale EISs for BMPs to be made mandatory. The Solar Programmatic EIS (PEIS) makes BMPs mandatory by referring to them as "design features." These design features are mitigation measures incorporated into the alternatives to avoid or reduce adverse impacts. As stated in the Solar PEIS, "When incorporated into BLM's program in the Record of Decision (ROD), the following proposed design features will be required to be applied to all solar energy applications submitted to the BLM for consideration. Because of site-specific circumstances, some features may not apply to some projects (e.g., a resource is not present on a given site) and/or may require slight variations from what is described in the PEIS (e.g., a larger or smaller protective area). Applicants will be required to discuss any proposed variations with BLM staff. All variations in design features will require appropriate analysis and disclosure as part of future project authorizations. It is anticipated that variations in the design features presented will be approved in very limited circumstances. Those design features that do not apply to a given project will need to be described as part of the project file along with an appropriate rationale. Additional mitigation measures may be identified and required during individual project development and environmental review."

BMPs, Conditions of Approval, and other similar measures can be and have been included in a number of other past RMPs. FWS will only consider conservation measures that are a mandatory component of an RMP to be "regulatory mechanisms" that FWS will consider in the ESA listing process. The RMPs that result from the Greater Sage-Grouse RMP Amendment EISs should differentiate between the pure land use planning decisions and the implementation-level decisions, but including the implementation-level decisions will provide a greater level of regulatory certainty that may preclude the need for FWS to list the Greater Sage-Grouse under the ESA. Therefore, BMPs and implementation-level decisions should be made mandatory wherever feasible in the Greater Sage-Grouse RMP Amendment EISs and in ongoing RMP amendments and/or revisions in Greater Sage-Grouse habitat.

An additional example of this concept is being considered in the Montana Billings Draft RMP Revision with an appendix and language similar to the Solar PEIS introducing a process by which occasional exceptions would be made where justified.

DRAFT

Decision: Various plans may address this with different language derivations or approaches but it's agreed to that the revisions and amendments would include a sufficient description such that the FWS, as determined through discussions with them, has enough assurance of implementation that they would be able to 'count' the description of them in the revisions and amendment in their 2015 decision.

DRAFT

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Friday, February 06, 2015 9:44 AM
To: Joan Suther; Quincy Bahr; Jonathan Beck
Cc: Matthew Magaletti; Michael Hildner
Subject: Fwd: SSS 1 - 3 Language
Attachments: Sage Grouse Actions from Nevada.docx

Hi Joan, Quincy, and Jon:
This is what Nevada is putting in our SSS Section so that we don't have to repeat these actions over and over again.
We have also included direction on how to apply these actions under every resource section. We provided an example for you as well.
Hope this might help you as you move forward.

Sent from my iPhone
Lauren

Sent from my iPhone
Lauren

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Gower, Peter" <pgower@blm.gov>
> **Date:** February 6, 2015 at 9:41:45 AM PST
> **To:** Lauren Mermejo <lmermejo@blm.gov>, Randall Sharp <sharphay@att.net>
> **Cc:** Peter Gower <peter.gower@empsi.com>
> **Subject: SSS 1 - 3 Language**
>
> See attached

Sage Grouse Actions from Nevada/NE California ADPP

Objective SSS 4: In PHMA and GHMA, apply the concept of "avoid, minimize, and mitigate" for all anthropogenic disturbance not already excluded or closed, so as to avoid adverse effects on GRSG and its habitat. The first priority would be to avoid new disturbance. Where avoidance is not feasible, the scond priority would be to minimize and mitigate any new disturbance.

Action SSS-1: In PHMA and GHMA, work with the proponent/applicant, whether pursuant to a valid existing right or not, and use the following screening criteria to avoid effects of the proposed anthropogenic activity on GRSG habitat:*

a) First priority: locate project/activity outside of PHMA and GHMA.

b) Second priority: if the project/activity cannot be placed outside of PHMA and GHMA, locate the surface-disturbing activities in non-habitat areas first, and then in the least suitable habitat for GRSG.

- In non-habitat, ensure the project/activity would not create a barrier to movement and/or connectivity between seasonal habitats and populations.

c) Third priority: co-locate the project/activity adjacent to or within the footprint of existing infrastructure

*The screening criteria would not be applicable to vegetation treatments being conducted to enhance GRSG habitat.

Action SSS-2: In PHMA, the following conditions would be met in order to minimize and mitigate any effects on GRSG and its habitat from the project/activity:**

a) For BLM land in the state of Nevada only, the following Disturbance Management Protocol (DMP) is intended to provide for a 3% limitation on disturbance, except in situations where a biological analysis indicates a net conservation gain to the species.

New development/activity would not exceed the 3% disturbance cap protocol at either the BSU and project scale (see Appendix XXXX) unless a technical team described below determines that new or site-specific information indicates the project could occur without significant impacts to GRSG or that the project could be modified to result in a net conservation gain [PG1] at the

BSU level. Factors considered by the team will include GRSG abundance and trends, habitat amount and quality, extent of project disturbance, location and density of existing disturbance, project design options and other biological factors.

Any exceptions to the disturbance cap 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 NDOW, the USFWS, and the BLM unanimously find that the proposed action satisfies the conditions stated in the above paragraph. Such finding shall initially be made by the technical team, which consists of a 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 BLM State Director, USFWS State Ecological Services Director and NDOW Director for final resolution. In the event their recommendation is not unanimous to grant the exception, the exception will not be granted.

b) For BLM land in the state of California only, manage land resource uses not to exceed the 3% disturbance cap in PHMA (See **Appendix XX** (Disturbance Appendix)).

c) New project/activity would not result in any of the adaptive management hard triggers being reached (see Appendix XXXX).

d) The project/activity with associated mitigation would result in an overall net conservation gain to GRSG (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework).

e) 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 (e.g., due to the site limitations or engineering considerations). Economic considerations

such as increased costs do not render and RDF as not applicable;

- An alternative RDF/BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;

- A specific RDF/BMP would provide no additional protection to GRSG or its habitat.[PG2]

f) 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[PG3] .

g) Apply seasonal restrictions of active and pending GRSG leks during the period specified below to manage discretionary surface disturbing activities and uses on public lands to prevent disturbance to GRSG during seasonal life cycle periods as follows:

- In breeding habitat within four (4) miles [PG4] of active and pending GRSG leks from March 1 through June 30:
    - Lek: March 1- May 15
    - Lek Hourly Restrictions: 6pm – 9am
    - Nesting: April 1-June 30
- Brood-rearing habitat from May 15 to September 15
    - Early: May 15-June 15
    - Late: June 15-Sept 15
- Winter habitat from November 1-February 28

The seasonal dates may be modified due to documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climactic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long and/or

heavy winter) in coordination with NDOW and CDFW, in order to better protect GRSG.

Authorizations/permits would limit noise from discretionary activities (during construction, operation, or maintenance) to not exceed 10 decibels above ambient sound levels at least 0.25 miles from active and pending leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during the breeding season. See **Appendix E**, Summary of Noise-Monitoring Recommendations.

**The conditions would not be applicable to vegetation treatments being conducted to enhance GRSG habitat with exceptions for seasonal restrictions and noise.

Action SSS-3: In GHMA, the following conditions would be met in order to minimize and mitigate any effects on GRSG or its habitat from the project/activity:***

a) New project/activity in GHMA would not result in any of the adaptive management hard triggers being reached (see Appendix XXXX).

b) The project/activity with associated mitigation within GHMA would result in an overall net conservation gain to GRSG (see Appendix _____, Mitigation Framework).

c) 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 (e.g., due to the site limitations or engineering considerations). Economic considerations such as increased costs do not render and RDF as not applicable;

- An alternative RDF/BMP is determined to provide equal or better protection for GRSG or its habitat;

- A specific RDF/BMP would provide no additional protection to GRSG or its habitat.

d) 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[PG5] .

e) Apply seasonal restrictions of active and pending GRSG leks during the period specified below to manage discretionary surface disturbing activities and uses on public lands to prevent disturbance to GRSG during seasonal life cycle periods as follows:

- In breeding habitat within four (4) miles of active and pending GRSG leks from March 1 through June 30:
  - Lek: March 1- May 15
  - Lek Hourly Restrictions: 6pm – 9am
  - Nesting: April 1-June 30
- Brood-rearing habitat from May 15 to September 15
  - Early: May 15-June 15
  - Late: June 15-Sept 15
- Winter habitat from November 1-February 28

The seasonal dates may be modified due to documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climactic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long and/or heavy winter) in coordination with NDOW and CDFW, in order to better protect GRSG.

Authorizations/permits would limit noise from discretionary activities (during construction, operation, or maintenance) to not exceed 10 decibels above ambient sound levels at least 0.25 miles from active and pending leks from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during the breeding season. See **Appendix E**, Summary of Noise-Monitoring Recommendations.

***The conditions would not be applicable to vegetation treatments being conducted to enhance GRSG habitat with exceptions for seasonal restrictions and noise.

Example of reference back to Sage Grouse Objective and Actions:

Action LR LUA 1: Apply Objective SSS 4 and Actions SSS 1 through SSS 3 when reviewing and analyzing projects/activities proposed within GRSG habitat.

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1.1

From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 12:47 PM
To: Poirier, Gwenan
Cc: Murdock, Pamela; Kyle Cowan; Richard Putnam
Subject: Re: Additional SG language

Hi Everyone, I forwarded Pam's concern with the language to our WO folks that have been involved with the FIAT intensively, but I have not heard back from them. Since we are being directed by WO to include the language as is into all of our GRSG plans, I do not think their is any flexibility to modify the language. But as you pointed out Gwenan, there is wiggle room in the language to use any principles to address conifer encroachment, not just those found in the FIAT report. That is why the Rocky Mountain planning efforts were directed to use different drop-in language then what is being required of the Great Basin planning efforts. I do know that the Rockies will eventually have to do something "FIAT like" in the future (nothing from my end indicates that this will happen anytime soon), but this language in the RMPs would accommodate that.

If I hear back from DC - I will make sure to inform you all.

Thanks,

On Tue, Feb 10, 2015 at 4:27 PM, Poirier, Gwenan <gpoirier@blm.gov> wrote:

> Hi Pam,
>
> Thanks for asking this question. I too get concerned when FIAT gets referenced in Rocky Mountain planning efforts. Much of the Rocky Mountain side of the sage-grouse was excluded early on in the FIAT report, due to our "resiliency" and "resistance". However, I've been told that the WO wants to see consistency in sage-grouse planning effort language. So non-FIAT sage-grouse habitat areas are being asked/told to include language that refers to FIAT or FIAT like things.
>
> The excerpt you included in your email does give wiggle room - "...analysis and principles like those included in the FIAT report..." It doesn't say "FIAT" analysis and principles, it says analysis and principles "like those included in FIAT".
>
> I've heard Rocky Mountain side might eventually have to do something "FIAT like"; seems to me if our highest pressure is development, our FIAT like thing would be about that. So far, I haven't seen or heard anything about what a "FIAT like" thing would look like or be focused on for the Rocky Mountain side.
>
> Maybe Matt could provide some insight for us from his "regular job", especially regarding the wording inclusion.
>
> Thanks again for keeping me in this loop,
> Gwenan

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
Gwenan Poirier
BLM CO, WY and NE
Fire Planner
303-239-3689 Work
303-945-6709 Cell
gpoirier@blm.gov
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

On Mon, Feb 9, 2015 at 12:07 PM, Murdock, Pamela <pmurdock@blm.gov> wrote:

Gwenan,

I wanted to check with you on the applicability of incorporating the following into all our Wyoming plans:

For Rocky Mountain

"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 principles like those included in the FIAT report (Chambers et. al., 2014) and other ongoing modeling efforts to address conifer encroachment will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated."

Primarily my concern is with referencing the FIAT report since that is Great Basin centric. Are we going to create problems for ourselves by referencing the FIAT? Thanks.

--
Pamela Murdock
Senior Resource Advisor
BLM Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne WY 82003
307-775-6259 (work)
307-274-5548 (mobile)

--

Matthew Magaletti
Rocky Mountain Region Sage Grouse Coordinator (Acting)
Bureau of Land Management
(307) 775-6329

IDMT_PUB_6597
3.3
05/15/2015

Ralston, Brent E

From: Mermejo, Lauren L
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2012 9:55 AM
To: Amme, Brian C; Sovey, Sally J; Bahr, Quincy F; Ralston, Brent E; Kosic, Arlene D; Thompson, John H
Cc: Munson, Johanna; Goodman, Jonathan D; Stout, Joseph R
Subject: More Comments from Solicitor Incorporated into the MOU_Template_ Sent.2
Attachments: 4 5 12_GSG_MOU_Template_ Sent.2.docx

Sorry everyone –
Just got some more comments from Aaron Moody who received comments from the NW Solicitors on the MOU. I have incorporated them and highlighted them in turquoise….they are all at the end of the MOU and under "h" and "i" and the signature part (under "i", they just rewrote the paragraph)
……their review said that this language needs to be in all MOUs as standard language.
I have also talked with Dave Goodman about ensuring that it gets into any future templates.
NO MORE CHANGES!!!! Lets move forward now!

Thanks and sorry again!

Lauren Mermejo
Great Basin Sage-grouse Project Manager
BLM – Nevada State Office, Reno
775 861-6580 (Office)
775 223-2770 (Blackberry)

GBR_0000366

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

(NAME OF COUNTY)

If approp.: BY AND THROUGH THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AND

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BY AND THROUGH THE APPLICABLE BLM STATE DIRECTOR

Commented [c1]: Where the involved County only has Forest Service lands and not BLM, the appropriate Forest Service official should also sign

REGARDING

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE NATIONAL PLANNING STRATEGY, [INSERT SUB-REGION]

Memorandum of Understanding
Between (Name of COUNTY/COUNTY COMMISSION)
and the Bureau of Land Management, (insert State Office)

Parties to and Purpose for this Document: This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into between (Name) County and the United States Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) by and through the (INSERT STATE) Director (BLM), for the purpose of cooperating in conducting an environmental analysis and preparing the draft and final programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for amendment of land use plans to incorporate conservation measures for the Greater sage-grouse. This unprecedented planning effort has been split into two regions: a Rocky Mountain Region and a Great Basin Region. The Rocky Mountain Region will conduct numerous EISs which include land use plans in the states of Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, and portions of western Utah and western Montana. The Great Basin Region will also conduct multiple EISs which include land use plans in California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and portions of eastern Utah and eastern Montana.

The BLM is the lead agency assigned to complete the programmatic EISs, and the US Forest Service (FS) has joined the BLM as a Cooperating Agency to include FS lands into the programmatic EIS and amendment process. The FS will be amending their Land and Resource Management Plans (LMPs) under the same EISs that BLM will be amending their Resource Management Plans (RMPs) or Management Framework Plans (MFPs).

Within the Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Regions, sub-regional interdisciplinary teams (IDTs) will be developing the individual EISs. Based on the identified threats to the Greater sage-grouse and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (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.

The (Name) Sub-regional effort, for which you requested to participate as a Cooperating Agency, will produce one state-wide programmatic EIS that will amend up to (insert #) BLM RMPs/MFPs, and (insert #) FS LMPS.

1. **Cooperating Agency:** This MOU establishes (Name) County as a Cooperating Agency in the environmental impact analysis and documentation process and establishes procedures through which the (Name) County will participate with the BLM (and/or the FS) to help develop the (Insert Name) Sub-region EIS. The (Name) County has been identified as a Cooperating Agency because it has special expertise concerning management information within the (Name) County Plan as well as with the social and economic baseline information within the County that may be used in the environmental impact statement relating to the Greater sage-grouse habitat conservation strategy (40 CFR 1508.5). This MOU applies specifically to the (INSERT the County Name within the SUB-REGION)

Commented [MLL2]: This sentence is just suggested language….each MOU may have more specific information tied to the County and may be crafted to explain that here.

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2. **Authorities:** This MOU has been prepared under the authority of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 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).

3. **Background:** In March 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 RMPs/MFPs and FS 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 Greater sage-grouse conservation measures in existing BLM RMPs/MFPs and selected FS LMPs, and consider conservation measures, as appropriate, in proposed RMP/MFP 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/MFPs and LMPs and alternative conservation measures, and analyze how incorporation of these conservation measures into RMPs/MFPs 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/MFPs and LMPs would apply ONLY to federal land and minerals.

4. **Term of MOU:** This MOU will commence upon the date of the last signature made by the

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duly authorized representatives of the parties to this MOU, and will remain in full force and effect until terminated, as described in item 9i below.

5. **Responsibilities of (Name) County:** In agreement with the time frames identified in Attachment A for this planning effort, (Name) County will participate in the environmental analysis and documentation process where appropriate given the County's special expertise. The schedule and preliminary timeframe for the respective stages of EIS development is included in Attachment A.

(Name) County will have the opportunity to provide review and input on draft documents prepared during the EIS process prior to public release of those materials. The IDT leader may, at any time during the effective term of this MOU, request records and/or information by contacting the (Name) County point of contact identified in Section 9k below.

6. **Responsibilities of the BLM:** In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.5, the BLM is the lead agency. The point of contact for the preparation of this EIS is as designated in Section 9k of this MOU. The BLM will keep the (Name) County representative apprised of current events and timeframes in relation to this EIS. The BLM will consider and may use (Name) County input and proposals to the maximum extent possible and consistent with responsibilities as lead agency as described in 40 CFR 1501.5. BLM may incorporate information provided by (Name) County into the draft and final EIS, as appropriate and deemed relevant to the planning process. The BLM and FS are solely responsible for any decisions made for the planning effort. Any BLM decisions made associated with the EIS apply only to BLM-administered lands and federal mineral estate. Any FS decisions made associated with the EIS would apply only to FS land, upon adoption of the EIS under 40 CFR 1506.3.

7. **Mutual Responsibilities of the Parties:** (Name) County 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 (Name) County or BLM and other agencies involved in the EIS that may affect the environmental analyses and writing of the EIS.

Responsible parties identified in 9k serve as the MOU primary points of contact. The purpose of these points of contact is to ensure that timely and coordinated communication and exchange of information between the parties to the MOU occurs throughout the planning process.

8. **Payment:** No payment will be made to either party by the other as a result of this MOU. Each party is responsible for the costs of their participation. During the term of this MOU, should it become necessary for one party to purchase from or make payment or reimbursement to the other party, such arrangements will be covered in a separate cooperative agreement.

9. **General Provisions:**

Commented [MLL3]: This is the place where each sub-regional effort may want to spell out what their special expertise is: i.e. socio-economic baseline information and analysis.
What do we want the County to bring to the table and in what context. Based on their localized expertise, what do we need?

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a. Amendments. Either 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 authorities defined herein.

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 [INSERT #] pages, represents the entire and integrated agreement between the parties and supersedes all prior negations, representations and agreements concerning the parties' 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. (Name) County 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 between the parties to this MOU, and will benefit only 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/Confidentiality. All records or information requested of either party by the other 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. The BLM and (Name) County recognize that applicable public records laws will require release of non-exempt documents.

h. Administrative Considerations. Pursuant to 204(b) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, responsible Federal Agency officials may meet or enter into project level MOUs with officials of State, Tribal and local Governments or their designees. During such meetings and development, implementation and monitoring of such MOUs, views, information and advice are exchanged, or input relative to the implementation of Federal

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programs is obtained. Such meetings and MOUs will further the administration of intergovernmental coordination.

The meetings or MOUs referred to include, but are not limited to, meetings called for the purpose of exchanging views, information, advice or recommendations, or for facilitating any other interaction relating to intergovernmental responsibilities or administration.

Nothing in this MOU will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or legal responsibility of (Name) Country or the BLM, or as binding either (Name) County 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 (Name) County 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 BLM for planning and management of land and resource uses for any non-Federal lands or resources in the planning area. Similarly, nothing in this MOU will be construed to extend jurisdiction or decision-making authority to (Name) County for planning and management of land or resource uses on the Federal lands or mineral estates administered by the BLM. Both (Name) County and BLM will work together cooperatively and will communicate about issues of mutual concern.

Nothing in this MOU may be construed to obligate the Department of the Interior, the BLM, or the United States to any current or future expenditure of resources in advance of the availability of appropriations from Congress.

No member of or delegate to Congress shall be entitled to any share or part of this MOU, or to any benefit that may arise from it.

i. Termination: Either party may terminate this MOU upon 30 days written notice to the other party of their intention to do so. During the 30-day period, the parties will conduct negotiations to resolve any disagreement(s). If the disagreement(s), if any, have not been resolved and the party initiating the termination has not rescinded its termination in writing 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 in writing that termination be postponed for an additional 30-day period or longer while the negotiations continue; upon such request, the termination shall be postponed for the specified period.

j. Dispute Resolution: In the event of any disagreement between the parties regarding their obligations under this MOU that cannot be resolved between the parties in a reasonable time, either party may refer the disagreement to the (INSERT BLM STATE DIRECTOR NAME) to timely resolve said issue. The decision of the INSERT BLM STATE DIRECTOR NAME will be the final decision for purposes of resolving the issue.

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k. Contacts: The primary points of contact for carrying out the provisions of this MOU are:

COOPERATOR
NAME
ADDRESS

BLM
BLM Designee
BLM ADDRESS and phone

10. 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. This MOU may be executed in multiple originals or counterparts. A complete original of this MOU shall be maintained in the records of each of the parties.

(Name) County by and through:

_____ _____
NAME Date
TITLE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, by and through:

_____ _____
STATE DIRECTOR NAME Date
STATE NAME State Director

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Attachment A

Current EIS and Planning schedule, as of MOU signature:

RMP/EIS Stage	**Proposed Completion Date**
Conduct scoping and identify issues	February 28, 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;	May 30, 2014
Sign ROD	September 30, 2014 (latest date acceptable)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLWO2100000 L11100000.DQ0000.LXSISGST0000]

Notice of Availability of the Great Basin Region Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments and Final Environmental Impact Statements for the Sub-Regions of Idaho and Southwestern Montana; Nevada and Northeastern California; Oregon; and Utah

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, and the Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) have prepared Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments (LUPA) and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for planning units in Idaho, Southwestern Montana, Nevada, Northeastern California, Oregon, and Utah. There are four separate Final EISs being conducted in the Great Basin Region and this notice announces the availability of all four.

DATES: BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the BLM's and Forest Service's Proposed LUP/Final EIS. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. In accordance with 36 CFR 219.59, the Forest Service will waive its objection procedures of this subpart and instead adopt the BLM's protest procedures outlined in 43 CFR 1610.5–2.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, Oregon, and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs have been sent to affected Federal, State and local government agencies, tribal governments, and to other stakeholders and members of the public who have requested copies. Copies of the Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs are available for public inspecton at the addresses listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section. Interested persons may also review the Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs on the internet at *http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse.html.*

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail: BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, P.O. Box 71383, Washington, DC 20024–1383.

Overnight Delivery: BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, 20 M Street SE., Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *For the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS:* Jonathan Beck, BLM Idaho State Office GRSG Planning Lead, telephone 208–373–4070; address 1387 South Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709; email *jmbeck@blm.gov.*

For the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS: Lauren Mermejo, BLM Nevada State Office GRSG Project Lead, telephone 775–861–6580; address 1340 Financial Boulevard, Reno, NV 89502; email *lmermejo@blm.gov.*

For the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS: Joan Suther, BLM Oregon State Office GRSG Planning Lead, telephone 541–573–4445; address BLM Burns District, 28910 Hwy 20, West Hines, OR 97738; email *jsuther@blm.gov.*

For the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS: Quincy Bahr, BLM Utah State Office GRSG Project Lead, telephone 801–539–4122; address 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101–1345; email *qfbahr@blm.gov.*

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM and Forest Service prepared the Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse LUPAs and EISs. The Oregon LUPA/EIS was prepared solely by the BLM because there were no National Forest System lands involved. All four of these Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs address a range of alternatives focused on specific conservation measures across the range of the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG). All four of these EISs are part of a total of 15 separate EISs that make up the BLM and Forest Service National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy. These four EISs will amend the following BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) and Management Framework Plans (MFPs) and Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) in the Great Basin Region:

California

- Alturas RMP (2008)
- Eagle Lake RMP (2008)
- Surprise RMP (2008)

Idaho

- Birds of Prey NCA RMP (2008)
- Bruneau RMP revision (and existing 1983 Bruneau MFP)
- Challis RMP (1999)
- Craters of the Moon NM RMP (2006)
- Four Rivers RMP revision (and existing 1988 Cascade RMP and 1983 Kuna and Bruneau MFPs)
- Jarbidge RMP revision (and existing 1987 Jarbidge RMP)
- Lemhi RMP (1987)
- Owyhee RMP (1999)
- Pocatello RMP revision
- Shoshone-Burley RMP revision (and existing 1980 Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, 1985 Cassia, 1975 Magic, 1985 Monument, 1981 Sun Valley, and 1982 Twin Falls MFPs/RMPs)
- Upper Snake RMP revision (and existing 1983 Big Lost, 1985 Medicine Lodge, 1981 Big Desert, and 1981 Little Lost-Birch Creek MFPs/RMPs)
- Boise National Forest, LRMP (2003)
- Curlew National Grassland Management Plan, LRMP (2002)
- Caribou National Forest, Revised LRMP (2003)
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Targhee National Forest LRMP (1997)
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, Challis National Forest LRMP (1987)
- Salmon-Challis National Forest, Salmon National Forest LRMP (1988)
- Sawtooth National Forest, Revised LRMP (2003)

Montana

- Dillon RMP (2006)
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, LRMP (2009)

Nevada

- Battle Mountain RMP revision (and existing 1997 Tonopah and 1986 Shoshone-Eureka RMPs)
- Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon NCA RMP (2004)
- Carson City RMP revision (and existing 2001 Carson City Consolidated RMP)
- Elko RMP (1987)
- Ely RMP (2008)

additional management based on the NTT recommendations. This alternative emphasizes management of GRSG seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives.

The BLM and Forest Service received approximately 4,990 substantive comments, contained in 74,240 submissions during the four Draft EISs' comment periods. Based on comments received during the NEPA process, the following comment topics were frequently identified:

- General (Process/Policy);
- Lands and Realty;
- Livestock Grazing;
- Minerals and Energy;
- Predation;
- Recreation;
- Socioeconomic;
- Special Management Area Designations;
- Special Status Species (Including GRSG);
- Travel and Access Management;
- Vegetation;
- Wildland Fire Management;
- Wildlife and Fisheries.

For the Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG Proposed LUPA/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Murphy, Idaho Falls, Salmon, Pocatello, Twin Falls, and Boise in Idaho and Dillon in Montana during January 2014. For the Nevada and Northeastern California GRSG Proposed LUPA/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Cedarville and Susanville, California, and in Reno, Tonopah, Ely, Elko, and Winnemucca, Nevada in early December 2013. For the Oregon GRSG Proposed LUPA/Final EIS, the BLM conducted seven public meetings. These meetings were held in Baker City, Burns, Durkee, Jordan Valley, Lakeview, Ontario and Prineville, Oregon during January 2014. For the Utah GRSG Proposed LUPA/Final EIS, the BLM and Forest Service conducted eight public meetings. These meetings were held in Cedar City, Panguitch, Price, Randolph, Richfield, Salt Lake City, Snowville, and Vernal, Utah during November and December 2013. Comments on the Draft LUPAs/Draft EISs received from the public and internal BLM and Forest Service review were carefully considered and incorporated as appropriate into the proposed LUPAs/Final EISs. The BLM and Forest Service, via the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Management Zone Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Team, will develop a Regional Mitigation Strategy to guide the application of the mitigation hierarchy to address impacts within that Zone. The Regional Mitigation Strategy should consider any State-level GRSG mitigation guidance that is consistent with the requirements. The Regional Mitigation Strategy will be developed in a transparent manner, based on the best science available and standardized metrics.

Copies of the Idaho and Southwestern Montana GRSG Proposed LUPA/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Idaho State Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709
- BLM Boise District Office, 3948 Development Avenue, Boise, ID 83705
- BLM Owyhee Field Office, 20 First Avenue West, Marsing, ID 83639
- BLM Idaho Falls District Office, 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, ID 83401
- BLM Salmon Field Office, 1206 South Challis Street, Salmon, ID 83467
- BLM Challis Field Office, 1151 Blue Mountain Road, Challis, ID 83226
- BLM Pocatello Field Office, 4350 Cliffs Drive, Pocatello, ID 83204
- BLM Twin Falls District Office, 2536 Kimberly Road, Twin Falls, ID 83301
- BLM Shoshone Field Office, 400 West F Street, Shoshone, ID 83352
- BLM Burley Field Office, 15 East 200 South, Burley, ID 83318
- BLM Coeur d'Alene District Office, 3815 Schreiber Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
- BLM Cottonwood Field Office, 1 Butte Drive, Cottonwood, ID 83522
- BLM Montana State Office, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101
- BLM Butte District Office, 106 North Parkmont, Butte, MT 59701
- BLM Dillon Field Office, 1005 Selway Drive, Dillon, MT 59725–9431
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest Headquarters, 1405 Hollipart Drive, Idaho Falls, ID 83401
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge Supervisor's Office, 420 Barrett Street, Dillon, MT 59725
- Salmon-Challis Supervisor's Office, 1206 S. Challis Street, Salmon, ID 83467
- Boise Supervisor's Office, 1206 Vinnell Way, Suite 200, Boise, ID 83709
- Sawtooth Supervisor's Office, 2647 Kimberly Road, East, Twin Falls, ID 83301

Copies of the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Boulevard, Reno, NV 89502
- BLM Winnemucca District Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Boulevard, Winnemucca, NV 89445
- BLM Ely District Office, 702 North Industrial Way, Ely, NV 89301
- BLM Elko District Office, 3900 E. Idaho Street, Elko, NV 89801
- BLM Carson City District Office, 5665 Morgan Mill Road, Carson City, NV 89701
- BLM Battle Mountain District Office, 50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, NV 89820
- BLM California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W–1623, Sacramento, CA 95825
- BLM Alturas Field Office, 708 W. 12th Street, Alturas, CA 96101
- BLM Eagle Lake Field Office, 2950 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA 96130
- BLM Surprise Field Office, 602 Cressler Street, Cedarville, CA 96104
- Austin Ranger District, 100 Midas Canyon Road, Austin, NV 89310
- Carson Ranger District, 1536 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701
- Ely Ranger District, 825 Avenue East, Ely, NV 90301
- Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Headquarters, 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431
- Jarbidge Ranger District, 140 Pacific Avenue, Wells, NV 89835
- Modoc National Forest, 225 West 8th, Alturas, CA 96101
- Mountain City Ranger District, 2035 Last Chance Road, Elko, NV 89801
- Santa Rosa Ranger District, 1200 East Winnemucca Boulevard, Winnemucca, NV 89445
- Tonopah Ranger District, 1400 S. Erie Mian Street, Tonopah, NV 89049

Copies of the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Oregon State Office, 1220 SW. 3rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97204
- BLM Baker Resource Area Office, 3100 H Street, Baker City, OR 97814
- BLM Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, OR 97738
- BLM Lakeview District Office, 1301 S. G Street, Lakeview, OR 97630
- BLM Prineville District Office, 3050 NE. 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754
- BLM Vale District Office, 100 Oregon Street, Vale, OR 97918

Copies of the Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed LUPA/Final EIS are available for public inspection at:

- BLM Utah State Office, 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
- BLM Cedar City Field Office, 176 East D.L. Sargent Drive, Cedar City, UT 84721
- BLM Fillmore Field Office, 95 East 500 North, Fillmore, UT 84631
- BLM Kanab Field Office and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, 669 South Highway 89A, Kanab, UT 84741

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- Wells RMP (1985)
- Winnemucca RMP revision (and existing 1982 Paradise-Denio MFP and 1982 Sonoma-Gerlach RMP)
- Humboldt National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Toiyabe National Forest, LRMP (1986)

Oregon

- Andrews RMP (2005)
- Baker RMP revision (and existing 1989 Baker RMP)
- Brothers-LaPine RMP (1989)
- Lakeview RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Lakeview RMP)
- Southeastern Oregon RMP amendment (and existing 2003 Southeastern Oregon RMP)
- Steens RMP (2005)
- Three Rivers RMP (1992)
- Upper Deschutes RMP (2005)

Utah

- Box Elder RMP (1986)
- Cedar/Beaver/Garfield/Antimony RMP (1986)
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan (2000)
- House Range RMP (1987)
- Kanab RMP (2008)
- Park City MFP (1975)
- Pinyon MFP (1978)
- Pony Express RMP (1990)
- Price RMP (2008)
- Randolph MFP (1980)
- Richfield RMP (2008)
- Salt Lake District Isolated Tracts Planning Analysis (1985)
- Vernal RMP (2008)
- Warm Springs RMP (1987)
- Dixie National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Fishlake National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Uinta National Forest, Revised LRMP (2003)
- Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Revised LRMP (2003)
- Ashley National Forest, LRMP (1986)
- Manti-La Sal National Forest, LRMP (1986)

Management decisions made as a result of these Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs will apply only to BLM-administered and National Forest System lands in the planning area. The planning areas for all four EISs includes approximately 194.0 million acres of BLM, National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, State, tribal, local, and private lands located in 28 Idaho counties (Ada, Adams, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Bonneville, Butte, Camas, Caribou, Cassia, Clark, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Gem, Gooding, Jefferson, Jerome, Lemhi, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida Owyhee, Payette, Power, Twin Falls, and Washington), 7 Montana counties (Montana, Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Fremont, Clark, Madison, and Silver Bow), 16 Nevada counties (Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, Storey, Washoe, and White Pine), 5 California counties (Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Siskiyou, and Sierra), 8 Oregon counties (Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur, and Union), 24 Utah counties (Beaver, Box Elder, Cache, Carbon, Daggett, Duchesne, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Iron, Juab, Kane, Morgan, Piute, Rich, Sanpete, Sevier, Summit, Tooele, Uintah, Utah, Wasatch, Wayne, and Weber), and 2 Wyoming counties (Sweetwater and Uinta). The decision area for these Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs is defined as those BLM-administered and National Forest System lands and Federal mineral estate within the following habitat management categories:

- Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA)—Areas identified as having the highest conservation value for maintaining sustainable GRSG populations; includes breeding, late brood-rearing, and winter concentration areas.
- Important Habitat Management Area (IHMA) (applicable to Idaho only)—Areas identified as having generally moderate to high conservation value habitat and/or populations that provide a management buffer for the PHMA and to connect patches of PHMA.
- General Habitat Management Area (GHMA)—Areas of seasonal or year-round GRSG habitat outside of PHMAs.

The Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare the Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, Oregon, and Utah Greater Sage-Grouse LUPAs/EISs was published in the **Federal Register** on December 9, 2011. A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, and Utah Draft LUPAs/EISs was published in the **Federal Register** on November 1, 2013. The Oregon Draft LUPA/EIS was released to the public on November 26, 2013. Comments on the Draft LUPAs/EISs received from the public and internal BLM and Forest Service review were considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Proposed Plan.

The alternatives presented in Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs are described below:

- Alternative A would retain the current management goals, objectives and direction specified in the existing BLM RMPs and the Forest Service LRMPs.
- Alternative B is based on the conservation measures developed by the National Technical Team (NTT) planning effort in Washington Office Instructional Memorandum (IM) Number 2012–044. As directed in the IM, the conservation measures developed by the NTT must be considered and analyzed, as appropriate, through the land use planning process and NEPA by all BLM state and field offices that contain occupied GRSG habitat. Most management actions included in Alternative B would be applied to PHMA.
- Alternative C is based on a citizen groups' recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for GRSG and is applied to all occupied GRSG habitat. Alternative C would limit commodity development in areas of occupied GRSG habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. The Utah LUPA/Draft EIS combined this alternative with Alternative F (discussed below).
- Alternative D, which was identified as the Preferred Alternative in the Draft EIS, balances opportunities to use and develop the planning area and protects GRSG habitat based on scoping comments and input from Cooperating Agencies involved in the alternatives development process. Protective measures would be applied to GRSG habitat.
- Alternative E is the alternative provided by the State or Governor's offices for inclusion and analysis in the EISs. It incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies and emphasizes management of greater sage-grouse seasonal habitats and maintaining habitat connectivity to support population objectives. This alternative was identified as a co-Preferred Alternative in the Idaho and Southwestern Montana Draft EIS.
- Alternative F is also based on a citizen group recommended alternative. This alternative emphasizes improvement and protection of habitat for GRSG and defines different restrictions for PHMA and GHMA. Alternative F would limit commodity development in areas of occupied GRSG habitat, and would close or designate portions of the planning area to some land uses. This alternative does not apply to the Utah sub-regional planning effort, as it was combined with Alternative C.
- The Proposed LUPA incorporates guidance from specific State Conservation strategies, as well as

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- BLM Price Field Office, 125 South 600 West, Price, UT 84501
- BLM Richfield Field Office, 150 East 900 North, Richfield, UT 84701
- BLM Salt Lake Field Office, 2370 S. Decker Lake Boulevard, West Valley City, UT 84119
- BLM Vernal Field Office, 170 South 500 East, Vernal, UT 84078
- Ashley National Forest, 355 N. Vernal Avenue, Vernal, UT 84078
- Dixie National Forest, 1789 N. Wedgewood Lane, Cedar City, UT 84721
- Fishlake National Forest, 115 East 900 North, Richfield, UT 84701
- Manti-LaSal National Forest, 599 West Price River Drive, Price, UT 84501
- Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, 857 W. South Jordan Parkway, South Jordan, UT 84095
- United States Forest Service Intermountain Region, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401

Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs may be found in the ''Dear Reader'' Letter of the Proposed LUPAs/Final EISs and at 43 CFR 1610.5–2. All protests must be in writing and mailed to the appropriate address, as set forth in the **ADDRESSES** section above. 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 and Forest Service will consider an emailed protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM and Forest Service with such advance notifications, please direct emails to *protest@blm.gov.*

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

Authority: 36 CFR 219.59, 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10, 43 CFR 1610.2; 43 CFR 1610.5

Amy Lueders,

Acting Assistant Director, Renewable Resources & Planning.

[FR Doc. 2015–12948 Filed 5–28–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLMT001000.L16100000.DP0000. LXSS065E0000 MO# 4500079413]

Notice of Availability of the Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument Resource Management Plan Revision, Billings Field Office, Montana

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Billings planning area, including Pompeys Pillar National Monument, and by this notice is announcing its availability.

DATES: The BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the BLM's Proposed RMP/Final EIS. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument Proposed RMP/Final EIS have been sent to affected Federal, State, and local government agencies, tribal governments, and to other stakeholders and members of the public. Copies of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are available for public inspection at the following locations:

- BLM, Montana State Office and Billings Field Office, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101.

Interested persons may also review the Proposed RMP/Final EIS on the Internet at *http://on.doi.gov/1EJBdaE.*

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail: BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, P.O. Box 71383, Washington, DC 20024–1383.

Overnight Delivery: BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, 20 M Street SE., Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Sherve-Bybee, Billings and Pompeys Pillar National Monument RMP Team Leader, telephone: 406–896–5234; address: 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101; email: *billings_pompeyspillar_rmp@blm.gov.* Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The planning area includes lands within the BLM Billings Field Office's administrative boundaries, including Carbon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Wheatland, and Yellowstone Counties in Montana, and portions of Big Horn County, Montana and Big Horn County, Wyoming. The planning area includes all lands, regardless of jurisdiction, totaling approximately 10.37 million acres; however, the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under the BLM's jurisdiction. The BLM decision area is comprised of approximately 434,154 acres of the surface estate in the planning area and 889,479 acres of Federal mineral estate. The revised RMP will replace the 1984 Billings RMP, as amended. The Draft RMP/EIS was made available for public review for a 90-day period on March 29, 2013 (78 FR 19291). The Draft RMP/EIS included a series of management actions, within four management alternatives, designed to address management challenges and issues raised during scoping. These included, but were not limited to, trails and travel management, wildlife habitat management including that of the Greater Sage-Grouse, energy development (coal and oil and gas), livestock grazing, recreation, lands with wilderness characteristics, special management areas including Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range, and management of the cultural and historic resources at Pompeys Pillar National Monument. In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.7–2(b), the Notice of Availability for the Draft RMP/EIS announced a concurrent public comment period on proposed ACECs.

Comments on the Draft RMP/Draft EIS received from the public and internal BLM review were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the Proposed RMP/Final EIS which analyzes four alternatives:

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Brent Ralston

From: Lauren Mermejo
Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 9:59 AM
To: Holly Prohaska; Zaccherio, Meredith; Chad Ricklefs; Lauren L. Mermejo; Matthew Magaletti; Quincy Bahr; Joan Suther; Brent Ralston; Randall Sharp; Melvin (Joe) Tague; Derek Holmgren; Angie Adams; Johanna Munson; Sarah Shattuck; Stephen Small; Carol-Anne Garrison; Drew Vankat; Stephanie Carman; Jessica Rubado; fquamen@blm.gov; Dillon, Madelyn -FS; jmbeck@blm.gov; Glen Stein; Michael Hildner; David Batts; vherren@blm.gov
Subject: Consultation and Coordination
Attachments: USE THIS ONE Master Chapter1_2_4.docx

This is for discussion on this morning's PL call.
Lauren

GBR_0000410

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is revising the resource management plans (RMPs) for its Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Field Office (1995 RMPs; USDI BLM 1995 a, b, c, d, e, f). This Draft RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides a description of the various alternative management approaches the BLM is considering for the management of these lands along with an analysis of the potential impacts of these alternatives. The BLM will consider public comments on the alternatives and analysis as it develops a Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

In 2012, the BLM conducted an evaluation of the 1995 RMPs in accordance with its planning regulations, which require that RMPs "shall be revised as necessary based on monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan" (43 CFR 1610.5-6). This evaluation contains the conclusion that "[a] plan revision is needed to address the changed circumstances and new information that has led to a substantial, long-term departure from the timber management outcomes predicted under the 1995 RMPs" (USDI BLM 2012, p. 12). Included in this evaluation was the identification of new information related to northern spotted owls, (including new demographic studies, the Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina)*(owl recovery plan; USDI FWS 2011), and revision of critical habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (77 FR 71875)), and the BLM concluded that the EIS supporting the 1995 RMPs contains outdated analysis relative to the development of suitable habitat for the northern spotted owl (USDI BLM 2012, p. 14). From this evaluation, the BLM identified a need to modify or update management direction for most of the other resource management programs due to changed circumstances and new information.

The Planning Area

The planning area includes approximately 2.5 million acres of public land in western Oregon managed by the BLM's Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Field Office (Map 1).

Throughout this document, the BLM will use the term 'planning area' to refer to all lands within the geographic boundary of this planning effort regardless of jurisdiction. However, the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under BLM jurisdiction (including subsurface minerals). The BLM will use the term 'decision area' to refer to the lands within the planning area for which the BLM has authority to

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make land use and management decisions. In general, the BLM has jurisdiction over all BLM-administered lands (surface and subsurface) and over subsurface minerals in areas of split estate (i.e., areas where the BLM administers Federal subsurface minerals, but the surface is not owned by the BLM).

Within the western Oregon districts, three BLM-administered areas are not included in the decision area: the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (Medford District), the Upper Klamath Basin and Wood River Wetland (Klamath Falls Field Office), and the West Eugene Wetlands (Eugene District). The first two areas have independent RMPs, while the BLM is currently developing an RMP for the West Eugene Wetlands. This revision process will not alter these independent RMPs.

Planning Process

The BLM integrates its planning process with its compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), which requires that Federal agencies prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for all actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The BLM planning regulations direct: "Approval of a resource management plan is considered a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The environmental analysis of alternatives and the proposed plan shall be accomplished as part of the resource management planning process and, wherever possible, the proposed plan and related environmental impact statement shall be published in a single document" (43 CFR 1601.0-6). Therefore, the BLM presents this Draft RMP integrated with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as a single document (Draft RMP/EIS).

Preparing a RMP involves the following nine interrelated actions or steps:

1. Conduct scoping and identify issues.
2. Collect inventory data.
3. Analyze management situation.
4. Develop planning criteria.
5. Formulate alternatives.
6. Analyze effects of alternatives.
7. Select the preferred alternative; issue Draft RMP/EIS.
8. Issue Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
9. Sign Record of Decision.

The BLM is preparing a single Draft RMP/EIS and a single Proposed RMP/Final EIS for the revision of the RMPs for the Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Field Office. At this time, the BLM anticipates eventually issuing two Records of Decision/RMPs: one Record of Decision/RMP that would apply to the Salem District, the Eugene District, the Coos Bay District, and the Swiftwater Field Office of the Roseburg District, and another Record of Decision/RMP that would apply to the South River Field Office of the Roseburg District, the Medford District, and the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS will more fully address the structure of the eventual Records of Decision/RMPs.

Decision to be made

Through this effort, the BLM will decide on an approach to managing the public land it administers in western Oregon. As described in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA; 43 U.S.C, 1701(a)(2)), RMPs are tools by which "present and future use is projected." The BLM's planning regulations make clear that RMPs are a preliminary step in the overall process of managing public lands, and are "designed to guide and control future management actions and the development of subsequent, more detailed and limited scope plans for resources and uses" (43 CFR 1601.0-2).

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The major provisions of the RMPs will include the following land use plan decisions–

- Objectives for the management of BLM-administered lands and resources;
- Land use allocations relative to future uses for the purposes of achieving the various objectives; and
- Management direction that identifies where future actions may or may not be allowed and what restrictions or requirements may be placed on those future actions to achieve the objectives set for the BLM-administered lands and resources.

Through the RMPs, the BLM will determine and declare the annual productive capacity for sustained-yield timber production.[1] The annual productive capacity is the timber volume that a forest can produce continuously under the intensity of management described in the RMPs for those lands allocated for sustained-yield timber production. The BLM will make the determination and declaration of the annual productive capacity for each of the six sustained yield units, which match the five western Oregon BLM district boundaries and the western portion of the Klamath Falls Field Office in the Lakeview District. The determination of the annual productive capacity includes consideration of the objectives, land use allocations, and management direction of the RMPs, which affect the amount of timber that each of the sustained yield units can produce. Chapter 3 contains additional discussion of the determination of the annual productive capacity under Vegetation Modeling Products.

In both the 1995 RMPs and in the 2008 RMPs, the BLM identified that there would be some level of variation in the annual amount of timber offered for sale. In this plan revision process, the BLM will consider whether the plan will include some level of variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume that the BLM will offer on an annual basis or over a longer period of time. In making a decision about the extent to which the plan will identify such variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume to be offered, the BLM will take into account a number of factors, including the availability of resources and compliance with applicable law, among other agency considerations. The BLM would identify the level of variation in the amount of sustained-yield timber volume that may be offered as part of the declaration of the annual productive capacity in this RMP.

At this time, the BLM does not anticipate including any implementation decisions in the eventual Records of Decision/RMPs.[2] That is the BLM anticipates that all of the decisions in the Records of Decision/RMPs will be land use plan decisions. If the BLM elects to include some implementation decisions later in the planning process, any implementation decisions will be clearly distinguished from the land use plan decisions in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will describe the administrative remedies for both.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose and need statement describes why the BLM is revising the 1995 RMPs and what outcomes the BLM intends the RMPs to achieve. The purpose and need statement defines the range of alternatives

[1] The terms "annual productive capacity," "annual sustained yield capacity," and "allowable sale quantity" are synonymous.

[2] Implementation decisions authorize implementation of on-the-ground projects. Land use plan decisions (land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction) do not directly authorize implementation of on-the-ground projects. Land use plan decisions guide and control future implementation decisions, which can be carried out only after completion of further appropriate NEPA analysis or documentation, consultation, and decision-making processes.

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that will be analyzed in the planning process, because alternatives must respond to the purpose and need for action to be considered reasonable.

The proposed action is to revise the 1995 RMPs with land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction that best meet the purpose and need.

This plan revision process takes place against the backdrop of past planning efforts. These previous planning efforts and their supporting analyses, including the Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA/USDI 1994), the 1995 RMPs (the plans currently in effect; USDI BLM 1995 a, b, c, d, e, f), and the 2008 RMPs (which are no longer in effect; USDI BLM 2008 a, b, c, d, e, f), together with the results of the scoping process for this planning effort help to inform the BLM's discretion in determining the purpose and need for this action and to identify the scope of alternatives and impacts that need to be explored in this planning effort.

Need for the Action

The BLM conducted plan evaluations in accordance with its planning regulations, which require that RMPs "shall be revised as necessary based on monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan" (43 CFR 1610.5-6). These evaluations concluded that "[a] plan revision is needed to address the changed circumstances and new information that has led to a substantial, long-term departure from the timber management outcomes predicted under the 1995 RMPs" (USDI BLM 2012, p. 12). These evaluations also concluded that the management direction for most of the other resource management programs need to be modified or updated because of changed circumstances and new information. These evaluations concluded that changes are particularly indicated for the fisheries, aquatics, recreation, off-highway vehicle, and fire and fuels programs.

Moreover, the BLM needs to revise existing plans to replace the 1995 RMPs' land use allocations and management direction because of new scientific information and policies related to the northern spotted owl. Since the 1995 RMPs were approved, there have been analyses on the effects of land management on northern spotted owl habitat, demographic studies, and analyses of the effects of barred owls on northern spotted owls. In addition, since that time, new policies for northern spotted owls have been put in place, including a revised recovery plan and a new designation of critical habitat.

Purpose of the Action

The purpose of this proposed action is to make land use plan decisions to guide the management of BLM-administered lands.

Several of the purposes of the action are necessary for the BLM to be able to deliver a predictable supply of timber from the BLM-administered lands, based on the BLM's almost two decades of experience implementing the Northwest Forest Plan, new scientific information, and the advice of other Federal agencies, as discussed below. Harvesting timber on a sustained yield basis for the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act (O&C Act; 43 U.S.C. 1181a et seq.) purposes is required under the O&C Act. Harvesting timber on a sustained yield basis ensures that the BLM will achieve the purposes of the O&C Act, which include continuing to be able to provide, over the long-term, a sustained volume of timber within the management direction in the RMP. Declining populations of species now listed under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) have caused the greatest reductions and instability in the BLM's supply of timber in the past. Any further population declines of listed species or new species listings would likely lead to additional reductions in timber harvest. Contributing to the conservation and recovery of listed species is essential to delivering a predictable

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supply of timber. Specifically, the BLM recognizes that providing large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest and maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests are necessary components of the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl. Providing clean water is essential to the conservation and recovery of listed fish, and a failure to protect water quality would lead to restrictions that would further limit the BLM's ability to provide a predictable supply of timber. Furthermore, the O&C Act recognizes the importance of water quality; the purposes of sustained yield include, among others, "protecting watersheds and regulating stream flow." Finally, in fire-prone ecosystems in southern Oregon, the BLM must manage forests to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fires and the attendant loss of timber. These purposes require the BLM to exercise its discretion to determine how best to achieve sustained yield timber production over the long term and avoid future limitations on timber production.

Provide a Sustained Yield of Timber

The purpose of the action includes providing a sustained yield of timber. The O&C Act requires that the revested Oregon and California Railroad Grant lands and reconveyed Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands (O&C lands) be managed "for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). The O&C Act goes on to state that "[t]he annual productive capacity for such lands shall be determined and declared … [p]rovided, [t]hat timber from said lands … not less than the annual sustained yield capacity … shall be sold annually, or so much thereof as can be sold at reasonable prices on a normal market." In meeting the various requirements for managing the O&C lands, the Secretary of the Interior has discretion under the O&C Act to determine how to manage the forest to provide for permanent forest production on a sustained yield basis, including harvest methods, rotation length, silvicultural regimes under which these forests would be managed, or minimum level of harvest. In addition, the FLPMA specifically provides that if there is any conflict between its provisions and the O&C Act related to management of timber resources or the disposition of revenues from the O&C lands and resources, the O&C Act prevails (i.e., takes precedence) (43 U.S.C. 1701 note (b)). Thus, the multiple-use management direction of the FLPMA does not apply to the O&C lands that are suitable for timber production. The planning process established by the FLPMA is applicable to the O&C lands, because it is not in conflict with the O&C Act's management direction for those lands.

For the public domain lands, the FLPMA requires that public lands be managed "on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.7]). The FLPMA also requires that "the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.12]).

Conservation and Recovery of Threatened and Endangered Species

The purpose of the action includes contributing to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species within the planning area, including the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and threatened and endangered anadromous fish. The Endangered Species Act requires agencies to ensure that their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or result in the adverse modification or destruction of critical habitat. Since the adoption of the Northwest Forest Plan, BLM has recognized that additional species listings could have the effect of further limiting the BLM's ability to provide a sustained yield of timber under the O&C Act (USDA FS/USDI BLM 1994a, pp. 49-50). Using its discretion and authority under the O&C Act and the FLPMA, the BLM can direct sustained yield management of the O&C lands and public domain lands in western Oregon in a manner that contributes

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to the conservation and recovery of listed species and helps limit or avoid future listings, and thereby best ensures a permanency of timber production over the long-term, while, among other benefits of sustained yield, contributing to the economic stability of local communities.

The purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl necessarily includes maintaining a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests and maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests, based on the existing scientific information on the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl and the results of previous analyses as described below.

Large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest

Large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest have been an element of northern spotted owl conservation strategies for over two decades. Thomas et al. (1990, pp. 23-27) described that a conservation strategy for the northern spotted owl requires large blocks of nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat (i.e., suitable habitat) that support clusters of reproducing owls, distributed across a variety of ecological conditions and spaced so as to facilitate owl movement between the blocks. Courtney et al. (2004, pp. 9-11; 9-15), in the status review for the northern spotted owl, evaluated the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl and concluded that, based on existing knowledge, large contiguous blocks of suitable habitat are still necessary for northern spotted owl conservation. Culminating this confirmation of the scientific information on the conservation needs of the northern spotted owl, the owl recovery plan recommends managing for large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest (USDI FWS 2011, p. III-19).

Based on the results of previous analyses, large contiguous blocks of late-successional forest would not develop in the absence of a land use allocation reserving a network of large blocks of forest. The Supplemental EIS for the Northwest Forest Plan (USDA FS/USDI BLM 1994b, p. 2-22) explicitly required that all alternatives analyzed in detail include the allocation of a network of Late-Successional Reserves. Other previous planning efforts have considered alternatives that would not allocate such a network, including:

- Alternative A in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved no late-successional forest outside of special areas and sites occupied by listed species
- Alternative B in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved small blocks of late-successional forest
- Alternative 3 in the 2008 RMP/EIS, which would have allocated the majority of the landscape to a General Landscape Area that directed timber harvest on long rotations

For each of those alternatives, the analyses concluded that these alternatives would have resulted in less contribution to northern spotted owl conservation than alternatives that allocated a network of large blocks of forest. Notably, Alternative 3 in the 2008 RMP/EIS would have resulted in a total acreage of northern spotted owl habitat comparable to most other action alternatives, but would have failed to meet the conservation needs of the spotted owl because of the arrangement of that habitat. Overall, these previous analyses demonstrated that large, contiguous blocks of late-successional forest would not have developed under these alternatives, further demonstrating that reserving a network of large blocks of forest from programmed timber harvest is a necessary part of the purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl.

Older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests

The scientific foundation for the importance of older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests as habitat for the northern spotted owl has been clearly established. Thomas et al. (1990) described high-quality northern spotted owl habitat as older, multilayered, structurally

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complex forests characterized by large-diameter trees, high amounts of canopy cover, numerous large snags, and lots of downed wood and debris. Courtney et al. (2004, pp. 5-18), in the status review for the northern spotted owl, evaluated the existing scientific information on spotted owl habitat and confirmed that nesting, foraging and roosting habitat is associated with older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests in the Pacific Northwest. The 15-year spotted owl monitoring report concluded that the highest stand-level habitat suitability for spotted owls is provided by older, more structurally complex forests (Davis et al. 2011, p. 38).

The owl recovery plan recommends maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests. As noted in the owl recovery plan, the maintenance of older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests has scientific support at several scales: "At the scale of a spotted owl territory, Dugger et al. (in press) found an inverse relationship between the amount of old forest within the core area and northern spotted owl extinction rates from territories. At the population scale, Forsman et al. (2011) found a positive relationship between recruitment of spotted owls into the overall population and the percent cover of spotted owl NRF [nesting, roosting, and foraging] habitat within study areas" (USDI FWS 2011, p. III-67). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted that, in dry forest areas, maintaining these older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests may require active management to meet the overlapping goals of spotted owl recovery and restoration of dry forest structure, composition, and processes including fire, insects, and disease.

Previous planning efforts have considered a wide variety of approaches to the management of older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests, including:

- Alternative A in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved no late-successional forest outside of special areas and sites occupied by listed species
- The 1995 RMP, which reserved approximately 83 percent of old-growth forest
- The Proposed RMP in the 2008 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved 81percent of old-growth forest and would have deferred harvest of any forest older than 160 years old for 15 years
- Alternative E in the 1994 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved all old-growth forest
- A sub-alternative for Alternative 1 in the 2008 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved all forests older than 200 years old
- A sub-alternative for Alternative 1 in the 2008 RMP/EIS, which would have reserved all forests older than 80 years old

None of these alternative approaches defined management direction explicitly in terms of older, more structurally complex, multi-layered conifer forests, but used a variety of different terms, such as older forest, old-growth forest, late-successional forests, or a specific stand age. Nevertheless, these different management approaches would have resulted in the maintenance of differing amount of older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests. Those analyses demonstrated that alternatives that would have maintained more older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests would have maintained more northern spotted owl habitat and would have provided better conditions for northern spotted owl movement between large blocks of habitat than alternatives that would have maintained less older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests.

The existing science clearly establishes the importance of older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests as northern spotted owl habitat; the owl recovery plan recommends the maintenance of older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests; and the results of previous analyses demonstrate that maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered

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conifer forests would contribute to meeting conservation needs of the northern spotted owl. Therefore, maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest is a necessary part of the purpose of contributing to the conservation and recovery of the northern spotted owl.

To respond to this purpose for the action, alternatives would explore differing approaches to defining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest, by such criteria as stand age, structure, size, or landscape context. In addition, alternatives would explore differing management approaches to maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest, such as active management in dry forest areas to reduce fire risk and restore fire resiliency.

The purpose of this action includes maintaining marbled murrelet habitat. The status review of the marbled murrelet prepared for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the existing scientific information and confirmed the importance of maintaining suitable nesting habitat to the conservation and recovery of the marbled murrelet (McShane et al. 2004, pp. 4-61–4-63). Additionally, the recovery plan for the marbled murrelet (USDI FWS 1997) recommends protecting adequate nesting habitat for marbled murrelets.

The purpose of this action includes protecting existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat for threatened and endangered anadromous fish. The status review of threatened and endangered anadromous fish prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service reviewed the existing scientific information and confirmed the importance of maintaining existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered fish (Good et al. 2005). The National Marine Fisheries Service has prepared several final and draft recovery plans for listed salmonid fish within the planning area, including the Upper Willamette River Conservation and Recovery Plan for Chinook Salmon and Steelhead (ODFW/USDC NMFS 2011), which recommend maintaining existing habitat and restoring degraded habitat.

Provide Clean Water in Watersheds

The purpose of the action includes continuing to comply with the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), which directs the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The policy declaration in the FLPMA states that the BLM should manage the public lands in a manner that protects many resources and their values, including the water resource (43 U.S.C. 1701[a][8]). The FLPMA directs that land use plans provide for compliance with applicable State and Federal air, water, noise, or other pollution control laws, standards, or implementation plans (43 U.S.C. 1712[c][8]).

In addition, the O&C Act includes reference to protecting watersheds and regulating stream flows, requiring that the O&C lands be managed "for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of … protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, …" (43 U.S.C. 1181a).

Restore Fire-Adapted Ecosystems

The purpose of the action includes restoring fire-adapted ecosystems to increase fire resiliency. Previous analyses have shown that active management in the dry forest landscape of southern Oregon can positively influence fire risk and fire resiliency, thereby restoring fire-adapted ecosystems (2008 RMP/EIS). Further, as noted in the owl recovery plan, natural landscape resilience mechanisms in the dry forest landscape of southern Oregon have been decoupled by fire exclusion and wildfire suppression activities. The owl recovery plan recommends active management within the dry forest landscape to

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restore ecosystem resiliency. Additionally, in order to provide for sustained yield of timber from public lands under the O&C Act, BLM management must account for potential loss of this timber to fire. Based on the BLM's authority under the O&C Act, the results of previous analyses showing the benefits of active management in restoring fire-adapted ecosystems, and in light of the recommendations in the owl recovery plan, the purpose of this action includes restoring fire-adapted ecosystems to increase fire resiliency.

Provide for Recreation Opportunities

The purpose of the action includes providing for recreation opportunities. The FLPMA requires that, among other uses, "the public lands be managed in a manner that will … provide for outdoor recreation" 43 CFR 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]. In addition, the O&C Act states that O&C lands shall be managed "… for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of … providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). Finally, changes in BLM policy since the 1995 RMPs for recreation land use allocations and management objectives necessitate plan revision, as concluded in the BLM plan evaluations (USDI 2012, pp. 28-29).

Coordinate Management of Lands Surrounding the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe

The management of the Coquille Forest is subject by law (25 U.S.C. 715c (d)) to the standards and guidelines of forest plans for adjacent or nearby Federal forest lands. Title V of the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-208) created the Coquille Forest to be held in trust for the benefit of the Coquille Tribe. This Act states that the Coquille Forest shall be managed "under applicable State and Federal forestry and environmental protection laws, and subject to critical habitat designations under the Endangered Species Act and subject to the standards and guidelines of Federal forest plans on adjacent or nearby Federal lands, now and in the future." This Act also requires the Secretary of the Interior to take the Coquille Forest lands into trust for the benefit of the Coquille Tribe. As such, the purpose of the action includes coordinating the management of BLM-administered lands "adjacent or nearby" the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe.

Guidance for Development of All Action Alternatives

The BLM will develop all action alternatives to meet the purposes for the action, described above under 'Purpose and Need for Action.' To be considered reasonable, action alternatives would have to make a substantial and meaningful contribution to meeting each of the purposes, rather than a minimal contribution. The alternatives will explore various ways of contributing to these purposes and meeting the requirements of the management guidance provided in this document.

In developing all action alternatives, the BLM will:

- Review existing Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and nominations for new ACECs. In this review, the BLM will do the following:
    - Determine if they meet the Relevance and Importance criteria.
    - Determine, for those on O&C lands that meet Relevance and Importance criteria, if designation would be in conflict with the O&C Act, as detailed below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA.
    - Eliminate from further consideration those areas that do not meet criteria for designation as ACECs.
    - Determine if the relevant and important resource values of the remaining nominations can be protected and maintained through other features of the alternatives or if special management attention is needed.

  - Include in development of alternatives those nominations that meet criteria for designation as ACECs.

- Designate areas as Special Recreation Management Areas or Extensive Recreation Management Areas; lands not designated under one of these two categories are Public Lands not Designated for Recreation. Develop a range of recreation management area scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives, consistent with the discussion of recreation management areas below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA.

- Designate Visual Resource Management classifications for areas. Develop a range of Visual Resource Management classification scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives, consistent with the discussion of visual resources below under The O&C Act and the FLPMA.

- Evaluate all eligible Wild and Scenic River segments and determine which are suitable or non-suitable per Section 5(d)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.).

- Designate areas as open, limited, or closed to off-highway vehicle use in accordance with 43 CFR 8342. Develop a range of travel management area scenarios in relationship to various land use allocations and management objectives among the alternatives. Defer implementation level travel and transportation management planning until after completion of the RMP revision process. For those areas designated as limited in the RMP, define interim management objectives and clearly identify the process leading from the interim area designation of 'limited to existing roads, primitive roads and trails' to the development of a designated network of roads, primitive roads and trails, consistent with BLM Handbook 8342.1 – Travel and Transportation Handbook (USDI BLM 2012b).

- Consider a range of management alternatives for addressing lands with wilderness characteristics.

- Designate areas that are available and have the capacity for planned, sustained-yield timber harvest, and declare an Allowable Sale Quantity of timber that represents the annual productive capacity for sustained-yield timber production.

- Designate lands that are available or not available for livestock grazing. For lands available for livestock grazing, identify the amount of forage available for livestock.

- Designate land tenure zones identifying lands for retention, disposal, or acquisition.

- Designate lands as open or closed to the several forms of mineral entry location, leasing, or sale as appropriate to the type of commodity and land status. Identify areas, if any, recommended for closure to the mining laws for locatable exploration or development (and which the BLM would petition for withdrawal).

In developing the action alternatives, the BLM will consider the concepts contained in the Framework to Guide Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plan Revisions and Amendments, dated April 11, 2011 (RIEC 2011).

The BLM will not constrain the development of alternatives by current or projected BLM budget or staff levels. As long as alternatives are economically feasible, the analysis of the alternatives will assume that

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BLM budget and staff will be sufficient to implement all alternatives. The analysis of alternatives will include an evaluation of the cost of implementation.

In accordance with national BLM planning policy (USDI BLM 2005, pp. 11-13), the RMP will emphasize management direction for allowable uses and management actions needed to achieve desired resource goals and objectives, rather than administrative process, reviews, or analysis requirements. The BLM will use program guidance issued outside the land use planning process to provide direction on administrative process, reviews, and analysis. Ongoing program guidance provides more flexibility to respond to changing national or state-level BLM administrative process or analysis requirements. Of course, the RMP process itself will be conducted consistent with procedural, review, and analysis requirements necessary to comply with Federal law and regulations applicable to planning for BLM-administered lands.

The BLM will develop action alternatives to provide a high degree of predictability and consistency about implementing land management actions and a high degree of certainty of achieving management objectives (desired outcomes), especially those outcomes related to discrete statutory mandates.

The BLM will develop action alternatives and provide cumulative effects analysis to provide a framework to simplify and facilitate project-level NEPA analysis for management actions implementing the RMP.

The BLM will develop action alternatives to simplify implementation of management actions and reduce the costs of implementation.

Working closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, the BLM will develop the action alternatives to provide sufficient detail in the analysis to facilitate RMP-level Endangered Species Act consultation, as well as eventual project-level consultation for management actions implementing the RMP.

Working closely with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, the BLM will develop the action alternatives to satisfy State and Federal water quality rules and regulations at the RMP level.

Major Authorizing Laws and Regulations

This section discusses how various laws affect management of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area. The planning area includes lands of different status: O&C lands, public domain lands, and acquired lands. In addition to the laws presented here, many other legal authorities affect management of BLM-administered lands (see *Appendix X*).

The O&C Act has been the statutory authority for the management of the O&C lands since 1937. Subsequent laws affect the management of the O&C lands to varying degrees. Laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act, are directly applicable to how the BLM exercises its statutory authorities in managing the O&C lands, but none of these laws repealed the underlying primary direction and authority for the O&C lands. Thus, the BLM has a duty to find a way to concurrently implement all these laws, in a manner that harmonizes any seeming conflict between them, unless Congress has provided that one law would override another law, such as with the O&C Act and the FLPMA, as described below.

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Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires Federal agencies to use their legal authorities to promote the conservation purposes of the act. This section also requires Federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that actions these agencies authorize, fund, or carry out will not jeopardize species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act or cause destruction or adverse modification to designated critical habitat for such species. Critical habitat is defined, in part, as geographic areas occupied by the species that contain the physical or biological features essential to the conservation of a species listed under the Act and that may need special management or protection. The BLM will complete Section 7 consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to signing Records of Decision/RMPs for this RMP revision.

Clean Water Act

The objective of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. To accomplish this objective, the statute requires that: water quality standards consistent with the statutory goals of the Clean Water Act be established; water bodies be monitored to determine whether the water quality standards are being met; and, if all of the water quality standards are being met, then anti-degradation policies and programs, including ambient monitoring, be employed to keep the water quality at acceptable levels. In accord with this statute, the responsibility for establishing these standards, developing a strategy for meeting these standards, and monitoring their attainment in Oregon has been delegated to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Sections 303(d), 313(a), and 319 of the Clean Water Act are relevant to management of water resources on BLM-administered lands. Section 303(d) (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1313[d]) directs the states and tribes to develop a list of waters that fail to meet water quality standards for various constituents including, among others, sediment, temperature, and bacteria. Section 303(d) requires states and tribes to develop total maximum daily loads that apportion a load of pollutants that can be discharged into the waters of a state. The total maximum daily loads determine what level of pollutant load would be consistent with meeting the water quality standards and allocate acceptable loads among sources of the relevant pollutants. Necessary reductions in pollutant loading are achieved by implementing strategies authorized by the Clean Water Act, along with other tools available from Federal, State, and local governments and nongovernmental organizations. Section 313(a) (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1323[a]) directs that the Federal Government, "(1) having jurisdiction over any property or facility, or (2) engaged in any activity resulting, or which may result, in the discharge or runoff of pollutants," shall comply with requirements for the control and abatement of water pollution. Section 319 (codified as 33 U.S.C. 1329) established management programs to control water pollution from nonpoint sources, such as sediment.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act

The FLPMA provides the legal authority to the Secretary of the Interior for the management of public domain and acquired lands. The FLPMA requires, in part, that "the public lands scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). In addition, the FLPMA requires that "the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.12]). The FLPMA directs that acquired lands "… shall, upon acceptance of title, become public lands, and, for the administration of public land laws not repealed by this Act, shall remain public lands" (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 205.c]).

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Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act

The O&C Act provides the legal authority to the Secretary of the Interior for management of the O&C lands. The O&C Act requires that the O&C lands "classified as timberlands … shall be managed … for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal [sic] of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities" (43 U.S.C. 1181a). Section 701(b) of the FLPMA states, "Notwithstanding any provision of this Act, in the event of conflict with or inconsistency between this Act and [the O&C Act] …, insofar as they relate to management of timber resources, and disposition of revenues from lands and resources, the latter Acts shall prevail." In this case, the "latter Acts" refers to the O&C Act.

The O&C Act and the FLPMA

On August 28, 1937, Congress enacted the O&C Act, which provides the legal authority for the management of O&C lands and Coos Bay Wagon Road lands. Approximately 81 percent of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area are O&C lands, and approximately 3 percent are Coos Bay Wagon Road lands (*Map 2*). The provision of the O&C Act that provides the management direction for the O&C lands states, in part, that these lands:

> "shall be managed except as provided in section 3 hereof, for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the [principle] of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities …"

Based on the language of the O&C Act, the O&C Act's legislative history, and case law, it is clear that sustained-yield timber production is the primary or dominant use of the O&C lands in western Oregon. In managing the O&C lands for that primary or dominant use, the BLM must exercise its discretion to determine how to manage the forest to provide for sustained-yield timber production, including harvest methods, rotation length, silvicultural regimes under which these forests would be managed, or minimum level of harvest. In addition, the BLM must conduct this management "for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilities." Finally, when implementing the O&C Act, BLM must do so in full compliance with a number of subsequent laws that direct how the BLM accomplishes the statutory direction.

The FLPMA provides the legal authority for the management of public domain lands and acquired lands. These lands and resources are to be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Approximately 15 percent of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area are public domain lands, and less than 1 percent is acquired lands (*Map 2*). The FLPMA specifically provides that if there is any conflict between its provisions and the O&C Act related to management of timber resources or the disposition of revenues from the O&C lands and resources, the O&C Act prevails (i.e., takes precedence) (43 U.S.C. 1701 note (b)). However, provisions of the FLPMA that do not conflict with the O&C Act related to management of timber resources or the disposition of revenues from the O&C lands are applicable to the O&C lands. Preparation of the RMPs and EIS will conform to these land laws as described in this section and will comply with other Federal laws, including, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

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In developing the range of alternatives in this planning process, the BLM will need to apply the direction set forth in the O&C Act to key issues associated with the management of areas or resources that typically arise during land use planning. These areas or resources include:

- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern;
- Lands with wilderness characteristics;
- Visual resources;
- Recreation management areas; and
- Sensitive species.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

The FLPMA provides authority for designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (43 U.S.C. 1712 [Sec. 202.c.3]). In this planning process, the BLM will evaluate nominated and existing ACECs to determine whether relevant and important values are present and if special management is needed to maintain those values.

For areas that have relevant and important values and need special management to maintain those values, the BLM will designate and manage ACECs on public domain lands and acquired lands. The BLM will also designate and manage ACECs on O&C lands where the special management needed to maintain relevant and important values would not conflict with the planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act. For example, designating and managing ACECs on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production in the following circumstances: on non-forested lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification[3] category is 'not included in the harvest land base.' In addition, designating and managing ACECs on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production, if the special management needed to maintain relevant and important values were compatible with sustained-yield timber production, even if that special management might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. Finally, designation and management of Research Natural Areas, which are a type of ACEC, on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production when the scientific value of the research is relevant to sustained-yield timber production.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Designated Wilderness Areas will be managed pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the area's designating statute, the BLM's wilderness regulations at 43 CFR 6300, and BLM Manual 6340 – Management of Designated Wilderness Areas (USDI BLM 2012c). In this planning process, the BLM will consider whether to manage lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics on public domain lands and acquired lands. The BLM will also consider whether to manage lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics on O&C lands where management for wilderness characteristics would not conflict with the planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act. For example, management for wilderness characteristics on O&C lands would not conflict with sustained-yield timber production in the following circumstances: on non-forested lands; on lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is 'not included in the harvest land base.'

[3] Timber Productivity Capability Classification is the process of partitioning forest land into major classes indicating relative suitability to produce timber. See Chapter 2 pages XX.

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However, management for wilderness characteristics cannot be compatible with sustained-yield timber production, because the selling, cutting, and removing timber in conformance with the principles of sustained yield would alter such areas to the point of reducing or eliminating their wilderness characteristics. Thus, in developing the range of alternatives for this planning effort, alternatives should not include managing O&C lands outside of designated Wilderness Areas for wilderness characteristics in areas dedicated to sustained-yield timber production.

Visual Resources

The FLPMA provides authority for protection of scenic values (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). Through this planning process, the BLM will designate Visual Resource Management classes for all BLM-administered lands, based on an inventory of visual resources and management considerations for other land uses.

In this planning process, the BLM will designate Visual Resource Management classes that would protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory where the protection is required as part of the management specified by Congress in legislation, such as the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.). In this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Visual Resource Management classes that would conflict with sustained-yield timber production to protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory on public domain lands and acquired lands; on non-forested O&C lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on O&C lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is 'not included in the harvest land base.' Finally, in this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Visual Resource Management classes to protect scenic values as identified through a visual resource management inventory on O&C lands to the extent that the protection of scenic values is compatible with sustained-yield timber production, even if that protection might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. The O&C Act contemplates that sustained yield forest management can be conducted in a manner to provide for purposes including recreation, and the BLM recognizes that scenery can be an important component of recreation.

Recreation Management Areas

The FLPMA provides authority for management for outdoor recreation (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). The O&C Act contemplates that sustained yield timber production can be conducted in a manner to provide for purposes including recreation. A Special Recreation Management Area is an administrative unit where the existing recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are recognized for their unique value, importance, and distinctiveness, as compared to other areas used for recreation. Consistent with BLM Manual 8320 – Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services (USDI BLM 2011), within a Special Recreation Management Area, recreation and visitor services management is recognized as the predominant land use plan focus, where specific recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are managed and protected on a long-term basis.

In this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Special Recreation Management Areas on public domain lands and acquired lands; on non-forested O&C lands; on O&C lands that would otherwise be allocated to a land use allocation that would preclude sustained-yield timber production; or on O&C lands for which the Timber Productivity Capability Classification category is not included in the harvest land base. Finally, in this planning process, the BLM will consider designating Special Recreation Management Areas on O&C lands to the extent that the management for recreation and visitor services would be compatible with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act, even if that management might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. However, in developing the range of alternatives for this planning effort, alternatives should

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not include Special Recreation Management Areas on O&C lands if the management for recreation and visitor services would conflict with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the purposes of the O&C Act.

An Extensive Recreation Management Area is an administrative unit that requires specific management consideration in order to address recreation use, demand, or recreation and visitor services program investments. Extensive Recreation Management Areas do not necessarily conflict with sustained-yield timber production. Consistent with BLM Manual 8320, management of Extensive Recreation Management Areas "… is commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses." Furthermore, this manual explains that land use plan decisions for management of Extensive Recreation Management Areas will be "… compatible with other resource objectives." Because management for recreation values in Extensive Recreation Management Areas is intended to be done in a manner that is compatible with other resource uses, such as sustained-yield timber production, designation of Extensive Recreation Management Areas would not necessarily conflict with sustained-yield timber production. Therefore, the BLM will consider designating Extensive Recreation Management Areas on all lands in the planning area, including O&C lands.

Sensitive Species

The FLPMA provides authority for management for ecological and environmental values and to provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife (43 U.S.C. 1701 [Sec. 102.a.8]). Consistent with BLM Manual 6840 – Special Status Species (USDI BLM 2008g), the BLM shall designate Bureau sensitive species and implement measures to conserve these species and their habitats. It is in the interest of the BLM to undertake conservation actions for such species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is warranted. By doing so, the BLM will have greater flexibility in managing the public lands to accomplish native species conservation objectives and other legal mandates. BLM Manual 6840 also directs that specific protection to species that are listed by the BLM as sensitive on lands governed by the O&C Act must be consistent with timber production as the dominant use of those lands.

In developing the range of alternatives to be considered in this planning process, the BLM will consider providing measures to conserve Bureau sensitive species and their habitats on O&C lands to the extent that the conservation measures are compatible with planning for sustained-yield timber production for the O&C Act purposes. The BLM will consider providing these measures even if the conservation measures might condition how sustained-yield timber production would be conducted. Furthermore, the BLM will consider providing measures to conserve Bureau sensitive species and their habitats on O&C lands to the extent that the conservation measures are necessary to prevent the need to list Bureau sensitive species under the Endangered Species Act. Future listings under the Endangered Species Act could have the effect of limiting the BLM's ability to provide a sustained yield of timber under O&C Act; limiting or avoiding future listings could best ensure a permanency of timber production over the long-term.

Management of the Public Domain Lands in Relation to the O&C Lands

Out of the approximately 2.5 million acres of BLM-administered lands in the planning area, 384,273 acres are public domain lands. About half of those public domain lands are small parcels that are widely scattered and intermingled with the O&C lands. While the FLPMA requires that the public domain lands be managed for a multitude of values, the Act does not require that every parcel be managed for every value. As in previous RMPs, these public domain parcels will be managed in accordance with the 1975 Public Land Order No. 5490 (40 FR 7450), which reserves these intermingled public domain lands for multiple-use management, including the sustained yield of forest resources in connection with the intermingled O&C lands.

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Relationship of the RMPs to Other Plans and Programs

The 1995 RMPs are consistent with the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, which was adopted by the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture for Federal forests within the range of the northern spotted owl as an "ecosystem management plan for managing habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest related species." The April 1994 Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan, signed jointly by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, required the BLM to incorporate the Northwest Forest Plan's land use allocations and its standards and guidelines into the district RMPs for western Oregon. The Northwest Forest Plan was implemented on the BLM-administered lands in western Oregon in 1995 through the completion of its RMPs in the six western Oregon Districts.

The Northwest Forest Plan is not a statute or regulation. It was a coordinated, multi-agency amendment to the then-current RMPs of the BLM and forest plans of the U.S. Forest Service. The Secretaries and the agencies retained authority provided by statutes and regulations to revise these plans in the future. The only provision the Northwest Forest Plan made concerning future amendments or modifications to these plans was that they would be "coordinated" through the "Regional Interagency Executive Committee and the Regional Ecosystem Office" (USDA FS/USDI BLM 1994, p. 58.). The Northwest Forest Plan did not change the authority of the BLM, provided under the FLPMA and its promulgating regulations, for amending or revising RMPs. The 1995 RMPs, consistent with FLPMA planning regulations, anticipated the possibility that periodic plan evaluations could lead to RMP amendments and revisions. The BLM has subsequently amended the 1995 RMPs, as described below.

The interagency Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (USDA FS/USDI BLM 2001) amended all of the 1995 RMPs.[4]

The BLM has also amended the Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg District RMPs with the Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendment for Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg District (USDI BLM 2004), which was based on an interagency supplemental EIS. Under all alternatives in this RMP revision, the BLM would continue to manage Port-Orford-Cedar in accordance with this 2004 Record of Decision.

In addition, the BLM has amended individual RMPs with amendments of more limited scope than the above amendments, and has periodically maintained individual RMPs.[5] Individual District Annual Program Summaries have documented these RMP amendments and RMP maintenance actions.

[4] The survey and manage categorizations for the red tree vole were established in this record of decision. The Ninth Circuit Court decision in *Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center v. Boody*, 468 F.3d 549 (2006), found that the changes to those survey and manage categorizations for the red tree vole would constitute plan amendments that need to be analyzed with National Environmental Policy Act procedures. The court then invalidated the re-categorizations regarding the red tree vole, because the BLM had not prepared a National Environmental Policy Act document to amend the plans.

[5] RMP maintenance actions respond to minor data changes and incorporation of activity plans and are limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. Plan maintenance does not result in expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved RMP.

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In contrast to these amendments of the 1995 RMPs, this RMP revision would replace the 1995 RMPs and thereby replace the Northwest Forest Plan for the management of BLM-administered lands in western Oregon. The purpose and need for this RMP revision, as described earlier in this chapter, is not identical to the purpose and need for the Northwest Forest Plan. As such, the action alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS do not contain all elements of the Northwest Forest Plan.

For example, the Northwest Forest Plan included measures to provide benefits to some rare or little known species. This approach, which is known as Survey and Manage, is reflected in the Draft RMP/EIS's No Action alternative described in Chapter 2. In the years since the Northwest Forest Plan, the BLM and Forest Service have attempted to amend, modify, or remove the Survey and Manage measures from the Northwest Forest Plan-based land use plans. The interagency Final Supplementation Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines includes a history of the Survey and Manage measures and agency implementation, which is incorporated here by reference (USDA FS/USDI BLM 2004, pp. 3-21). Consistent with the differences between the Northwest Forest Plan purpose and need and the purpose and need for this RMP revision, and in light of the reasons the BLM has identified to modify or remove the Survey and Manage measures (USDA FS/USDI BLM 2004, pp. 3-9), none of the action alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS include the Survey and Manage measures. All of the action alternatives would implement the BLM special status species policy, which is described in detail in the Final Supplementation Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines, which is incorporated here by reference (USDA FS/USDI BLM 2004, pp. 45-54). Because the Survey and Manage measure is a component of the No Action alternative, which is analyzed in detail in this Draft RMP/EIS, this component could be considered for inclusion in the eventual development of the Proposed RMP, along with any of the components of the alternatives and sub-alternatives, which are described in Chapter 2.

In keeping with the intention of the Northwest Forest Plan to encourage cooperation and coordination of programs among the Federal agencies, the BLM has briefed the Regional Interagency Executive Committee on this RMP revision. Furthermore, many of the agencies that are represented on the Regional Interagency Executive Committee are cooperating agencies in this RMP Revision. Those cooperating agencies include the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Existing Decisions

The following existing decisions, which are valid for continued implementation and are supported by an EIS, will be carried forward into the RMPs. The BLM will restate or summarize these decisions to incorporate them into the RMPs without additional analysis. These decisions will be common to all alternatives and include the following:

- Management plans for congressionally-designated areas such as Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers
- North Bank Habitat Management Area/ACEC Record of Decision Habitat Management Plan and Monitoring Plan (Roseburg District, USDI BLM 2001)
- Final North Spit Plan (Coos Bay District, USDI BLM 2005a)
- Pokegama Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan (Klamath Falls Field Office, USDI BLM 2002)
- Record of Decision for Management of Port-Orford-cedar in Southwest Oregon (Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts; USDI 2004)
- Record of Decision for Implementation of a Wind Energy Development Program and Associated Land Use Plan Amendments (USDI BLM 2005b)

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- Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States (USDA FS/USDI BLM 2008)
- Approved Resource Plan Amendments/Record of Decision for Designation of Energy Corridors on Bureau of Land Management-administered lands in the 11 Western States (USDI BLM 2009)
- Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon Record of Decision (USDI BLM 2010)
- Seed Orchard Records of Decision for Integrated Pest Management (Salem, Eugene, Medford Districts; USDI BLM 2005c, 2005d, 2006)
- Greater Sage Grouse Plan Amendments (in process)

The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (Medford District), and the Upper Klamath Basin and Wood River Wetland (Klamath Falls Field Office), and the West Eugene Wetlands (Eugene District) are not included in the decision area for this RMP revision. This RMP revision will not alter these independent RMP decisions.

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Chapter 2 – Alternatives

Introduction

This chapter describes the alternatives considered in this Draft RMP/EIS. The Council on Environmental Quality regulations direct that an EIS shall "... rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives ..." 40 CFR 1502.14. Guidance from the Council on Environmental Quality further explains, "When there are potentially a very large number of alternatives, only a reasonable number of examples, covering the full spectrum of alternatives, must be analyzed and compared in the EIS." ("Forty Most Asked Questions ..." 46 FR 18027). The purpose and need for action dictates the range of alternatives that must be analyzed, because action alternatives are not reasonable if they do not respond to the purpose and need for the action (BLM NEPA Handbook, pp. 35-36, 49-50).

This chapter describes the No Action alternative and the action alternatives that are analyzed in detail in this RMP/EIS, including identification of the preferred alternative. This chapter also discusses alternatives that the BLM considered but did not analyze in detail. Finally, this chapter presents a comparison of the alternatives, including a summary of the environmental effects of the alternatives.

No Action Alternative

The Council on Environmental Quality NEPA regulations require that an EIS analyzes a No Action alternative (40 CFR 1502.14(d)). The Council on Environmental Quality guidance explains that, for plans such as this RMP revision, No Action means there is no change from current management direction or level of management intensity (CEQ 1981). The No Action alternative in this Draft RMP/EIS is implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written (in contrast to how the BLM has been implementing the 1995 RMPs). A section later in this chapter, titled Alternatives Considered but not Analyzed in Detail, includes further discussion of an alternative that would seek to continue the current practices.

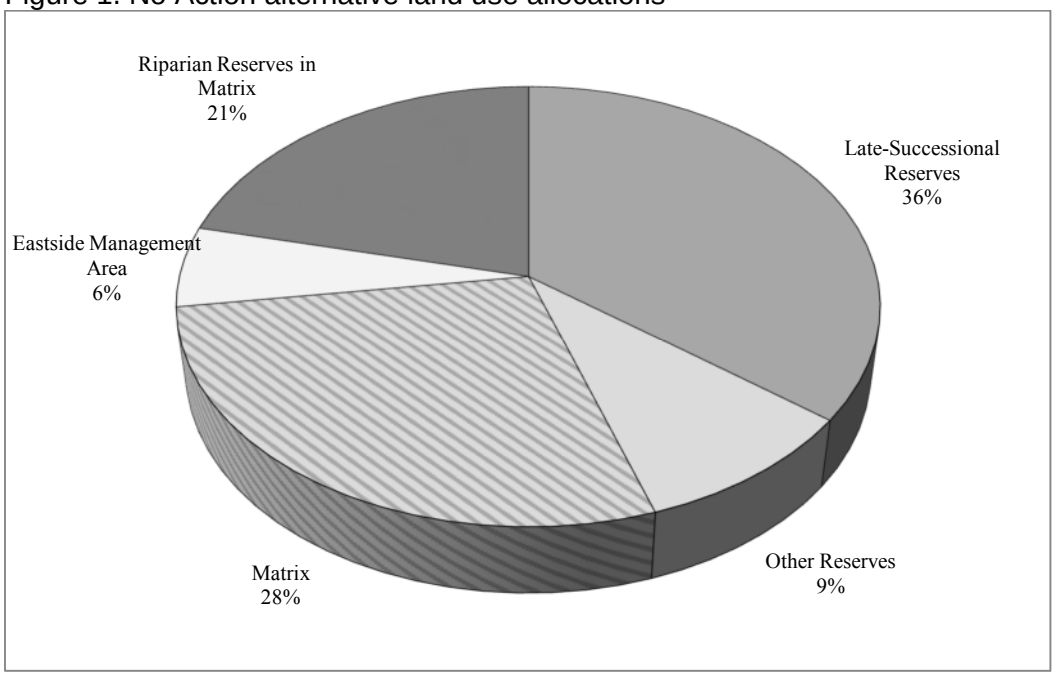
The land use allocations and management actions/direction in the 1995 RMPs for the Coos Bay, Eugene, Medford, Roseburg, and Salem Districts and the Klamath Falls Field Office of the Lakeview District, as amended and modified by court order, describe the No Action alternative (see Figure 1, Table 1, and Map 1) and are incorporated here by reference. The No Action alternative, as analyzed in this Draft EIS/RMP, includes Survey and Manage standards and guidelines, consistent with—

- The January 2001, Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl;
- The 2001, 2002, and 2003 Annual Species Review modifications to the Survey and Manage species list, except for the changes made for the red tree vole; and
- The Pechman exemptions[6].

[6] The District Court for the Western District of Washington issued a remedy order on Feb. 18, 2014, in the case of *Conservation Northwest et al.* v. *Boonie et al.*, No. 08-1067-JCC (W.D. Wash.)/No.11-35729 (9th Cir.) that vacated the 2007 Records of Decision to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines. Vacatur of the 2007 RODs has the effect of returning the BLM to the status quo in existence prior to the 2007 RODs, which was defined by three previous legal rulings, as follows:

The BLM has documented all amendments and plan maintenance of the 1995 RMPs in the district annual program summaries and monitoring reports from 1996 through 2014.

Figure 1. No Action alternative land use allocations



- Judge Pechman reinstated the 2001 ROD, including any amendments or modifications to the 2001 ROD that were in effect as of March 21, 2004 (CV-04-00844-MJP, Jan. 9, 2006), and this ruling incorporated the 2001, 2002, and 2003 Annual Species Reviews;
- The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *KSWC et al.* v. *Boody et al.*, 468 F3d 549 (2006) vacated the 2001 Annual Species Review category change and 2003 Annual Species Review removal for the red tree vole in the mesic zone; and
- Judge Pechman ordered four categories of projects exempt from compliance with the Survey and Manage standards and guidelines (CV-04-00844-MJP, Oct. 11, 2006, "Pechman exemptions"): thinnings in forest stands younger than 80 years of age, culvert replacement/removal, riparian and stream improvement projects, and hazardous fuel treatments applying prescribed fire for noncommercial projects.

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Table 1. No Action alternative land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserves[7]	879,031 (36%)
Riparian Reserves in Matrix	527,550 (21%)
Other Reserves[8]	233,410 (9%)
Matrix[9]	691,998 (28%)
Eastside Management Area	146,867 (6%)

[7] Late-Successional Reserves include Adaptive Management Areas within the Late-Successional Reserves and predictions of the acreage of newly discovered marbled murrelet sites.
[8] Other Reserves in the No Action alternative include Congressionally Reserved lands, District-Designated Reserves, and lands reserved within the Matrix.
[9] Matrix includes Adaptive Management Areas.

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Map 1. No Action alternative land use allocations

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For comparing the acreage by land use allocation for the No Action alternative to the action alternatives, the Matrix land use allocation in the No Action alternative is comparable to the Harvest Land Base land use allocation in the action alternatives.

The Eastside Management Area in the No Action alternative comprises those BLM-administered lands in the Klamath Falls Field Office outside the range of the northern spotted owl. In the action alternatives, the Eastside Management Area comprises those BLM-administered lands in the Klamath Falls Field Office east of Highway 97. Because of these different boundaries, the acreage for the Eastside Management Area is slightly higher in the No Action alternative than in the action alternatives.

The Riparian Reserves acreage for the No Action alternative in Figure 1, Table 1, and Map 1 presents only the Riparian Reserves within the Matrix, which is how the 1995 RMPs presented the hierarchy of land use allocations. The Late-Successional Reserves acreage for the No Action alternative do not account for Riparian Reserves within the Late-Successional Reserves. In the No Action alternative, the Riparian Reserves would overlay the Late-Successional Reserves, and implementation in those overlapping areas would apply the management objectives and management direction for both land use allocations (USDA/USDI 1994, pp. A-5–A-6). As a result, the 1995 RMPs only accounted for the Riparian Reserves acreage in the Late-Successional Reserves as Late-Successional Reserves; the only Riparian Reserve acreage calculated were those in the Matrix. Thus, the acreage of Riparian Reserves and Late-Successional Reserves presented in the 1995 RMPs cannot be directly compared to the acreages presented in this analysis.

To facilitate more direct comparison of these acreages by land use allocation for the No Action alternative to the action alternatives, Figure 2, Table 2, and Map 2 present a modified hierarchy of land use allocations in the No Action alternative to display the Riparian Reserves acreage regardless of the underlying land use allocation (see Figure 1, Table 1, and Map 1). The results are a reduction in acreage identified as Late-Successional Reserves and a corresponding increase in acreage identified as Riparian Reserves that allows for direct comparative analysis in this Draft EIS/RMP.

Figure 2. No Action alternative land use allocations with modified hierarchy

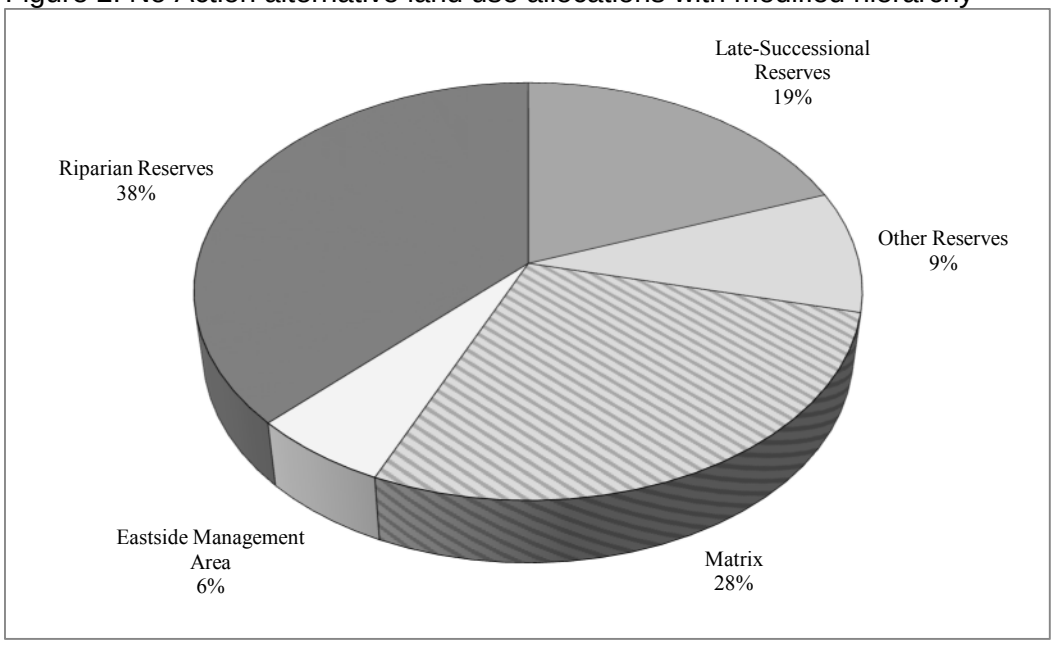

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Table 2. No Action alternative land use allocations with modified hierarchy

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserves	478,860 (19%)
Riparian Reserves	927,721 (38%)
Other Reserves[10]	233,410 (9%)
Matrix	691,998 (28%)
Eastside Management Area	146,867 (6%)

[10] Other Reserves in the No Action alternative include Congressionally Reserved lands, District-Designated Reserves, and lands reserved within the Matrix.

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Action Alternatives

The four action alternatives with two sub-alternatives comprise a range of management strategies that the BLM has designed to meet the purpose and need discussed in Chapter 1. In addition, the BLM has developed the action alternatives to be consistent with the guidance for the formulation of alternatives discussed in Chapter 1. These action alternatives examine potential management strategies through land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction. Some land use allocations, management objectives, and management direction are common to all action alternatives, and some vary by action alternative, as described below.

The BLM has developed the action alternatives in response to input received during external and internal scoping. Each of the action alternatives described below include land use allocations designed to respond to the purpose and need for action, including areas managed for sustained-yield timber production that would provide the annual productive capacity of timber and areas reserved from sustained-yield timber production for purposes such as the protection of clean water and the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species.

For an RMP, there are potentially endless variations in design features or combinations of different plan components. The BLM has designed the range of alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS to span the full spectrum of alternatives that would respond to the purpose and need for the action. The BLM has developed the alternatives to represent overall management approaches, rather than exemplify gradations in design features. Nevertheless, the action alternatives do not provide all possible combinations of plan components. There are components of the alternatives that are somewhat separable, and the BLM may combine management objectives and management direction from several of these alternatives in developing the eventual Proposed RMP.

Sub-alternatives

Sub-alternatives are variations of an action alternative that modify an individual component of the alternative to explore how these changes would alter certain outcomes. These examinations provide the responsible official with information that is useful for both fully understanding the alternatives and for informing the eventual development of the Proposed RMP.

The BLM focuses and limits the analysis of the sub-alternatives to the specific analytical question that is associated with a sub-alternative. This is in contrast to the broader analysis that is associated with the No Action alternative and the four action alternatives. The sub-alternatives are variations on the action alternatives and, as such, could be carried forward as the eventual Proposed RMP; their individual components could also be incorporated into the eventual Proposed RMP.

The BLM has developed two sub-alternatives in this Draft RMP/EIS, which vary individual components to test specific questions about alternative design based on input received during external and internal scoping. For both sub-alternatives, the BLM focuses analysis on how the changes in the sub-alternative would alter effects on timber production and northern spotted owls. The specific features of these sub-alternatives are described under the pertinent action alternatives.

Features Common to All Action Alternatives

This section contains a summary of those features that are common to all action alternatives. The subsequent section contains a description of the features that differ among the action alternatives.

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All action alternatives include the following land use allocations: Congressionally Reserved, District-Designated Reserves, Late-Successional Reserve, Riparian Reserve, Harvest Land Base, and Eastside Management Area. The location and acreage of these allocations, with the exception of Congressionally Reserved, vary by alternative. Within each action alternative, the Harvest Land Base, Late-Successional Reserve, and Riparian Reserve have specific, mapped sub-allocations with differing management direction.

In the context of these land use allocations, the term reserve indicates that the BLM or Congress have reserved lands within the allocation from sustained-yield timber production. These reserve land use allocations–Congressionally Reserved, District-Designated Reserves, Late-Successional Reserve, and Riparian Reserve–are in contrast to the Harvest Land Base, which includes management objectives for sustained-yield timber production. This does not mean that the BLM is necessarily prohibiting active management in these reserve allocations. On the contrary, each action alternative includes management direction to conduct the management actions necessary to achieve the management objectives for these allocations.

Congressionally Reserved lands are those lands that Congress has designated and defined management through law, such as designated Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers. The mandated management of these lands requires that the BLM reserve these lands from sustained-yield timber production. The location and acreage of Congressionally Reserved lands does not vary among the alternatives, including the No Action alternative.

District-Designated Reserves[11] include lands that are reserved from sustained-yield timber production for a variety of reasons, including—

- Areas that the BLM has constructed for specific purposes (such as roads, buildings, maintenance yards, and other facilities and infrastructure);
- Areas that the BLM has identified through the Timber Production Capability Classification system as unsuitable for sustained yield timber production;
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, including Research Natural Areas; and
- Other reserves (e.g., special recreation management areas, areas protected for Bureau sensitive species, and lands with wilderness characteristics).

Under all alternatives, the BLM would manage roads, maintenance yards, buildings, and other facilities for the purpose for which they were constructed. The BLM may manage areas identified as unsuitable for sustained-yield timber production through the Timber Production Capability Classification system for other uses, if those uses are compatible with the reason for which the BLM has reserved these lands (as identified by the timber production capability classification codes). The BLM will periodically add additional areas to those areas reserved through updates to the timber production capability classification system, when examinations indicate that an area meets the criteria for reservation. The BLM may also delete areas from those areas reserved through updates to the timber production capability classification system, when examinations indicate that an area does not meet the criteria for reservation. The BLM would reserve Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and other District-Designated Reserves on O&C lands consistent with the discussion in Chapter 1 under The O&C Act and the FLPMA.

Land Use Allocation Objectives that are Common to All Action Alternatives

The Late-Successional Reserve in all action alternatives has management objectives to—

[11] These areas have been termed Administratively Withdrawn in previous planning efforts. This RMP/EIS does not use the term withdrawn in this context to avoid confusion with the withdrawal of areas from operation of public land laws, location and entry under mining laws, or application and offers under mineral leasing laws.

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- Protect stands of older, structurally complex, conifer forest;
- Maintain habitat for the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet;
- Promote development of habitat for the northern spotted owl in stands that do not currently meet suitable habitat criteria; and
- Promote development of nesting habitat for the marbled murrelet in stands that do not currently meet nesting habitat criteria.

The Riparian Reserve in all action alternatives has management objectives to—

- Contribute to the conservation and recovery of listed fish species and their habitats and provide for conservation of special status fish and other special status riparian associated species;
- Maintain and restore the proper functioning condition of riparian areas, stream channels and wetlands by providing forest shade, sediment filtering, wood recruitment, stability of stream banks and channels, water storage and release, vegetation diversity, nutrient cycling, and cool and moist microclimates;
- Maintain water quality and stream flows within the range of natural variability, to protect aquatic biodiversity, and provide quality water for contact recreation and drinking water sources;
- Meet ODEQ water quality targets for 303(d) water bodies with approved Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs);
- Maintain high quality water and contribute to the restoration of degraded water quality downstream of BLM-administered lands; and
- Maintain high quality waters within ODEQ designated Source Water Protection watersheds.

The Harvest Land Base in all action alternatives has objectives to—

- Manage forests to achieve continual timber production that can be sustained through a balance of growth and harvest;
- Offer for sale the declared annual productive capacity of timber;
- Recover economic value from timber harvested after a stand-replacement disturbance, such as a fire, windstorm, disease, or insect infestation;
- Ensure the establishment and survival of desirable trees appropriate to the site and enhance their growth in harvested or disturbed areas; and
- Enhance the economic value of timber in forest stands.

All action alternatives include an Eastside Management Area land use allocation, which applies to BLM-administered lands in the Klamath Falls Field Office east of Highway 97. This allocation includes management objectives to—

- Manage non-forest lands with the intent of maintaining or improving wildlife habitat and rangeland conditions based on ecological site parameters;
- Manage non-forest lands for multiple uses in addition to those listed above including: recreational needs, community stability, and commodity production;
- Promote development of fire-resilient forests;
- Provide for the conservation of BLM Special Status Species; and
- Meet Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife management goals for wildlife on public domain lands.

In addition, the design, management objectives, and management direction for the Riparian Reserve on BLM-administered lands in the Klamath Falls Field Office east of Highway 97 do not vary among action alternatives (see Appendix X).

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Resource-specific Objectives that are Common to All Action Alternatives

For many programs or resources, the management objectives and management direction differ from the No Action alternative, but do not vary among the action alternatives. For some of these resources or programs, the management objectives and management direction do not vary among the action alternatives, but the management of the resource is tied to allocations that do vary among action alternatives. For example, the management objectives and management direction for designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern do not vary among action alternatives, but which specific areas the BLM would designate as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern would vary with the land use allocations of each alternative. The following section summarizes the resource-specific management objectives that are common to all action alternatives. Appendix X contains detailed descriptions of the management objectives and management direction that are common to all action alternatives.

Air Quality: The BLM would follow the Clean Air Act by protecting air quality in Class 1 areas, such as wilderness areas, and preventing exceedances of National, State, or local ambient air quality standards.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs): The BLM would manage designated ACECs to maintain and restore their relevant and important values (though the array of ACECs that the BLM would designate varies by alternative).

Cultural/Paleontological Resources: The BLM would protect significant cultural resources and ensure that all land and resource uses comply with the National Historic Preservation Act.

Fire and Fuels: In responding to wildfires, the BLM would provide for public and firefighter safety while meeting land management objectives. The BLM would also manage the land to restore and maintain resilience to wildfires and to decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

Fisheries: The BLM would manage riparian areas to maintain and improve the aquatic habitat across the landscape.

Forest Management: The BLM would enhance the health, stability, growth, and vigor of forest stands. The BLM would not allow management activities that would disrupt the Density Management study sites until data collection is complete.

Hydrology: The BLM would manage to provide water that meets Oregon Department of Environmental Quality water quality standards for drinking water, contact recreation, and aquatic biodiversity.

Invasive Species: The BLM would prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.

Lands, Realty, and Roads: The BLM would adjust land tenure zones to facilitate potential changes in ownership to improve the management of resources and enhance public resource values. It would also provide legal access to BLM-administered lands and facilities and rights-of-way, permits, leases, and easements in a manner that is consistent with Federal and State laws. In managing its roads, the BLM would provide a transportation system that serves the needs of both resource management and adjacent private owners.

Minerals: The BLM would manage mineral resources in a manner that allows for their orderly and efficient development.

Rare Plants and Fungi: The BLM would manage to contribute toward the recovery of listed plant and fungi species. It would also manage for an array of natural communities including oak woodlands,

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shrublands, grasslands, cliffs, rock outcrops, talus slopes, meadows, and wetlands, and would support ecological processes and disturbance mechanisms to allow for a range of seral conditions.

Recreation: The BLM would provide diverse recreational opportunities.

National Landscape Conservation System: The BLM would conserve, protect, and restore areas that Congress has designated for their outstanding values.

Travel and Transportation: The BLM would maintain a travel network that best meets the full range of public, resource management, and administrative access needs.

Visual Resource Management: The BLM would protect the quality of the scenic values on public lands where visual resource management is an issue or where high value visual resources exist, and protect areas having high scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and public visibility.

Soils: The BLM would manage to maintain the overall soil capacity of BLM-administered lands.

Sustainable Energy: The BLM would allow for the development of sustainable energy resources to the maximum extent possible without precluding other land uses.

Wild Horses: The BLM would maintain a healthy population of wild and free-roaming horses in the Pokegama Herd Management Area.

Wildlife: The BLM would manage to contribute to the conservation and recovery of federally listed wildlife species. It would also implement proactive conservation measures that reduce or eliminate threats to Bureau sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of and need for listing of these species under the Endangered Species Act.

Under all action alternatives, the BLM would implement administrative actions at approximately the same levels as during the past decade. Administrative actions are routine transactions and activities that are required to serve the public and to provide optimum management of resources, including:

- Competitive and commercial recreation activities
- Lands and realty actions (including the issuance of grants, leases, and permits)
- Trespass resolution
- Facility maintenance
- Facility improvements
- Road maintenance
- Hauling permit issuance
- Recreation site maintenance
- Recreation site improvement
- Hazardous materials removal
- Law enforcement
- Legal land or mineral estate ownership surveys
- Engineering support assistance in mapping
- Field visits for the design of projects
- Tree sampling (including using the 3P fall, buck, and scale sampling method)
- Project implementation and plan effectiveness monitoring
- Incidental live or dead tree removal for safety or operational reasons
- Wildlife or fisheries population monitoring

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Action Alternative Descriptions

This section includes a summary of those features that differ among the action alternatives. Appendix Y contains detailed descriptions by alternative of the management objectives and management direction that differ among the action alternatives.

Alternative A

Alternative A has a Late-Successional Reserve larger than the No Action alternative (see Figure 3, Table 3, and Map 3). The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area and the High Intensity Timber Area. The High Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts).

Figure 3. Alternative A land use allocations

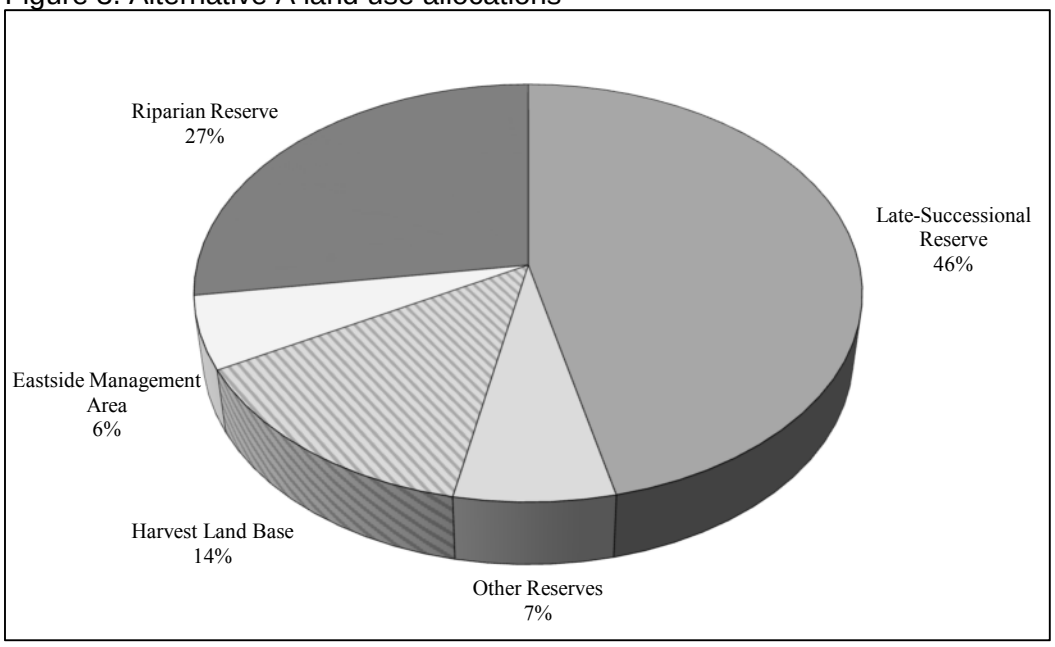

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Table 3. Alternative A land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	1,147,527 (46%)	Structurally Complex Forest	655,125 (26%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Moist)	265,376 (11%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)	188,440 (8%)
		Existing Marbled Murrelet Sites	38,312 (2%)
		Existing Red Tree Vole Sites	274 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	676,917 (27%)	Riparian Reserve (Moist)	441,603 (18%)
		Riparian Reserve (Dry)	235,313 (9%)
Other Reserves	170,540 (7%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	130,003 (5%)
Harvest Land Base	343,900 (14%)	High Intensity Timber Area	289,060 (12%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	54,840 (2%)
Eastside Management Area			139,972 (6%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 3. Alternative A land use allocations

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Late-Successional Reserve

The Late-Successional Reserve includes Structurally Complex Forest, Large Block Forest Reserves (Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)), existing occupied marbled murrelet sites, and existing sites of the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole. Within the Late-Successional Reserve, the BLM would not conduct timber salvage after disturbance, except when necessary to protect public health and safety, or to keep roads and other infrastructure clear of debris.

Structurally Complex Forest

Alternative A includes within the Late-Successional Reserve all forests120-years old and older, based on the current age of stands in the BLM forest operations inventory.

Large Block Forest Reserves: Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)

Alternative A includes within the Late-Successional Reserve all northern spotted owl critical habitat designated in 2013 and marbled murrelet critical habitat designated in 2011. In moist forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest, but without commercial removal of timber (i.e., coarse woody debris and snag creation only). In dry forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest and to improve resilience to disturbance. In dry forests, restoration thinning would include removing cut trees, including commercial removal, as needed to reduce the risk of large, high severity or high intensity fire.

Riparian Reserve

In Alternative A, the Riparian Reserve encompasses lands within one site-potential tree height[12] on either side of all streams.

The Riparian Reserve includes an inner zone in which thinning is not permitted. Inner zone widths are—

- 120 feet on either side of perennial and fish-bearing intermittent streams and
- 50 feet on either side of non-fish-bearing, intermittent streams

Outside of the inner zone, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning as needed to ensure that stands are able to provide trees to form stable instream structures. In moist forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning without commercial removal of timber (i.e., coarse woody debris and snag creation only). In dry forests, restoration thinning would include removal of cut trees, including commercial removal, as needed to reduce the risk of large, high severity or high intensity fire.

Harvest Land Base

The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area and the High Intensity Timber Area. The allocation of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area in Alternative A is based on areas below an average annual precipitation threshold. Timber management in the High Intensity Timber Area includes thinning and regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts). The High Intensity Timber Area has no snag or coarse woody debris retention requirements.

Wildlife

Within the Harvest Land Base, Alternative A does not include—

- Specific protections for northern spotted owl known or historic sites;

[12] Site-potential tree height is the average maximum height of the tallest dominant trees (200 years or older) for a given site class. Site-potential tree heights generally range from 140 feet to 210 feet across the decision area, depending on site productivity.

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- A requirement for surveys for the marbled murrelet prior to management actions;
- Specific management requirements for trees capable of providing marbled murrelet nesting structures in younger stands; or
- A requirement for surveys for North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole prior to management actions.

Rare Plants and Fungi
The BLM would create new populations and augment existing populations of federally listed and special status plants and fungi to meet recovery plan or conservation strategy objectives.

Invasive Species
Alternative A does not include treatment of sudden oak death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) infection sites.

Grazing
The BLM would manage allotments in compliance with Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (1997). The BLM would adjust grazing levels and management practices when needed to meet or make progress toward meeting the standards for rangeland health. The BLM would make unavailable to grazing those allotments that have generally been vacant or inactive for 5 years or more.

Minerals
Under Alternative A, the BLM would petition for the withdrawal of X acres from locatable mineral entry and would close Y acres to salable mineral development.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Under Alternative A, the BLM would designate 119 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Recreation Management Areas
Alternative A includes designation of Special Recreation Management Areas at developed recreation sites. In the rest of the decision area, the BLM would not manage specifically for recreation, but recreation could occur to the extent that the BLM has legal public access and recreation is not in conflict with the primary uses of these lands.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
Alternative A includes protection of lands with wilderness characteristics that are not within the harvest land base.

Wild and Scenic Rivers
Under Alternative A, the BLM would not find any of the eligible Wild and Scenic River segments suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Visual Resource Management
Under Alternative A, the BLM would manage visual resources on Congressionally Reserved lands and ACECs according to their established class. The BLM would manage all other lands as Visual Resource Management Class IV.

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Alternative B

Alternative B has a Late-Successional Reserve similar in size to Alternative A, though of a different spatial design (see Figure 4, Table 4, and Map 4). The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area, Low Intensity Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The portion of the Harvest Land Base in Uneven-Aged Timber Area is the largest of all action alternatives. The Low Intensity Timber Area and Moderate Intensity Timber Area include regeneration harvest with varying levels of retention.

A sub-alternative of Alternative B (hereafter Sub-alternative B) includes reserving all known and historic northern spotted owl sites that would be in the Harvest Land Base in Alternative B. All other features of Sub-alternative B are the same as Alternative B. The description of Sub-alternative B, including the acreage of each land use allocation and a map, follows the description of Alternative B.

Figure 4. Alternative B land use allocations

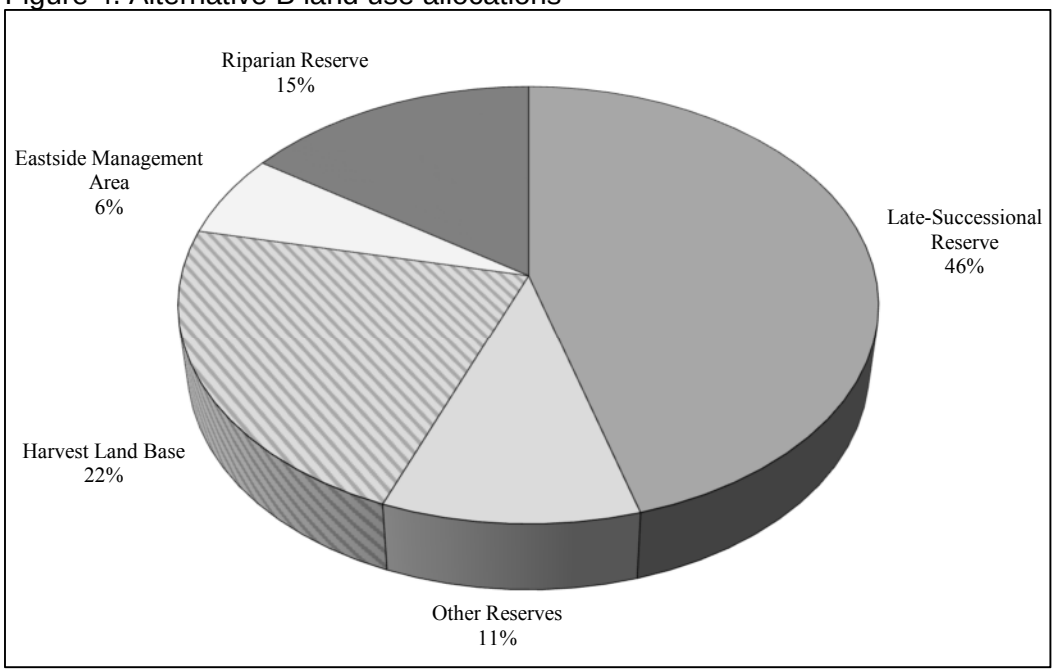

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Table 4. Alternative B land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	1,127,320 (46%)	Structurally Complex Forest	463,910 (19%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Moist)	371,305 (15%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)	223,399 (9%)
		Occupied Marbled Murrelet Sites	41,633 (2%)
		Predicted Marbled Murrelet Sites	13,738 (<1%)
		Occupied Red Tree Vole Sites	297 (<1%)
		Predicted Red Tree Vole Sites	13,039 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	382,805 (15%)	Riparian Reserve (Moist)	215,231 (9%)
		Riparian Reserve (Dry)	167,574 (7%)
Other Reserves	260,510 (11%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	219,973 (9%)
Harvest Land Base	556,335 (22%)	Moderate Intensity Timber Area	210,087 (8%)
		Low Intensity Timber Area	72,358 (3%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	273,890 (11%)
Eastside Management Area			151,885 (6%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 4. Alternative B land use allocations

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Late-Successional Reserve

The Late-Successional Reserve includes Structurally Complex Forest, Large Block Forest Reserves (Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)), existing occupied marbled murrelet sites, and existing sites of the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole. In addition, Alternative B includes requirements for surveys for the marbled murrelet and the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole, as described below; newly discovered sites would be included in the Late-Successional Reserve. Thus, this description of the Late-Successional Reserve includes predictions of the acreage of newly discovered marbled murrelet and red tree vole sites. Within the Late-Successional Reserve, the BLM would not conduct timber salvage after disturbance, except when necessary to protect public health and safety, or to keep roads and other infrastructure clear of debris.

Structurally Complex Forest Alternative B includes within the Late-Successional Reserve all forests identified by existing, district-specific information on structurally complex forests.

Large Block Forest Reserves: Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)

Alternative B includes within the Late-Successional Reserve blocks of functional and potential northern spotted owl habitat, sufficient to meet block size and spacing requirements (Thomas et al. 1990, pp. 24, 28) in all provinces except the Coast Range province, where reserves include blocks of habitat without limitations for size and spacing. In moist forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest, which may include commercial removal of cut trees. In dry forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest and to improve resilience to disturbance, which may include commercial removal of cut trees.

Riparian Reserve

In Alternative B, the Riparian Reserve encompass lands within

- one site-potential tree height on either side of fish-bearing and perennial streams
- 100 feet on either side of debris-flow-prone, non-fish-bearing, intermittent streams
- 50 feet on either side of other non-fish-bearing, intermittent streams

The Riparian Reserve includes an inner zone in which thinning is not permitted. Inner zone widths are—

- 60 feet on either side of perennial and fish-bearing intermittent streams
- 50 feet on either side of non-fish-bearing, intermittent streams

Outside of the inner zone, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning, which may include commercial removal, as needed to develop diverse and structurally complex riparian stands.

Harvest Land Base

The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area, Low Intensity Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The allocation bases the Uneven-Aged Timber Area in Alternative B on dry and very dry forest types identified by potential vegetation types. The portion of the Harvest Land Base outside of the Uneven-aged Timber Area is divided between the Low Intensity Timber Area in designated northern spotted owl critical habitat and the Moderate Intensity Timber Area outside of designated northern spotted owl critical habitat. Timber harvest in the Low Intensity Timber Area includes thinning and regeneration harvest with retention of 15 to 30 percent of the stand. In the Low Intensity Timber Area, the BLM would rely on natural tree regeneration after timber harvest. Timber harvest in the Moderate Intensity Timber Area includes thinning and regeneration harvest with retention of 5 to 15 percent of the stand. In the Moderate Intensity Timber Area, the BLM would use either natural

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tree regeneration or replanting after timber harvest, but would maintain early seral habitat conditions for several decades after harvest.

Wildlife

Within the Harvest Land Base, Alternative B includes—

- No specific protections for northern spotted owl known or historic sites;
- A requirement for surveys for the marbled murrelet prior to management actions in marbled murrelet Zone 1 and protection of habitat within 300 feet around newly discovered occupied sites;
- The protection of trees capable of providing marbled murrelet nesting structures in younger stands in marbled murrelet Zone 1; and
- A requirement for surveys for North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole prior to management actions and protection of habitat areas around newly discovered nest sites

Rare Plants and Fungi

The BLM would manage mixed hardwood and conifer communities outside of the Harvest Land Base to maintain and enhance oak persistence and structure.

Invasive Species

Alternative B includes treatment at all sudden oak death infection sites outside of the Riparian Reserve and no treatment at infection sites in the Riparian Reserve.

Grazing

The BLM would manage allotments in compliance with Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (1997). The BLM would adjust grazing levels and management practices when needed to meet or make progress toward meeting the standards for rangeland health. The BLM would make unavailable to grazing those allotments that have generally been vacant or inactive for 5 years or more.

Minerals

Under Alternative B, the BLM would petition for the withdrawal of X acres from locatable mineral entry and would close Y acres to salable mineral development.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Under Alternative B, the BLM would designate 114 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Recreation Management Areas

Alternative B includes designation of Special Recreation Management Areas at currently developed recreation facilities. Alternative B includes designation of Extensive Recreation Management Areas where the BLM has developed and currently manages recreation activities outside of developed facilities, primarily where the BLM has authorized motorized and non-motorized trails, and where the BLM currently manages dispersed recreation activities. In the rest of the decision area, the BLM would not manage specifically for recreation, but recreation could occur to the extent that the BLM has legal public access and recreation is not in conflict with the primary uses of these lands.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Alternative B includes protection of lands with wilderness characteristics that are outside of the Harvest Land Base and are compatible with existing and potential recreation opportunities.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

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Under Alternative B, the BLM would recommend for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System the eligible Wild and Scenic River segments with recreation identified as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value and the eligible river segments that the BLM found suitable during its administrative process.

Visual Resource Management

Under Alternative B, the BLM would manage visual resources on Congressionally Reserved lands and ACECs according to their established class. The BLM would manage all other lands as Visual Resource Management Class IV.

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Sub-alternative B

Sub-alternative B would be identical to Alternative B, except that it would include protection of habitat within the home ranges of all northern spotted owl known and historic sites that would be within the Harvest Land Base. This single change in design increases the Late-Successional Reserve to 57 percent of the decision area, which is larger than any other alternative, and reduces the Harvest Land Base to 12 percent of the decision area, which is smaller than any other alternative (see Figure 5, Table 5, and Map 5).

Figure 5. Sub-alternative B Land Use Allocations

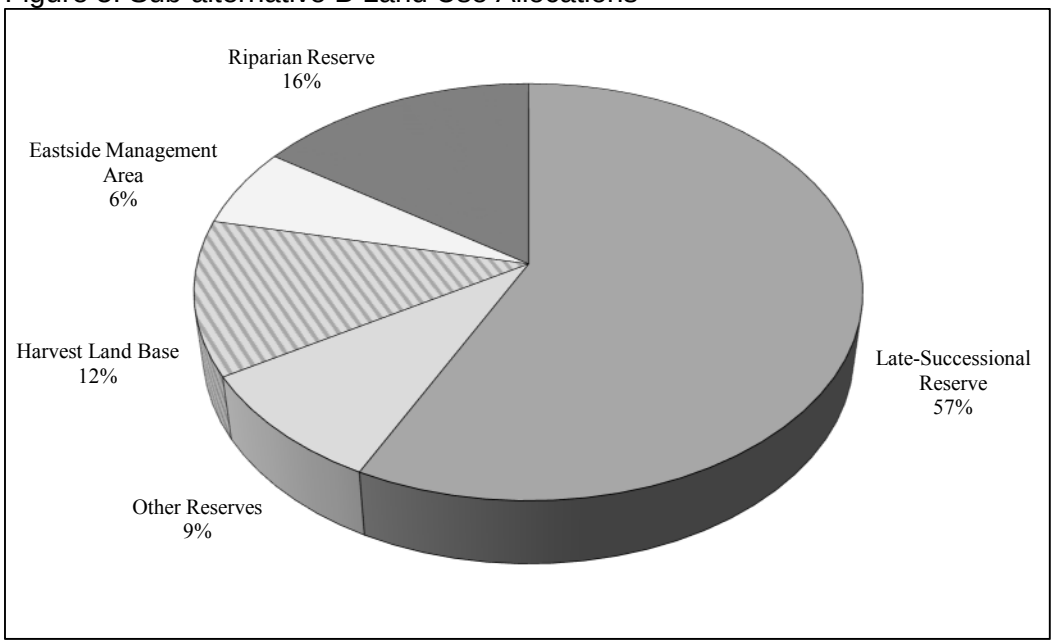

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Table 5. Sub-alternative B land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	1,422,933 (57%)	Structurally Complex Forest	463,910 (19%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Moist)	371,305 (15%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)	223,399 (9%)
		Northern Spotted Owl Sites	295,614 (12%)
		Occupied Marbled Murrelet Sites	41,633 (2%)
		Predicted Marbled Murrelet Sites	13,738 (<1%)
		Occupied Red Tree Vole Sites	297 (<1%)
		Predicted Red Tree Vole Sites	13,039 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	382,805 (15%)	Riparian Reserve (Moist)	215,231 (9%)
		Riparian Reserve (Dry)	167,574 (7%)
Other Reserves	223,111 (9%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	182,574 (7%)
Harvest Land Base	298,121 (12%)	Moderate Intensity Timber Area	129,120 (5%)
		Low Intensity Timber Area	30,761 (1%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	138,239 (6%)
Eastside Management Area			151,885 (6%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 5. Sub-alternative B land use allocations

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Alternative C

Alternative C has the largest Harvest Land Base of any of the alternatives (see Figure 6, Table 6, and Map 6). The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area and the High Intensity Timber Area. The High Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts). Alternative C has the smallest acreage in the Riparian Reserve of all of the alternatives.

A sub-alternative of Alternative C (hereafter Sub-alternative C) includes reserving all forests 80-years old and older, based on the current age of stands in the BLM Forest Operations Inventory. All other features of Sub-alternative C are the same as Alternative C. The description of Sub-alternative C, including the acreage of each land use allocation and a map, follows the description of Alternative C.

Figure 6. Alternative C land use allocations

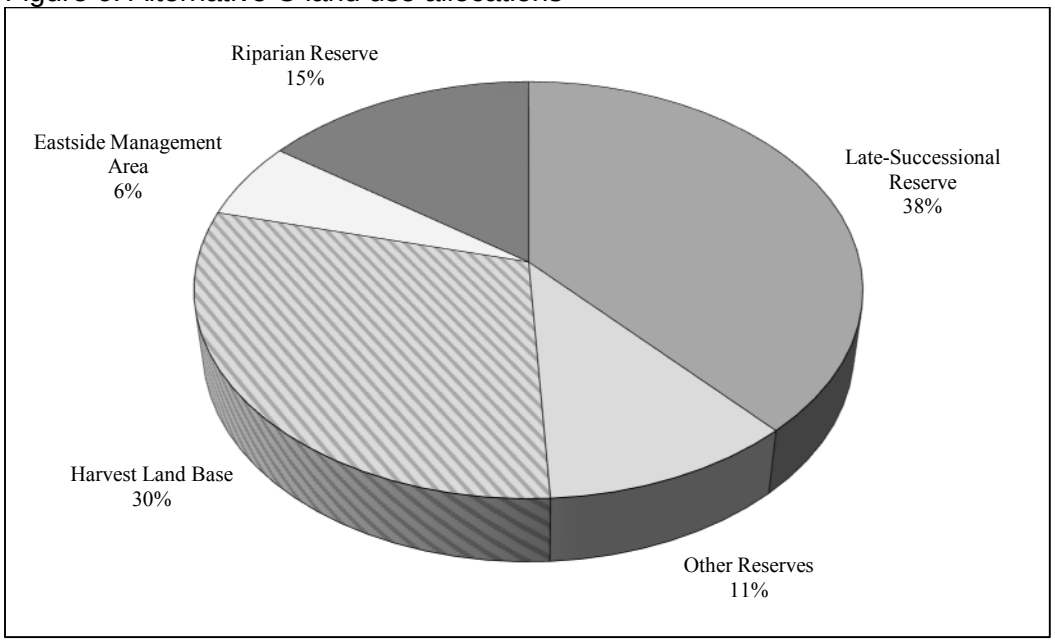

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Table 6. Alternative C land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	949,279 (38%)	Structurally Complex Forest	428,522 (17%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Moist)	331,224 (13%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)	148,776 (6%)
		Occupied Marbled Murrelet Sites	40,468 (2%)
		Predicted Marbled Murrelet Sites	2,761 (<1%)
		Occupied Red Tree Vole Sites	287 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	372,739 (15%)	Riparian Reserve (Moist)	244,694 (10%)
		Riparian Reserve (Dry)	128,045 (5%)
Other Reserves	267,678 (11%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	227,141 (9%)
Harvest Land Base	741,332 (30%)	High Intensity Timber Area	553,857 (22%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	184,715 (7%)
Eastside Management Area			147,828 (6%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 6. Alternative C land use allocations

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Late-Successional Reserve

The Late-Successional Reserve includes Structurally Complex Forest, Large Block Forest Reserves (Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)), existing occupied marbled murrelet sites, and existing sites of the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole. In addition, Alternative B includes requirements for surveys for the marbled murrelet and the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole, as described below, and newly discovered sites would be included in the Late-Successional Reserve. Thus, this description of the Late-Successional Reserve includes predictions of the acreage of newly discovered marbled murrelet and red tree vole sites. Within the Late-Successional Reserve, the BLM would conduct timber salvage after disturbance to recover economic value, to protect public health and safety, or to keep roads and other infrastructure clear of debris.

Structurally Complex Forest

Alternative C includes within the Late-Successional Reserve all forests 160-years old and older, based on the current age of stands in the BLM forest operations inventory.

Large Block Forest Reserves: Late-Successional Reserve (Moist) and Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)

Alternative C includes within the Late-Successional Reserve blocks of functional and potential northern spotted owl habitat, sufficient to meet block size and spacing requirements (Thomas et al. 1990, pp. 24, 28) in all provinces. In moist forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest, which may include commercial removal of cut trees. In dry forests, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning to promote the development of structurally complex forest and to improve resilience to disturbance, which may include commercial removal of cut trees.

Riparian Reserve

In Alternative C, the Riparian Reserve encompass lands within—

- 150 feet on either side of fish-bearing streams
- 50 feet on either side of non-fish-bearing streams

The Riparian Reserve includes an inner zone in which thinning is not permitted. Inner zone widths are—

- 60 feet on either side of fish-bearing streams
- 50 feet on either side of non-fish-bearing streams

Outside of the inner zone, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning, which may include commercial removal, as needed to develop diverse and structurally complex riparian stands.

Harvest Land Base

The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the High Intensity Timber Area and the Uneven-Aged Timber Area. The allocation of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area in Alternative C is based on very dry forest types identified by potential vegetation. Timber management in the High Intensity Timber Area includes thinning and regeneration harvest with no retention (clear cuts). The High Intensity Timber Area has no snag or coarse woody debris retention requirements.

Wildlife

Within the Harvest Land Base, Alternative C includes—

- No specific protections for northern spotted owl known or historic sites;
- A requirement for surveys for the marbled murrelet prior to management actions in stands 120-years and older and protection of habitat within 300 feet around newly discovered occupied sites;

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- No specific management requirements for trees capable of providing marbled murrelet nesting structures in younger stands; and
- No requirement for surveys for North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole prior to management actions.

Rare Plants and Fungi
The BLM would create new populations and augment existing populations of federally listed and special status plants and fungi to meet recovery plan or conservation strategy objectives.

Invasive Species
Alternative C includes treatment at all sudden oak death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) infection sites.

Grazing
The BLM would manage allotments in compliance with Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (1997). The BLM would adjust grazing levels and management practices when needed to meet or make progress toward meeting the standards for rangeland health. The BLM would make unavailable to grazing those allotments that have generally been vacant or inactive for 5 years or more.

Minerals
Under Alternative C, the BLM would petition for the withdrawal of X acres from locatable mineral entry and would close Y acres to salable mineral development.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Under Alternative C, the BLM would designate 111 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Recreation Management Areas
Alternative C includes designation of Special Recreation Management Areas at currently developed recreation facilities. Alternative C includes designation of Extensive Recreation Management Areas where the BLM has developed and currently manages recreation activities outside of developed facilities, primarily where the BLM has authorized motorized and non-motorized trails, and where the BLM currently manages dispersed recreation activities. In addition, the BLM would designate Special Recreation Management Areas and Extensive Recreation Management Areas to address specific recreation demand and scarcity. In the rest of the decision area, the BLM would not manage specifically for recreation, but recreation could occur to the extent that the BLM has legal public access and recreation is not in conflict with the primary uses of these lands.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
Alternative C includes protection of lands with wilderness characteristics that are not within the Harvest Land Base and are compatible with existing and potential recreation.

Wild and Scenic Rivers
Under Alternative C, the BLM would recommend for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System those eligible river segments that the BLM found suitable during its administrative process.

Visual Resource Management
Under Alternative C, the BLM would manage visual resources on Congressionally Reserved lands and ACECs according to their established class. The BLM would manage all other lands as Visual Resource Management Class IV.

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Sub-alternative C

Sub-alternative C would be identical to Alternative C, except that the Late-Successional Reserve would include all forests 80 years old and older, based on the current age of stands in the BLM forest operations inventory. This single change in design increases the Late-Successional Reserve to 55 percent of the decision area and reduces the Harvest Land Base to 20 percent of the decision area (see Figure 1, Table 1, and Map 1).

Figure 7. Sub-alternative C Land Use Allocations

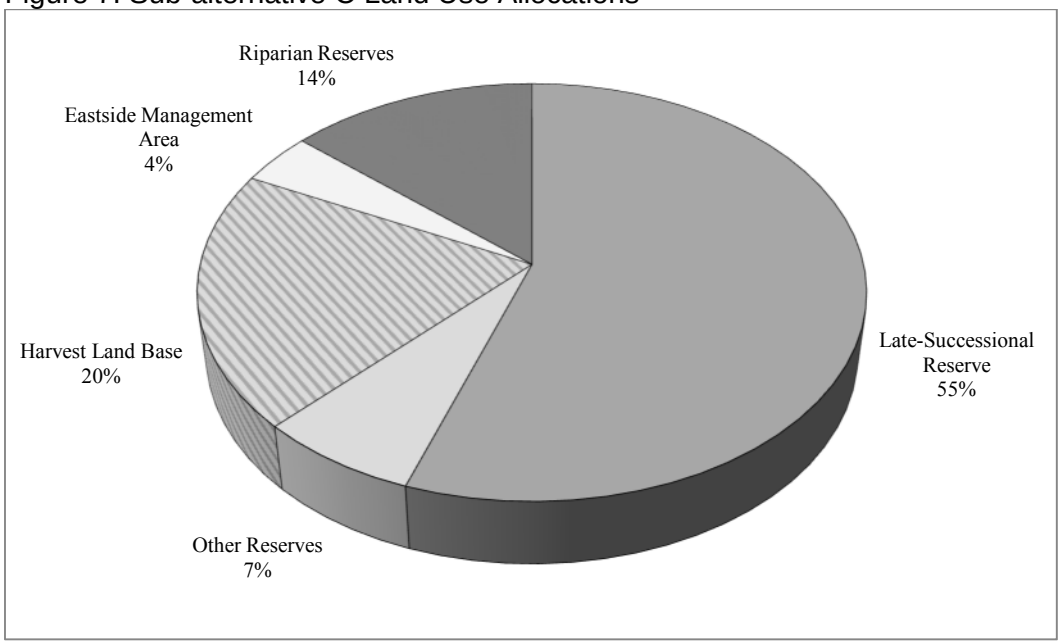

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Table 7. Sub-alternative C land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	1,373,206 (55%)	Structurally Complex Forest	1,036,218 (42%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Moist)	233,967 (9%)
		Late-Successional Reserve (Dry)	61,525 (2%)
		Occupied Marbled Murrelet Sites	40,468 (2%)
		Predicted Marbled Murrelet Sites	740 (<1%)
		Occupied Red Tree Vole Sites	287 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	337,701 (14%)	Riparian Reserve (Moist)	253,674 (10%)
		Riparian Reserve (Dry)	84,026 (3%)
Other Reserves	172,232 (7%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	131,694 (5%)
Harvest Land Base	495,507 (20%)	High Intensity Timber Area	02,665 (16%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	92,842 (4%)
Eastside Management Area			100,210 (4%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 1. Sub-alternative C land use allocations

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Alternative D

Alternative D has the smallest Late-Successional Reserve of any of the alternatives (see Figure 1, Table 1, and Map 1). The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area, Owl Habitat Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The Owl Habitat Timber Area includes timber harvest applied in a manner that would maintain northern spotted owl habitat. The Moderate Intensity Timber Area includes regeneration harvest with retention. Alternative D has the largest acreage in the Riparian Reserve of all of the action alternatives.

Figure 8. Alternative D land use allocations

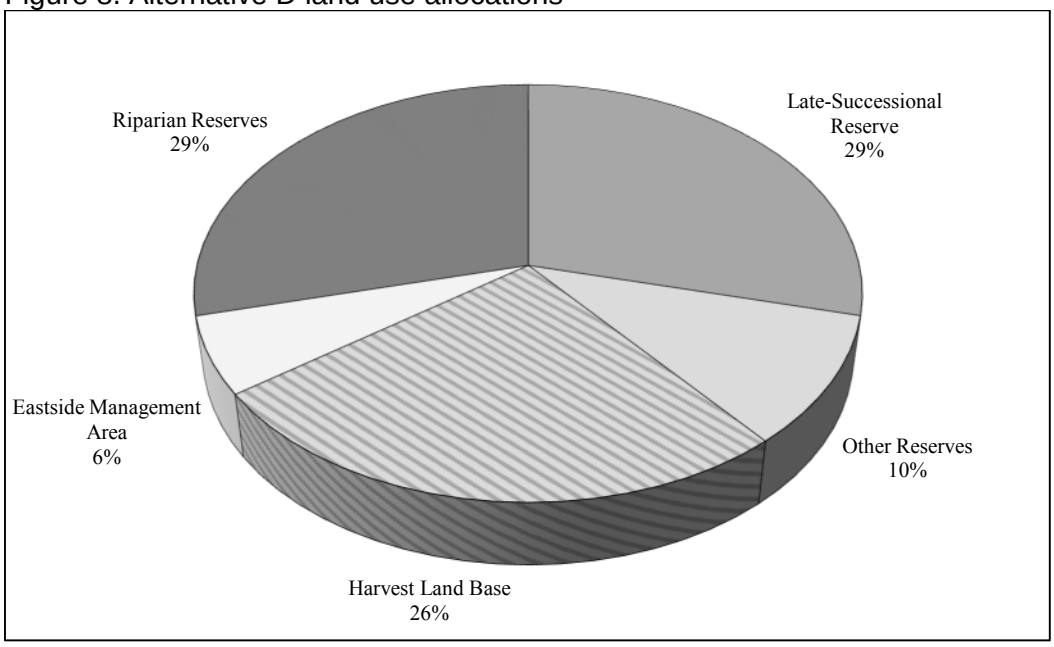

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Table 8. Alternative D land use allocations

Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)	Sub-Allocation	Acres (Percentage of Total Acres)
Late-Successional Reserve	714,292 (29%)	Structurally Complex Forest	482,920 (19%)
		Northern Spotted Owl Sites	96,666 (4%)
		Occupied Marbled Murrelet Sites	33,037 (1%)
		Predicted Marbled Murrelet Sites	91,816 (4%)
		Occupied Red Tree Vole Sites	245 (<1%)
		Predicted Red Tree Vole Sites	9,608 (<1%)
Riparian Reserve	714,629 (29%)	Riparian Reserve – Moist	459,145 (19%)
		Riparian Reserve – Dry	255,484 (10%)
Other Reserves	250,523 (10%)	Congressionally Reserved	40,537 (2%)
		District Designated Reserves	209,986 (8%)
Harvest Land Base	650,382 (26%)	Moderate Intensity Timber Area	160,575 (6%)
		Owl Habitat Timber Area	427,556 (17%)
		Uneven-Aged Timber Area	62,251 (3%)
Eastside Management Area			149,030 (6%)
Total			2,478,856

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Map 1. Alternative D land use allocations

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Late-Successional Reserve

The Late-Successional Reserve includes Structurally Complex Forest/Large Block Forest Reserves, nest patches of known and historic northern spotted owl sites, existing occupied marbled murrelet sites, and existing sites of the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole. In addition, Alternative B includes requirements for surveys for marbled murrelet and the North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole, as described below, and newly discovered sites would be included in the Late-Successional Reserve. Thus, this description of the Late-Successional Reserve includes predictions of the acreage of newly discovered marbled murrelet and red tree vole sites. Within the Late-Successional Reserve, the BLM would conduct no timber salvage after disturbance, except when necessary to protect public health and safety, or to keep roads and other infrastructure clear of debris.

Structurally Complex Forest/Large Block Forest Reserves

Alternative D includes within the Late-Successional Reserve all forests 120 years old and older on high productivity sites, 140 years old and older on moderate productivity sites, and 160 years old and older on low productivity sites, based on the current age of stands in the BLM forest operations inventory. This structurally complex forest also constitutes the Large Block Forest Reserves under Alternative D.

Riparian Reserve

In Alternative D, the Riparian Reserve encompasses lands within one site-potential tree height on either side of all streams. The Riparian Reserve includes a no-thin inner zone of 120 feet on either side of all streams. Outside of the inner zone, the BLM would conduct restoration thinning, which may include commercial removal, as needed to ensure that stands are able to provide stable wood to the stream.

Harvest Land Base

The Harvest Land Base is comprised of the Owl Habitat Timber Area, Uneven-Aged Timber Area, and Moderate Intensity Timber Area. Alternative D includes the Owl Habitat Timber Area in all designated northern spotted owl critical habitat and within the home ranges of known and historic owl sites within the Harvest Land Base (though the nest patches themselves are included in the Late-Successional Reserve). Timber harvest in the Owl Habitat Timber Area includes thinning and uneven-aged timber harvest applied in a manner that would maintain northern spotted owl habitat. The portion of the Harvest Land Base outside of designated northern spotted owl critical habitat is divided between the Uneven-aged Timber Area and the Moderate Intensity Timber Area. The allocation of the Uneven-Aged Timber Area in Alternative D is based on very dry forest types identified by potential vegetation. The remainder of the Harvest Land Base in Alternative D is in the Moderate Intensity Timber Area. Timber harvest in the Moderate Intensity Timber Area includes thinning and regeneration harvest with retention of 5 to 15 percent of the stand.

Wildlife

Within the Harvest Land Base, Alternative D includes

- Specific protections to maintain habitat within the home ranges of all northern spotted owl known and historic sites
- A requirement for surveys for the marbled murrelet prior to management actions in marbled murrelet Zones 1 and 2 and protection of habitat within ½ mile around newly discovered occupied sites
- Protection of trees capable of providing marbled murrelet nesting structures in younger stands in marbled murrelet Zones 1 and 2
- A requirement for surveys for North Oregon Coast Distinct Population Segment of the red tree vole prior to management actions and protection of habitat areas around newly discovered nest sites

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Rare Plants and Fungi
Under Alternative D, the BLM would protect known Bureau special status species sites from adverse impacts where protection does not conflict with sustained yield forest management in the Harvest Land Base

Invasive Species
Alternative D includes treatment at all sudden oak death infection sites.

Grazing
Under Alternative D, the BLM would eliminate livestock grazing by terminating existing grazing authorizations and not issuing any additional grazing authorizations.

Minerals
Under Alternative D, the BLM would petition for the withdrawal of X acres from locatable mineral entry and would close Y acres to salable mineral development.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Under Alternative D, the BLM would designate 118 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Recreation Management Areas
Alternative D includes designation of Special Recreation Management Areas where the BLM recognizes recreation opportunities and setting characteristics for their unique value, importance, and distinctiveness on public domain lands and acquired lands and on O&C lands not available for sustained-yield timber production (see "The O&C Act and the FLPMA" in Chapter 1). Alternative D would include designation of Extensive Recreation Management Areas on all lands within the decision area where existing recreation use is occurring and the BLM has legal public access. In addition, Alternative D would include designation of Special and Extensive Recreation Management areas where the BLM is seeking to address activity-specific demand and to increase travel and tourism opportunities.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
Alternative D would not include the protection of any lands with wilderness characteristics.

Wild and Scenic Rivers
Under Alternative D, the BLM would recommend all eligible river segments for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Visual Resource Management
Under Alternative D, the BLM would manage visual resources on Congressionally Reserved lands and ACECs according to their established class. The BLM would manage all other lands according to their visual resource inventory class, except that in the harvest land base, lands inventoried as class 2 would be managed as visual resource management class 3.

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Preferred Alternative

The BLM planning regulations contemplate identification of a preferred alternative in a Draft RMP/EIS (43 CFR 1610.4-7). The BLM's preferred alternative at the Draft RMP/EIS stage is Alternative X. In identifying the BLM preferred alternative, the BLM evaluated how well the alternatives in the Draft RMP/EIS would respond to the purpose and need for action and the guidance for the formulation of alternatives, as well as the effects of the alternatives relevant to the issues identified for detailed analysis. In this evaluation, the cooperating agencies provided advice that the BLM considered in identifying the preferred alternative.

The identification of the preferred alternative does not constitute a commitment or decision in principle. The identification of Alternative X as the preferred alternative does not mean that the BLM will necessarily present Alternative X as the Proposed RMP in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS or that the BLM will necessarily select Alternative X in the eventual Record of Decision. Instead, the BLM is simply identifying that the BLM believes that Alternative X, among the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS, would provide the most useful starting point from which to construct a Proposed RMP based on the analysis in this Draft RMP/EIS. In developing the Proposed RMP, the BLM may make modifications to the preferred alternative; make modifications to a different alternative analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS; or may develop a new alternative from within the spectrum of alternatives considered in the Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM will develop the Proposed RMP in response to public comments on the Draft RMP/EIS, advice from cooperating agencies, and advice from within the BLM.

Alternatives Considered but not Analyzed in Detail

An EIS must rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives. The BLM may eliminate from detailed analysis alternatives that are not reasonable. As explained in the BLM NEPA Handbook (USDI BLM 2008, p. 52), an alternative need not be analyzed in detail if -

- It does not meet the purpose and need (see Chapter 1 for the purpose and need);
- It is technically or economically infeasible;
- It is inconsistent with the basic policy objectives for the management of the area (see Chapter 1 for the guidance for the formulation of alternatives);
- Its implementation is remote or speculative;
- It is substantially similar to an alternative being considered in detail; or
- It would have substantially similar effects to an alternative being considered in detail.

The BLM considered the following alternatives but eliminated them from detailed analysis, as explained below.

No timber harvest

This alternative would prohibit all timber harvesting and allow only custodial management of the BLM-administered forests. The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need, which includes providing a sustained yield of timber.

This RMP/EIS does make use of a reference analysis of no timber harvest on BLM-administered lands. This reference analysis is not a reasonable alternative. Instead, this RMP/EIS includes discussion of this reference analysis to provide context and a point of comparison as needed to analyze and interpret the effects of the alternatives.

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Continuation of the current practices

This management approach would seek to continue the varying current practices that the BLM has been implementing since the adoption of the 1995 RMPs. The BLM cannot analyze continuation of the current practices as the No Action alternative. Additionally, the BLM has eliminated from detailed analysis the continuation of the current practices as an action alternative.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the No Action alternative in this Draft RMP/EIS is implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written (in contrast to using one of the variable years representing how the BLM has been implementing the 1995 RMPs). It is not possible to analyze continuation of the current practices within the decision area as the No Action alternative for two reasons. First, implementation of the timber management program has departed substantially from the outcomes predicted in the 1995 RMPs, and the manner and intensity of this departure has varied substantially over time and among districts (USDI BLM 2012, pp. 6-12). There is no apparent basis on which the BLM might select and project into the future continuation of the practices from a specific year (or set of years) since 1995. Second, continuing to harvest timber at the declared annual productive capacity level for multiple decades into the future would not be possible using the current practices (USDI BLM 2012, pp. 6-12). The No Action alternative is required to provide a benchmark to compare outputs and effects, even though this alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the project. *Friends of Se.'s Future* v. *Morrison*, 153 F.3d 1059, 1065–66 (9th Cir. 1998). Because of the inherent unsustainability of current practices, the BLM cannot project their implementation into the future; thus, continuation of the current practices would not serve the essential function of the No Action alternative of providing a baseline for comparison of outputs and effects. In contrast, it is possible for the BLM to project the implementation of the 1995 RMPs for multiple decades into the future and provide a baseline for comparison to the action alternatives.

The BLM cannot present the implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written and continuation of the current practices as two, separate No Action alternatives. The District Court for the Western District of Washington stated that agencies are "… obligated to provide a single, comprehensive no-action alternative that accurately represented the status quo …" *Conservation Nw.* v. *Rey*, 674 F. Supp. 2d 1232, 1251 (W.D. Wash. 2009). The status quo at this time is that the BLM must implement actions in conformance with the 1995 RMPs, consistent with 43 CFR 1610.5-3. Therefore, implementation of the 1995 RMPs as written, amended, and modified by court orders, represents the single No Action alternative for this RMP revision.

The BLM also eliminated continuation of the current practices from detailed analysis as an action alternative, because it would not be a reasonable alternative, in that it would not meet the purpose and need for this planning effort. The purpose and need includes providing a sustained yield of timber, which requires that the management of the forest provide a continuous volume of timber at the current intensity of management without decline. The current implementation practices in the timber program are not sustainable (USDI BLM 2012, pp. 6-12).

Timber harvest practices have varied since the adoption of the 1995 RMPs. Nevertheless, in recent years, all districts have implemented a timber harvest program that has been predominately thinning. The level of regeneration harvest has been substantially less than assumed in the 1995 RMPs for all districts, ranging from 4% to 16% of the assumed levels during the period from 2004 to 2010 (USDI BLM 2012, p. 7, Appendices 3 – 8). Thus, a management approach that would limit timber harvest to thinning would approximate the continuation of the practices of the past decade.

The 2008 RMP/EIS analyzed a sub-alternative of Alternative 1 that would limit timber harvest to thinning, which provides an approximation of the effects of continuation of the current practices. That

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analysis evaluated how long thinning alone could provide at least 90 percent of the annual productive capacity for Alternative 1. That analysis concluded that none of the sustained-yield units could maintain that harvest level for a decade. As concluded in that analysis, "This subalternative demonstrates that high levels of thinning cannot be maintained for extended periods to sustain an allowable sale quantity"[13] (USDI BLM 2007, p. 561). That analysis is incorporated here by reference (USDI BLM 2007, pp. 560-561). The timber harvest level of Alternative 1 would have been higher than the timber volume being produced under current practices. Thus, at the slower pace of harvesting under the current practices, compared to the harvest rates assumed under Alternative 1 in the 2008 RMP/EIS, it could be inferred that thinning might be able to support the current harvest volume for approximately one to two decades. However, during the years since the BLM conducted that analysis, the BLM has continued to harvest predominately with thinning, exhausting much of the thinning opportunities considered in that analysis. As a result, the overall analytical conclusion from the 2008 RMP/EIS that high levels of thinning can only be sustained for less than a decade is still applicable.

This analytical conclusion is consistent with the plan evaluations that the BLM conducted in 2012, which determined that the current timber harvest practices are "not sustainable at the declared ASQ level" due to reliance on predominately thinning (BLM 2012, pp. 10-11).

In summary, the BLM cannot analyze continuation of the current practices as the No Action alternative, because the current practices have been variable and are not sustainable, preventing the projection of the current practices into the future. The BLM has eliminated from detailed analysis the continuation of the current practices as an action alternative, because it would not be a reasonable alternative, in that it would not provide for a sustained yield of timber. The analysis of a thinning only sub-alternative in the 2008 RMP/EIS provides an approximation of the effects of this management approach, concluding that thinning levels can only be sustained for less than a decade.

"Natural Selection Alternative" - harvest only dead and dying trees

This alternative would remove only "naturally selected dead and dying trees, conditioned upon meeting the needs of other species." Timber harvesting of such trees would be accomplished with small equipment from a network of narrow roads. The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need and the basic policy objectives described in the guidance for development of all action alternatives, in that it would not make a substantial and meaningful contribution to providing a sustained yield of timber.

In addition, such an approach is economically infeasible for managing a landscape of the size and ruggedness of the BLM-administered lands in western Oregon. While this management approach might be feasible for managing a small woodlot on relatively flat terrain, the level of road access and survey efforts that would be necessary to identify and harvest the trees that die on BLM-administered lands in western Oregon every year would be prohibitively expensive both in financial and environmental terms.

Maximize carbon storage

This alternative would maximize the storage of carbon on BLM-administered lands. This Draft RMP/EIS analyzes the effects of the alternatives on carbon storage. The BLM will consider those effects on carbon storage, as well as the effects on other resources, in the development of the Proposed RMP and the eventual selection of an RMP. However, the BLM has no specific legal or regulatory mandate or policy

[13] As noted in Chapter 1, the terms "annual productive capacity," "annual sustained yield capacity," and "allowable sale quantity" are synonymous.

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direction to manage BLM-administered lands for carbon storage, and carbon storage is not part of the purpose and need for action. Therefore, the BLM has not developed alternatives specifically and explicitly intended to maximize carbon storage.

The BLM has various climate-related policies, including the following:

- Executive Order 13514, which directs agencies to measure, manage, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions toward agency-defined targets for agency actions such as vehicle fleet and building management
- Executive Order 13653, which directs agencies to assess climate change related impacts on and risks to the agency's ability to accomplish its missions, operations, and programs and consider the need to improve climate adaptation and resilience
- Departmental Manual 523 DM 1, which directs the Department of the Interior agencies to integrate climate change adaptation strategies into programs, plans, and operations

These policies address topics related to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, but none directs the BLM to manage BLM-administered lands specifically for carbon storage. This RMP/EIS is consistent with these policies to the extent they address topics within the scope of this planning effort.

Protect all nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for the northern spotted owl

The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it be substantially similar in design and effects to Sub-alternative C, which would reserve all forests 80 years of age and older. Although an age threshold of 80 years old does not function as a *de facto* definition of nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat, the majority of forests over 80 years of age provide nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for the northern spotted owl, and the majority of forests less than 80 years of age do not provide nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat. At the scale of analysis of the decision area, an alternative that would reserve all nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for the northern spotted owl would not be sufficiently different from Sub-alternative C to warrant separate analysis.

Reserve all forests 200 years of age and older

The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need and the basic policy objectives described in the guidance for development of all action alternatives, in that it would not make a substantial and meaningful contribution to maintaining older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest. Forests 200 years of age and older only constitutes about two-thirds of the structurally complex forest, according to the structural stage descriptions used in this RMP/EIS. This alternative would leave too much older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest available for timber harvest to constitute a substantial and meaningful contribution to maintaining older, more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forest.

Do not reserve older, more structurally complex forest

The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need, which includes contributing to the conservation and recovery of listed species. As the purpose and need explains, contributing to the conservation and recovery of the spotted owl necessarily includes maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests. As such, any alternative that does not maintain older, more structurally complex forest is not a reasonable alternative.

Increase Riparian Reserve widths

This alternative would include Riparian Reserves that would be wider than the Riparian Reserves in the No Action Alternative (i.e., more than two site-potential tree heights on fish-bearing streams and more

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than one site-potential tree height on non-fish-bearing streams). Such an alternative would be substantially similar to the Riparian Reserves in the No Action Alternative, because of its effect on the conservation and recovery of listed fish and the protection of clean water. Based on the results in the interagency Aquatic and Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Program, which evaluated watershed condition and trend for a fifteen-year period (1994-2008) in the Northwest Forest Plan area, the protections provided, in part, by the Riparian Reserves are improving watershed conditions (Lanigan et al. 2012). Additional width of Riparian Reserves would not provide additional protections for fish habitat or water quality. Furthermore, the Riparian Reserves in the No Action Alternative were designed to meet an array of objectives, including broad ecological objectives and riparian and terrestrial species habitat. In contrast, the Riparian Reserves in the action alternatives are designed to meet narrower objectives: conservation and recovery of listed fish and protection of clean water, consistent with the Purpose and Need for action. Because of these narrower objectives, the action alternatives considered in detail do not include widening the Riparian Reserve widths.

2008 BLM RMPs (Western Oregon Plan Revisions)

This alternative would manage BLM-administered lands consistent with the 2008 Records of Decision/RMPs. The U.S. District Court, District of Oregon (*Pacific Rivers Council et al.* v. *Shepard*, 03:11--CV--442--HU, 2012 WL 950032 (D. Or. Mar. 20, 2012)).vacated the 2008 Records of Decision/RMPs on May 16, 2012. The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need and therefore is not a reasonable alternative. Specifically, the 2008 RMPs would not maintain older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests, because they would only defer the harvest of older forests for 15 years.

Oregon Forest Practices Act

This alternative would manage BLM-administered lands with only those protections required by the Oregon Forest Practices Act, such as riparian protections and retention requirements during timber harvest. The BLM eliminated this alternative from detailed analysis because it would not meet the purpose and need for action and therefore is not a reasonable alternative.

In the 2008 RMP/EIS, the BLM used a reference analysis of managing most commercial forest lands for timber production, which considered the effects of managing "… in a manner similar to private industrial lands" (BLM 2008, p. 484). The 2008 RMP/EIS used this reference analysis to provide context and a point of comparison where needed to analyze the effects of the alternatives, rather than as a reasonable alternative itself. Nevertheless, the information in the 2008 RMP/EIS on the effects of this reference analysis is sufficient to demonstrate that this management approach would not meet the purpose and need for action, in that it would not provide a substantial and meaningful contribution to the conservation and recovery of listed species, including the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and listed fish. It would not meet the purpose and need for action because it would not provide a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests and maintain older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests and would not maintain marbled murrelet habitat (BLM 2008, p. 532). It would not meet the purpose and need for action because this management approach or similar management approaches would result in stream temperature increases after timber harvest, increased risk of sediment delivery to streams, and increased susceptibility to peak flows and subsequent adverse effects to fish habitat (BLM 2008, pp. 755-759; 762-764; 765).

Provide "not less than one-half billion feet board measure" of timber

This alternative would include providing an annual productive capacity of at least 500 million board feet of timber. Several commenters have asserted during the planning process that the O&C Act makes this

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requirement of the BLM. The O&C Act directs, "The annual productive capacity for such lands shall be determined and declared as promptly as possible after August 28, 1937, but until such determination and declaration are made the average annual cut therefrom shall not exceed one-half billion feet board measure: Provided, That timber from said lands in an amount not less than one-half billion feet board measure, or not less than the annual sustained yield capacity when the same has been determined and declared, shall be sold annually, or so much thereof as can be sold at reasonable prices on a normal market."

The purpose and need for action includes providing a sustained yield of timber but does not specify a target volume of timber. The basic policy objectives described in the guidance for development of all action alternatives stipulate that the alternatives must make a substantial and meaningful contribution to each of the purposes for action to be considered reasonable. The BLM has not specified a quantitative threshold for the amount of timber harvest that would constitute a substantial and meaningful contribution to sustained yield timber production, and does not accept that "one-half billion feet board measure" (that is, 500 million board feet) is a relevant or appropriate threshold.

Moreover, the BLM does not accept that the O&C Act requires that this RMP provide an annual productive capacity of "not less than one-half billion feet board measure" of timber. The O&C Act requires that the BLM offer for sale annually "… not less than one-half billion feet board measure, or not less than the annual sustained yield capacity when the same has been determined and declared …"(emphasis added). Previous BLM planning efforts, including the 1995 RMPs, determined and declared the annual sustained yield capacity, rendering obsolete the requirement to offer for sale "… not less than one-half billion feet board measure." This RMP revision will likewise determine and declare the annual sustained yield capacity based on the eventual RMP selected, again rendering obsolete the requirement to offer for sale "… not less than one-half billion feet board measure."

Based on the analysis of alternatives in previous planning efforts, the BLM cannot design an alternative that would provide an annual productive capacity of "… not less than one-half billion feet board measure" of timber and simultaneously make a substantial and meaningful contribution to the conservation and recovery of listed species, including providing a network of large blocks of forest to be managed for late-successional forests and maintaining older and more structurally complex multi-layered conifer forests. Therefore, such an alternative would not meet the purpose and need for action and would not be a reasonable alternative.

Change the O&C Act

This alternative would change or repeal the O&C Act, changing or removing the mandate for the BLM to manage the O&C lands "for permanent forest production, and the timber thereon shall be sold, cut, and removed in conformity with the principal of sustained yield for the purpose of providing a permanent source of timber supply, protecting watersheds, regulating stream flow, and contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries, and providing recreational facilties [*sic*]." Changes to existing laws or repeal of existing laws are not within the authority of the BLM and would be beyond the scope of this action, which is to revise the current RMPs with management objectives, land use allocations, and management direction that best meet the purpose and need. The purpose and need specifically includes providing a sustained yield of timber as required by the O&C Act.

Bills have recently been introduced to Congress that would change or repeal the O&C Act, including H.R. 1526 (O&C Trust, Conservation, and Jobs Act, passed House September 20. 2013) and S. 1784 (Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2013, introduced December 9, 2013). Neither of these bills has yet become law. If Congress passes and the President signs into law any legislation that would change or repeal the O&C Act, the BLM would reconsider the purpose and need for action in this RMP revision, as

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appropriate. However, any such changes to the O&C Act or the purpose and need at this time would be speculative.

Comparison of Alternatives

Table X summarizes the major features that are not common to all action alternatives. Appendix X provides detailed descriptions of the management objectives and management direction for each action alternative.

Table Y provides a summary of the key impacts of the alternatives. This table focuses on effects that vary substantially among the alternatives. Chapter 3 provides detailed analysis of the environmental consequences of the alternatives.

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Table 9. Key features of the alternatives

Alternative	Total Late-Successional Reserve (acres)	Protection of Structurally Complex Forest	Riparian Reserve total width	Riparian Reserve Inner Zone width	Marbled murrelet survey and protection
No Action	478,860	none specified	2 SPTH[14] on fish-bearing streams; 1 SPTH on non-fish-bearing streams	none specified	survey in Zones 1&2; protect contiguous recruitment and existing habitat within ½ mile of sites
Alternative A	1,147,527	≥120 years	1 SPTH on all streams	120’ on perennial and fish-bearing streams; 50’ on non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	none
Alternative B	1,127,320	District-defined map based on existing, district-specific information	1 SPTH on perennial and fish-bearing streams; 100’ on debris-flow-prone non-fish-bearing intermittent streams; 50’ on other non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	100’ on perennial and fish-bearing streams; 50’ on non-fish-bearing intermittent streams	survey in Zone 1; protect contiguous habitat within 300’ of sites
Sub-alternative B	1,422,933				
Alternative C	949,279	≥160 years	150’ on fish-bearing streams; 50’ on non-fish-bearing streams	60’ on fish-bearing streams; 50’ on non-fish-bearing streams	survey stands >120 years; protect contiguous habitat within 300’ of sites
Sub-alternative C	1,373,206	≥80 years			none
Alternative D	714,292	≥120/140/160 years on high/moderate/low productivity sites	1 SPTH on all streams	120’ on all streams	survey in Zones 1&2; protect habitat within ½ mile of sites

[14] Site-potential tree height

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Alternative	Total Harvest Land Base (acres)	Green tree retention	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (# designated)	Recreation Management Areas (SRMA[15] acres ERMA[16] acres)	Protection of lands with wilderness characteristics (acres)	Suitable Wild and Scenic Rivers (# of river segments)
No Action	691,998	GFMA[17]: 6-8 trees per acre Connectivity/Diversity: 12-18 trees per acre Southern GFMA: 16-25 trees per acre	89 (and 53 potential)	168,968 2,397,460	none	9 (and 50 eligible)
Alternative A	343,900	no retention	119	20,065 0	XX,XXX	0
Alternative B	556,335	Low Intensity Timber Area: 15-30% retention Moderate Intensity Timber Area: 5-15% retention	114	24,972 139,320	XX,XXX	6
Sub-alternative B	298,121					
Alternative C	741,332	no retention	111	59,046 357,771	XX,XXX	6
Sub-alternative C	495,507					
Alternative D	650,382	Owl Habitat Timber Area: maintain owl habitat Moderate Intensity Timber Area: 5-15% retention	118	86,693 580,458	XX,XXX	59

[15] Special Recreation Management Area
[16] Extensive Recreation Management Area
[17] General Forest Management Area

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Chapter 4 – Consultation and Coordination

Introduction

This chapter describes the public involvement and collaboration that occurred during the preparation of this Draft RMP/EIS. That collaboration includes government-to-government relationships with tribes, formal cooperators in the planning process, and consultation with Federal and State agencies. This chapter also includes a list of staff involved in the RMPs for Western Oregon.

Public Involvement

Formal scoping for the RMPs started with printing of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on March 9, 2012 (77 FR 14414). The BLM initially requested that the public submit comments in response to the Notice of Intent by July 5, 2012. The BLM continued to accept any public comments for an additional 90 days. By October 5, 2012, the BLM had received 584 comment letters. During the scoping period, the BLM held public meetings in Medford, Grants Pass, Klamath Falls, Salem, Springfield, Coos Bay, Roseburg, and Portland[18]. At each of these meetings, the BLM provided a brief overview of the planning process and a list of questions to prompt feedback, and then opened the meeting for discussion. The BLM prepared a scoping report, which contains a summary of this scoping process. The scoping report and other scoping documents are available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/scoping.php

During the winter of 2013, the BLM initiated a multi-phase outreach strategy to engage the public specifically on recreation management issues. The BLM sought to gain a better understanding of the social values associated with recreational users across western Oregon. This strategy included an interactive website and regional workshops in Medford, Roseburg, Springfield, and Portland. The regional workshops included the participation of the National Park Service-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program, the Association of O&C Counties, the Outdoor Alliance, Travel Oregon, the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Mazamas. The BLM designed this

[18]The BLM has listed the cities in this chapter in order by meeting date.

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recreation outreach to answer planning questions, collect quantitative and qualitative data specific to recreation management area delineation, and to understand better the role, value, and importance that recreation plays within each planning region. Outreach also yielded data related to public demand for specific types of recreation activities, experiences, beneficial outcomes, and the desired character of BLM-administered recreation settings. Appendix X - Recreation key findings report contains a summary of the results of this outreach effort.

In June of 2013, the BLM released the Purpose and Need Statement for the RMPs for Western Oregon. While this is not a typical step in the planning process, the BLM shared the Purpose and Need Statement earlier than usual in order to augment dialogue on the direction of the planning process. The Purpose and Need Statement is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/purpose.pdf

In August of 2013, the BLM released the Analysis of the Management Situation for the RMPs for Western Oregon (USDI BLM XXX). The BLM managers use the Analysis of the Management Situation as a snapshot to understand the status of the BLM resources and management opportunities in western Oregon, and the BLM shared this document for informational purposes. The Analysis of the Management Situation is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/ams-rmps-western-oregon.pdf

During December of 2013, the BLM conducted four community listening sessions on elements of the RMP. The BLM held public meetings in Corvallis, Medford, Coos Bay, and Roseburg. The community listening sessions included BLM updates on the planning process and attendees had a chance to share their input with the BLM and each other through small group discussions. A report (USDI BLM XXX) on the community listening sessions is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/comm-listen-report.pdf

On February 24, 2014, the BLM released the Planning Criteria (USDI BLM XXX), which provided an in-depth look at guidance, policy, analytical methodology, and preliminary alternatives. The comment period for the Planning Criteria continued until March 31, 2014. The BLM received approximately 3,000 letters during this comment period. During March 2014, the BLM conducted meetings about the Planning Criteria and the preliminary alternatives. The BLM held public meetings in Portland, Springfield, Salem, Roseburg, Coos Bay, Medford, and Klamath Falls. The BLM also held an additional public meeting in Roseburg with invited elected officials. The Planning Criteria is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/rmp-criteria.pdf

Additionally, the BLM has provided information to the public through various digital media outlets, including the BLM's public website, Twitter, and Facebook. The public can send inquiries to the agency at any time through a publicly available email address, BLM_OR_RMPs_WesternOregon@blm.gov. More information about agency outreach is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/public.php

List of Recipients of the Draft RMP/EIS

The BLM will distribute the Draft RMP/EIS to a mailing list of those agencies, organizations, tribes, and individuals that have requested copies. This mailing list, which includes approximately 1,700 hard copy mailings and 1,800 electronic copy mailings, is incorporated here by reference (USDI BLM, 2014).

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Collaboration

The FLPMA and NEPA provide direction regarding the coordination and cooperation of Federal agencies with other agencies and local and state governments and tribes. The FLPMA specifically emphasizes the need to ensure coordination and consistency of the BLM's proposed actions with the plans and policies of other relevant jurisdictions. The Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA specifically requires cooperative relationships between lead and cooperating agencies.

Government-to-Government Relationships

Federally recognized tribes have a unique relationship with the Federal Government in that they are sovereign nations and retain inherent powers of self-government. They interact with the United States on a government-to-government level.

There are nine federally recognized tribes located within, or that have interests within, the planning area:

- The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde: www.grandronde.org
- The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians: www.ctsi.nsn.us
- The Coquille Indian Tribe: www.coquilletribe.org
- The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians: www.ctclusi.org
- The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs: www.warmsprings.com
- The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians: www.cowcreek.com
- The Klamath Tribes: www.klamathtribes.org
- The Quartz Valley Indian Reservation: www.qvir.com
- The Karuk Tribe: www.karuk.us

In addition to government-to-government relationships, the BLM invited all of the above federally recognized tribes to be formal cooperators in the RMP revisions. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Klamath Tribes are formal cooperators in the RMP revisions, in addition to their government-to-government status.

In 2013, the BLM offered all tribes within the planning area an opportunity to schedule individual tribal listening sessions. The BLM met with five tribes on different dates spanning from May 14, 2013, to December 13, 2013.

In addition to their government-to-government relationship and their role as a formal cooperator, the Coquille Indian Tribe has a representative on the Westside Steering Committee, as noted below. The BLM has also agreed to meet regularly with the Coquille Indian Tribe to facilitate open and recurring communication. The Coquille Indian Tribe is directly engaged in the planning process, because the management of the Coquille Forest is subject by law (25 U.S.C. 715c(d)) to the standards and guidelines of forest plans for adjacent or nearby Federal forest lands. Title V of the Oregon Resource Conservation

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Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-208) included the creation of the Coquille Forest to be held in trust for the benefit of the Coquille Indian Tribe. The Act states that the Coquille Forest shall be managed "under applicable State and Federal forestry and environmental protection laws, and subject to critical habitat designations under the Endangered Species Act, and subject to the standards and guidelines of Federal forest plans on adjacent or nearby Federal lands, now and in the future." This Act also requires the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to take the Coquille Forest lands into trust for the benefit of the Coquille Indian Tribe. For the purposes of interpreting Title V of this Act, the management direction that will be described within the eventual RMP is synonymous with the "standards and guidelines" referenced in this Act.

Formal Cooperators

Cooperating agency status provides a formal framework for governmental units (including local, State, Federal, and tribal) to engage in active collaboration with a lead Federal agency to implement requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. For these RMP revisions, the BLM has worked with cooperators from many agencies. With all formal cooperators, the BLM has signed a memorandum of understanding, identifying the roles and responsibilities of the BLM and the cooperating agency in the planning process. See Table 4-1 for a list of the formal cooperators for these RMP revisions.

Table 4-1. Formal cooperators

	Cooperator
County governments[19]	Benton County
	Clackamas County
	Columbia County
	Coos County
	Curry County
	Douglas County
	Klamath County
	Lane County
	Lincoln County
	Linn County
	Marion County
	Multnomah County
	Polk County
	Tillamook County
	Washington County
	Yamhill County
State government	State of Oregon[20]
Federal government	Environmental Protection Agency
	National Marine Fisheries Service
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

[19] With the exception of Benton County, all of the listed counties have authorized the Association of O&C Counties to act as the counties' agent and representative in their role as cooperating agencies in this planning process. Occasionally, some counties represented by the Association of O&C Counties have had a county commissioner participate in the activities of the planning process. When that has happened, the county commissioner has represented the county rather than the Association of O&C Counties.

[20] Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Department of Forestry are the Oregon State agencies actively engaged in the planning process.

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	Cooperator
	U.S. Forest Service
Tribes	Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians
	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
	Coquille Indian Tribe
	Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
	Klamath Tribes

Working through a robust engagement process with neutral facilitation, the cooperators have provided expertise on much of the subject matter the BLM is addressing in the Draft RMP/EIS, as well as advice based on experience with similar planning efforts. The cooperators have provided feedback on public outreach sessions, data sources and analytical methods, and components of the draft alternatives. They have provided oral and written feedback and ideas throughout the process of developing the Draft RMP/EIS. DS Consulting, working through Oregon Consensus, has facilitated all meetings of the full Cooperating Agency Advisory Group and the five individual working groups.

The full Cooperating Agency Advisory Group first met in the summer of 2012, when the facilitators led them through an orientation to the cooperating agency task and assisted the group in defining its desired outcomes. In the fall and winter of 2012, the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group met several more times to provide and review RMP scoping comments and to discuss the RMP process. They also met to provide comments and review documents developed by the BLM for the planning effort, including the purpose and need for action and the planning criteria, in addition to providing written comments on the BLM's methodology for analyzing the effects of the alternatives. The Cooperating Agency Advisory Group also provided feedback on the public meetings held in 2013 and 2014. The BLM conducted a rehearsal of these meetings with the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group, which provided feedback on the content and format, leading the BLM to make improvements to the outreach sessions. The Cooperating Agency Advisory Group also met in the fall of 2014 to discuss the results of the analysis and to provide feedback to the BLM on the identification of a preferred alternative.

In addition to meeting as a full group periodically throughout the development of the Draft RMP/EIS, the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group also created five working groups in the winter of 2013 in order to facilitate a more detailed level of engagement with the BLM. These groups focused, respectively, on the following topics: aquatics, outreach, terrestrial, socio-economics, and tribal issues.

The Aquatics Working Group met six times during the development of the Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM updated the group on the status of alternative development. The working group provided comments on the development of the riparian management strategies and the methodology for analyzing impacts of the alternatives on aquatic habitat and water quality.

The Outreach Working Group met four times during the development of the Draft RMP/EIS. The group discussed outreach planning and goals and provided input on the outreach timeline. During the winter of 2013, they met to revisit ideas for outreach during the planning criteria comment period.

The Terrestrial Working Group met five times during the development of the Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM updated this group on the development of the terrestrial components of the RMP (e.g., alternative approaches for the large block reserve design). The group reviewed and provided input on the methodology for analyzing the impacts of the alternatives on terrestrial resources and met to discuss and

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provide feedback on components of the draft alternatives related to timber harvest, northern spotted owl conservation, marbled murrelet conservation, and fire and fuels management.

The Socio-Economic Working Group met seven times during the development of the Draft RMP/EIS. This group reviewed and refined the methodology for analyzing the socio-economic analysis of the alternatives, including working with BLM and its contractors on the development of a method to analyze impacts to community capacity and resiliency. Members of this group assisted the BLM in obtaining county economic data and identifying city officials for information-collection interviews.

The Tribal Working Group met four times during the development of the Draft RMP/EIS. This group provided input on the process by which the BLM conducted tribal listening sessions and consultation. They also provided input on aspects of the draft alternatives and analytical methodology that address resources of concern to the tribes represented in the group. Members of the group also reviewed and provided content for appendices to the Tribal Interests section of the Draft RMP/EIS.

Additionally, BLM district managers and planning personnel have met with individual county commissioners on an ongoing basis to provide updates on progress and key milestones. As noted above, several county governments are formal cooperators in the planning process. While the Association of O&C Counties represents most of the counties at the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group meetings, BLM district managers also maintain relationships with local county representatives.

Consultation

Endangered Species Act

Before signing a Record of Decision on the RMP revisions, the BLM will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service signed an ESA Consultation Agreement, which identifies responsibilities for each agency and defines the processes, products, actions, timeframe, and expectations for the consultation process. The ESA Consultation Agreement, signed June 18, 2013, is available at http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/files/esa-consult-agree.pdf

As part of this consultation, the BLM will prepare biological assessments of the potential effects of implementing the proposed RMP. In these biological assessments, the BLM will describe the proposed RMP, the geographic area addressed by the RMP, and the manner in which the RMP would affect threatened, endangered, and proposed species and their designated and proposed critical habitats.

As part of this consultation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service will provide their biological opinions. These biological opinions will include assessments of the status of the species and critical habitats involved, contain reviews of the potential effects of the RMP on these species and habitats, and provide evaluations of whether the RMP would be likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any species or destroy or adversely modify their critical habitats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service will prepare separate biological opinions dealing with terrestrial and aquatic species under their respective ESA jurisdiction. Additional information on the biological assessments and biological opinions is available in the ESA Consultation Agreement.

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In addition to their role as formal cooperators, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have met with the BLM repeatedly throughout the planning in preparation for the ESA consultation on the RMPs for Western Oregon. As part of that work and consistent with the ESA Consultation Agreement, the BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have met as a Terrestrial Technical Team in April 2013, September 2013, January 2014, February 2014, and March 2014 to discuss the analytical methodology for evaluating the effects of the alternatives on listed species and producing analytical information for the biological assessments. The BLM also met directly with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in April 2014 to discuss specifically the forest management approach for northern spotted owl critical habitat in Alternative D considered in the Draft RMP/EIS.

The BLM convened a group including representatives of the National Marine Fisheries Service and Environment Protection Agency in April and May 2013 to develop a strategic proposal for riparian management. The Environmental Protection Agency has participated in these meetings in the capacity of their technical expertise related to water quality. The BLM, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Environmental Protection Agency met as a Riparian Technical Team to develop that strategic proposal in detail to be included among the alternatives in the Draft RMP/EIS. DS Consulting facilitated all meetings of the Riparian Technical Team. The Riparian Technical Team met seven times from August 2013 to January 2014 and presented their work to the Cooperating Agency Advisory Group on January 30, 2014.

In addition, the BLM has met directly with the National Marine Fisheries Service in March 2014, April 2014, and June 2014 to discuss analytical methodology for evaluating the effects of the alternatives on listed fish species and producing analytical information for the biological assessment.

Water and Air Quality Management

As part of these RMP revisions, the BLM will concurrently coordinate with various agencies on water and air quality management. The BLM will coordinate with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (the federally designated management agency) on water quality standards and other requirements of the federally designated management agency as authorized by the Clean Water Act. Similarly, the BLM will coordinate with the Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and U.S. Forest Service to minimize the impacts of the emissions from prescribed burns.

List of Preparers

Westside Steering Committee

The Westside Steering Committee is comprised of BLM Oregon/Washington Deputy State Director - Division of Resources, the six BLM district managers represented in the RMP revisions, and a representative from the Coquille Indian Tribe. This committee provides leadership and direction to the RMP revisions planning process.

Key Project Staff

An interdisciplinary team of resource specialists and managers from the BLM districts and state office, and contract personnel prepared the Draft RMP/EIS for the RMPs for Western Oregon. The following table lists the staff, the organization where each staff member works, and their area of responsibility. Brief biographies for each BLM interdisciplinary team member are included below in Table 4-2.

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Table 4-2. List of Key Project Staff

Name	BLM Office	Area of Responsibility
Stewart Allen	Oregon State Office	Socioeconomics
Peter Broussard	Coos Bay District	Sustainable Energy
Mark Brown	Oregon State Office	Project Manager
Dan Carpenter	Coos Bay District	Hydrology
Susan Carter	Roseburg District	Rare Plants and Fungi
J. Byron Clayton	Oregon State Office	Lands and Realty
Lori Crumley	Lakeview District	Grazing and Wild Horses
Jena Dejuilio	Medford District	Fire and Fuels
Craig Ducey	Oregon State Office	Inventory Data Support
Louisa Evers	Oregon State Office	Air Quality and Climate Change
Paul Fyfield	Oregon State Office	Cartography
Eric Greenquist	Oregon State Office	Wildlife – Northern Spotted Owl
Richard Hardt	Oregon State Office	Interdisciplinary Team Leader
Claire Hibler	Salem District	Invasive Species and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Eric Hiebenthal	Oregon State Office	GIS Data Management
Aimee Hoefs	Coos Bay District	Writer, Editor, and Records
Carolina Hooper	Oregon State Office	Vegetation Modeling
Zach Jarrett	Salem District	Recreation, Visual Resource Management, and the National Landscape Conservation System
Craig Kintop	Roseburg District	Forest Management
Sarah Levy	Oregon State Office	Public Affairs Officer
Rex McGraw	Roseburg District	Wildlife – All but the Northern Spotted Owl
Arthur Miller	Oregon State Office	GIS and Data Analysis
Diane Parry	Medford District	Minerals
Lauren Pidot	Oregon State Office	Associate Interdisciplinary Team Leader
Cory Sipher	Roseburg District	Fisheries
Dale Stewart	Oregon State Office	Soils
Brian Thauland	Oregon State Office	Roads
Shelli Timmons	Oregon State Office	Management Analyst
Heather Ulrich	Eugene & Salem Districts	Cultural Resources and Tribal Interests
Abe Wheeler	Roseburg District	Forest Management

Stewart Allen – Socioeconomics. Stewart earned a Bachelor of Arts in mass communications and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology at the University of Utah, a Master of Arts in social/environmental psychology at Claremont Graduate School, and a Ph.D. in forestry (with a minor in psychology) at the University of Montana. He has 34 years of experience in the human dimensions of natural resources including 20 years with the Federal Government and one and a half years with the BLM as Socioeconomic Specialist, a zoned position shared by Oregon/Washington, California, and Alaska.

Peter Broussard – Sustainable Energy. Pete earned a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Registered as a professional engineer for 36 years, he currently holds professional engineering licenses in three states. Most of his private-sector career has been in the

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electric utility, gas pipeline, and petroleum industries. His public service includes eight years in the military as a combat engineer, and five years with the BLM as the Engineering Supervisor in the Coos Bay District.

Mark Brown – Project Manager. Mark Brown currently serves as the RMPs for Western Oregon Project Manager in the BLM Oregon State Office. He previously served as the BLM Partnership Coordinator. His federal career began as a Presidential Management Fellow with the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service before joining the BLM in 2002. He earned a Master of Environmental Management from Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and a Master of Public Administration at Portland State University, Hatfield School of Government.

Dan Carpenter – Hydrology. Dan earned a Bachelor of Science in soil conservation from Washington State University. He has worked as a professional hydrologist for the past 35 years with the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM on the Oregon Coast, Western Cascades, and Great Basin in Nevada. He is currently the District Hydrologist in the Coos Bay District.

Susan Carter – Rare Plants and Fungi. Susan earned a Bachelor of Arts in botany and environmental biology (double major) from Humboldt State University and has 25 years of experience working as a botanist with the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service. She is currently the District Botanist in the Roseburg District.

J. Byron Clayton – Lands and Realty. Byron earned a Bachelor of Arts in geography at Appalachian State University and a Master of Science in geography at Portland State University. He began work for the BLM in 2001 as a student cartographer with the Land Records Team in the Branch of Lands and Minerals. He is currently the Supervisory Geographer of the Land Records Team in the Branch of Geographic Sciences in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Lori Crumley – Grazing and Wild Horses. Lori earned a Bachelor of Science in range ecology and a Master of Science in plant science at the University of Idaho. She has seven years of experience working for the Federal Government as a Range Management Specialist. For the last three years, she has been a Range Management Specialist for the Lakeview Field Office in the Lakeview District.

Jena DeJuilio – Fire and Fuels. Jena earned a Master of Science in biology/fire ecology from Southern Oregon University. She has 12 years of experience in fire ecology and fuels management with the National Park Service and the BLM in southwest Oregon and is currently a Fire Ecologist in the Medford District.

Craig Ducey – Inventory Data Support. Craig earned a Bachelor of Science in botany at the University of Wyoming and a Master of Science in geography at Portland State University. He has 14 years of experience as a GIS/Remote Sensing Specialist in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Louisa Evers – Air Quality and Climate Change. Louisa earned a Bachelor of Science in forestry from the University of Tennessee, a Master of Science in forestry with an emphasis in fire ecology from the University of Idaho, and a Ph.D. in environmental science with an emphasis in rangeland ecology from Oregon State University. She has 28 years of experience with BLM and the U.S. Forest Service in fuels and fire management, fire ecology, vegetation ecology, and climate change. She is currently the Research Liaison and Climate Change Coordinator in the BLM Oregon State Office.

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Paul Fyfield – Cartography. Paul earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Science in geography at Portland State University. He has worked for the BLM Oregon State Office in Portland since 2001. He is currently a Cartographer with the BLM Oregon State Office.

Eric Greenquist – Wildlife – Northern Spotted Owl. Eric earned a Bachelor of Arts in biology at the University of Missouri and a Master of Science in wildlife ecology at Ohio University. He has worked as a professional wildlife biologist for 37 years, including 34 years with the BLM with the past 22 years in western Oregon. He is the District Wildlife Biologist in the Eugene District, where he leads the wildlife and endangered species management programs.

Richard Hardt – Interdisciplinary Team Leader. Richard earned a Bachelor of Arts in natural sciences at Johns Hopkins University, a Master of Landscape Architecture at Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in Forest Resources at the University of Georgia. He has 20 years of experience working for the BLM and is currently a planner in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Claire Hibler – Invasive Species and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Claire earned a Bachelor of Science in forest management at Oregon State University and a Bachelor of Arts in general biology at Humboldt State University. Claire is a founding member of, and participates on, the steering committee for the Western Invasives Network, which spans northwest Oregon, part of southwest Washington, and the Columbia River Gorge. She has worked in the Salem District for more than 25 years, serving as the District Botanist since 2001.

Eric Hiebenthal – GIS Data Management. Eric earned a Bachelor of Science in geography at Oregon State University. He has 18 years of experience with the BLM working with GIS, specializing in GIS Data Management. He is currently a GIS Data Management Specialist in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Aimee Hoefs – Writer, Editor, and Records. Aimee earned a Bachelor of Arts in molecular biology at Colgate University. She has worked for the BLM for nineteen years and has been a NEPA specialist for the past seven years. She is currently the Myrtlewood Field Office Planning and Environmental Coordinator in the Coos Bay District.

Carolina Hooper – Vegetation Modeling Lead. Carolina earned a Bachelor of Science in forestry at Humboldt State University and a Master of Science in forestry at Oregon State University. She has worked in forest inventory and planning for the last 20 years with the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM. She is currently a Forester/Resource Information Analyst in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Zach Jarrett – Recreation, Visual Resource Management, and the National Landscape Conservation System. Zach earned a Bachelor of Science in recreation resource management at Oregon State University and a Master of Science in natural resource planning at Humboldt State University. He has 13 years of experience working for the BLM in western Oregon and is currently an outdoor recreation planner in the Oregon State Office working on regional recreation and travel planning projects.

Craig Kintop – Forest Management. Craig earned a Bachelor of Science in forest resources management at the University of Minnesota. He has more than 38 years of experience working for the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM and is currently the District Forester/Silviculturist in the Roseburg District.

Sarah Levy – Public Affairs Officer. Sarah earned a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Southern California, and a Master of Science in natural resources and environment at the University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and Environment. Sarah has six years of experience with the U.S. Forest

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Service working in public affairs, recreation, and research and is currently a Public Affairs Officer with the BLM Oregon State Office.

Rex McGraw – Wildlife. Rex earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in wildlife biology at the University of Montana, Missoula. He has 16 years of experience with the BLM and is currently the District Wildlife Biologist in the Roseburg District.

Arthur Miller – GIS and Data Analysis Lead. Arthur earned Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts in geography at Oregon State University School. He has over 25 years of experience working with the BLM in Oregon, with an emphasis on the use of geographic information systems for resource and land use planning. He is currently a Geographic Information Specialist with the BLM Oregon State Office.

Diane Parry – Minerals. Diane earned a Bachelor of Arts in geology at Humboldt State University. She has 28 years of experience as a geologist with the BLM and is currently the Lead Geologist in the Medford District, zoned to the westside of Oregon.

Lauren Pidot – Associate Interdisciplinary Team Leader. Lauren earned a Bachelor of Arts in government at Wesleyan University and a Master of Science in natural resource policy at the University of Michigan. She has over six years of experience with the BLM and is currently a planner for the BLM Oregon State Office.

Cory Sipher – Fisheries. Cory earned a Bachelor of Science in biology at the State University of New York at Cortland and a Master of Science in fishery biology at Colorado State University. Cory has been with the BLM for 12 years, starting his career as a fisheries biologist in the South River Field Office of the Roseburg District. He has served as the District Fisheries Biologist in the Roseburg District since 2012.

Dale Stewart – Soils. Dale earned a Bachelor of Science in forestry and a Master of Science in biological sciences at Michigan Technological University. He has over 35 years of experience working in the forestry, soil, and hydrology disciplines with the BLM and U.S. Forest Service in Oregon. He is currently the Soil, Water, and Air Program Lead in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Brian Thauland – Roads. Brian earned a Bachelor of Science in forest management at Iowa State University. He has 36 years of experience with the BLM in forest engineering and currently provides transportation program support at the BLM Oregon State Office.

Shelli Timmons – Management Analyst. Shelli earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Communication at the University of Phoenix. Shelli has over 15 years of experience in the administration and management fields, the last 4 of which have been in the BLM Oregon State Office.

Heather Ulrich – Cultural Resources and Tribal Interests. Heather earned a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science in anthropology at the University of Oregon. She has been with the BLM since 2007 and currently works as the District Archaeologist and Tribal Liaison in both the Salem and Eugene Districts.

Abe Wheeler – Forest Management. Abe earned an Associate of Arts in business administration at Linn Benton Community College, and a Bachelor of Science in forest management at Oregon State University. He has seven years of experience with the BLM in field forestry, timber sale contract preparation, sale planning, and project leadership. Abe was also a key player in the recent design, analysis, and implementation of Roseburg District's Secretarial Pilot Project, as well as other more recent ecological forestry projects. He is currently a Plans Forester in the South River Field Office of the Roseburg District.

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Several contact efforts support the work of the interdisciplinary team:

- A team of specialists at Mason, Bruce, & Girard, Inc., under the project management of Mark Rasmussen (Mason, Bruce, & Girard, Inc.), has conducted vegetation modeling of the alternatives using the Woodstock Optimization Platform model (Woodstock). Carolina Hooper of the interdisciplinary team has directed this work.
- A team of specialists at Environmental Resources Management (ERM) and subcontractors, under the project management of Clive Graham, ERM, has conducted socioeconomic analysis of the alternatives. Stewart Allen of the interdisciplinary team has directed this work.
- David W. LaPlante of Natural Resource Geospatial in Yreka, California, and Jeffrey R. Dunk of Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, have assisted the BLM with its evaluation of the northern spotted owl. They used the MaxEnt computer model to forecast how northern spotted owl habitat conditions would change on BLM-administered lands in western Oregon under different management scenarios. They used the spatially explicit, individual-based population model HexSim to forecast how northern spotted owls would respond demographically to such changes. Eric Greenquist and Craig Ducey of the interdisciplinary team have directed this work.
- A team of specialists at ECONorthwest assisted the BLM with its evaluation of recreation supply and demand throughout the project area. ECONorthwest collected recreation supply and demand data to identify particularly valuable recreation activities or resources for development, and estimate the value of recreation use and improvements. Zach Jarrett of the interdisciplinary team has directed this work.

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PL_PUB_0345
4.1
10/27/2015

Jonathan Hayden

From: Mermejo, Lauren <lmermejo@blm.gov>
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2015 12:14 PM
To: nvca sagegrouse
Subject: Fwd: Coordination and Consultation Tracking List
Attachments: Consultation and Coordination Check List_4_14_15.docx

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Magaletti, Matthew** <mmagalet@blm.gov>
Date: Wed, Apr 15, 2015 at 5:38 AM
Subject: Coordination and Consultation Tracking List
To: Stephanie Carman <scarman@blm.gov>, Michael Hildner <mhildner@blm.gov>, Lauren Mermejo <lmermejo@blm.gov>

Attached is the tracking sheet we populated which outlines the changes we made in the Coordination and Consultation chapters of each ADPP. It also includes "consistency" drop-in language we crafted with the SOLs and incorporated into each ADPP.

Thanks,
--
Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management, WO-210
(202) 912-7085

--
Lauren L. Mermejo
Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse Project Mgr.
BLM, Nevada State Office
775 861-6580

GBR_0000489

	Billing	Buffalo	HiLine	Miles City	SD	Lewistown	Idaho	NW CO	Utah	Nevada	Oregon	North Dakota	WY 9	Bighorn
Cooperators Listed	Check	Check	Check	No list - Made note in Ch. 5	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	check
Tribal Consultation (Sec 106)	Check	Check	Check	No discussion – made note in Ch.5	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	check
FWS Section 107	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check
List of Preparers	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check	Check
Template language regarding consistency with local plans.	Dropped in – Section 5.3.5.	Dropped in: Section C.3. Consultation and Coordination	Dropped in: In the cooperating agency section of Ch. 5	Dropped in: Under the consistency section	Dropped in: Under the CA section	Dropped in language – Section 6.4.	Dropped in language – Section 6.3.	Dropped in – Ch. 6 (also changed header from "collaboration" to "consultation and coordination")	Dropped in – Section 6.5 (also changed header from "collaboration" to "consultation and coordination" also deleted "consistencies with federal plans" section)	Dropped in – Ch. 6	Dropped in – Ch. 6 (also changed header from "collaboration" to "consultation and coordination")	Dropped in – Ch. 6	Dropped in – Section 5.1.2.	Dropped in: Section 5.2 Consultation and Coordination.

Drop-in language included in all the plans: The BLM is aware that there are specific State laws and local plans 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 and its implementing regulations require that BLM's land use plans be consistent with State and local plans only if those plans are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands. Where State and local plans conflict with the purposes, policies, and programs of Federal law, there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved. While County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to 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.

PL_PUB_5632
4.1

From: Magaletti, Matthew
Sent: Saturday, August 23, 2014 5:40 AM
To: Melvin (Joe) Tague; Lauren Mermejo; Joan Suther; Quincy Bahr; Brent Ralston
Cc: Frank Quamen; Joseph Stout; Kathryn Stangl; Stephen Small
Subject: Buffers Table
Attachments: Updated BLM Great Basin GRSG ADPP Buffer Distances from Leks.docx

Hello Great Basin,

Attached is a revised buffers table from the version we reviewed during the FFM meeting this week. Please let Frank and I know if this content is incorrectly displayed.

Hope you all have a great weekend.

--
Matthew Magaletti
Planning and Environmental Analyst
Bureau of Land Management (WO-210)
(202) 912-7085

BLM Great Basin GRSG ADPP Buffer Distances from Leks (in miles)

Note: Many buffers are not applied due to the fact that the entire GRSG management area/habitat may already protected by a land use plan allocation.

	Prohibit all surface disturbing activities	Prohibit or minimize sage brush removal or cutting	Fluids (Closed)	Fluids (NSO)	Fluids (CSU/TL)	Fluids – Geospatial exploration (TL)	Exclude Renewable Development	Avoid Renewable Development	Disruptive recreational events	Upgrading/ new roads/trails	Fence Removal /Marking	Rangeland Structures	Vegetation Treatments	Above ground structures	Mineral Development	Repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance
Oregon ADPP	PPMA: 1_1 PGMA: 1_1	PPMA: 4 PGMA: 4	None	PPMA: - PGMA: 1_4	None	None	None	None	PPMA: 3-4_7 PGMA: 3-4_7	PPMA: 4_8 PGMA: 4_8	PPMA: 1.2 PGMA: 1.2	PPMA: 1 PGMA:1	PPMA: 4_{12} PGMA:4_{12}	None	None	None
Nevada/NE CA ADPP	PPMA: $1/4_2$ PGMA: $1/4_2$	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	PPMA: 4_9 PGMA: 4_9	PPMA: 1.25_c PGMA: 1.25_c	PPMA: 2_{11} PGMA:2_{11}	PPMA: .6/3.2_{13} PGMA: 6/3.2_{13}	None	None	None
Utah ADPP	PPMA: 1_{15} PGMA: -	None	None	PPMA: 4_3 PGMA: -	None	None	None	None	None	None	PPMA: 1.2_d PGMA: 1.2_d		PPMA: $.6_{14}$ PGMA:$.6_{14}$		PPMA: 1 PGMA: -	None
Idaho/SW MT ADPP (Idaho portion)	Core: 2_b Important:$.2_b$ General: 2_b	Core: $.6_a$ Important:$.6_a$ General: $.6_a$	None	None	None	None	Core: - Important: 2_5 General: -	Core: - Important: 2_5 General: -	Core: - 2_6 Important: 2_6 General: -	Core: - $.8_{10}$ Important: $.8_{10}$ General: -	None	Core: .6e Important: .6e General: .6e	None	Core: 2_f Important: 2_f General: - *See table below for ID for details.*	Core: $.8_g$ Important: $.8_g$ General: -	Core: $.2_{h\,/\,16}$ Important: $.2_{h\,/\,16}$ General: $.2_{h\,/\,16}$
Idaho/SW MT ADPP (MT portion)	None	None	None	Core : General: .6 Restore:	Core : - General: 2 Restore: -	Core : - General: 4 Restore: -	Core : - General: 1 Restore: -	None	None	None	None	None	None	None		None

Footnotes

1- (OR) Only applies to new anthropogenic disturbances

2- (NV) 4 mile buffer for all surface disturbing activities (during life cycle periods, except within existing designated corridors) & 1 mile buffer from seeps, springs and wet meadows within brood-rearing habitat (year round)

3- (UT) Only applies to development associated with existing fluid mineral leases.

4- (OR) For fluid mineral development

5- (ID) Exclude/Avoid solar energy development only.

6- (ID) Do not schedule disruptive recreational events (e.g., motorized races) during the lekking season.

7- (OR) 3 mile buffer only applies to the issuance of future special recreation permits., while the 4 mile buffer only applies to the issuance of motorized and /or race SRPs

8- (OR) Only applies to upgrading primitive roads.

9- (NV) Only applies to the to concentrated turn-out locations for livestock

10- (ID) Do not construct new paved or high volume traffic gravel roads.

11- (NV) 2 mile buffer only applies to domestic sheep use and bedding areas, and herder camps

12- (OR) Includes juniper cutting and vegetation management activities that are timing-sensitive for maximum effectiveness

13- (NV) .62 buffer for Lek Security-Tree cover/Proximity of trees: Less than 4 percent landscape canopy cover and 3.2 for nesting security-Tree cover/Proximity of trees: No tall structures

14- (UT) Reduce conifer, where technically feasible, to less than 5 percent canopy cover, with preference for complete removal

15- (UT Applies only to ROWs, mineral materials permits, non-energy leasables, appurtenant sub-surface coal mine facilities, surface coal mines (or facilities), or locatable mineral (where claimant agrees) developments

16- (ID) No repeated or sustained behavioral disturbance (e.g., visual, noise, etc.) to lekking birds from 6:00 pm to 9:00 am in Core/Important and avoid in General.

Best Available Science Reference

a. State of Colorado GRSG Conservation Plan

b. Connelly et al. 2000

c. Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2011; NRCS 2012

d. Stevens 2012

e. IDswMT biology team

f. Connelly et al. 2000

g. Patricelli et al. 2012

h. 2011 MS Thesis

Idaho ADPP – Additional Above Ground Structure Buffers			
	Core/Imp	General	
Do not allow new facilities or associated above ground infrastructure *Important only	2*	-	Connelly et al. 2000
Do not allow communication tower construction, unless needed to address public safety needs	3	-	Johnson et al. (2011)
Avoid communication tower construction, unless needed to address public safety needs. * Important and General Only	3*	-	Johnson et al. (2011
Do not allow transmission line construction	.37	.37	Gillan et al. (2013)

Avoid transmission line construction	2	2	Connelly et al. 2000

75% Breeding Bird Density: What Does it Mean?

A major goal in greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*, hereafter 'sage-grouse') conservation is to spend limited resources efficiently by conserving large and functioning populations. Knowledge of where these large and functioning populations are located represent a starting point to frame regional conservation initiatives, and can direct management to landscapes where actions will have the largest benefit to regional populations. The 75% breeding bird density map attempts to locate these large and functioning populations.

In their analysis, Dougherty et al. (2010) analyzed 4,885 leks (with nearly 100,000 attending male sage-grouse) across the range of the sage-grouse. They ranked each lek according to population size and started by plotting the largest leks on the map. The leks were buffered by 5.3 miles (8.5 km) to account for sage-grouse nesting habitat which surrounds the leks. They then added smaller leks to the map until the map showed leks containing 75% of all the breeding birds in the analysis. The remaining leks had the lowest populations and add up to account for 100 % of the breeding birds in the analysis.

Here is an example:

> *If there were 100,000 birds, 75% of that population would be 75,000 birds. Below is a hypothetical ranking of leks, from largest to smallest:*
>
> - *Largest lek: 25,000 birds*
> - *Lek #2: 20,000*
> - *Lek #3: 15,000*
> - *Lek #4: 10,000*
> - *Lek #5: 5,000*
>
> *The total for the five leks is 75,000 birds. These five leks can be said to contain 75% of the breeding bird density. The 75% breeding bird density map was created in a similar fashion.*

This method helps to group breeding areas that represent the smallest area necessary to contain 75% of the breeding birds. This map is intended to be a starting point to help identify core habitat for sage-grouse, but it will likely change during the RMP/EIS process.

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4.2.a

WHY PUBLIC COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT

This is an opportunity for you to be involved in the decision-making process of the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and to offer your thoughts on alternative ways for the agency to accomplish what it is proposing, and to offer your comments on the agency's analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action and possible mitigation of potential harmful effects of such actions.

The National Environmental Policy Act "… is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on the understanding of environmental consequences…" (40 CFR 1501 (c).) To achieve this, the EIS considers the effects of our actions on, economic and natural resources within the planning area. Citizens, such as yourself, often have valuable information about places and resources they consider important and the potential effects proposed federal actions may have on those places and resources. This is your opportunity to work with us so we can take your information into account.

The BLM is responsible for managing public lands in the public interest. Comments that provide relevant and new information with sufficient detail are most useful and are referred to as substantive comments. The BLM reviews all comments and identifies the topics that are substantive for consideration in the final published document. A substantive comment is a comment that does one or more of the following:

- Questions, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the RMP and EIS;
- Questions, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of, methodology for, or assumptions used for the environmental analysis;
- Presents new information relevant to the analysis;
- Presents reasonable alternatives other than those analyzed in the EIS; or
- Causes changes or revisions in one or more of the alternatives.

TIPS FOR PROVIDING HELPFUL COMMENTS

- Provide specific and detailed text changes. Include the section, management action or page number to help us find the exact location of the subject of your comment. Clearly identify:
  - Where the issue or error is located;
  - Why you believe there is an error; and
  - Alternative ideas to address the issue/errors.
- Provide constructive solutions with documentation or resources to support your recommendations.
- Include any knowledge, experience or evidence as it relates to your observations and comments.
- Provide GPS readings if possible when referring to specific locations.
- Avoid vague statements or concerns. These don't give the BLM something on which to act.
- Comments are not votes for or against a decision. BLM must rely on supporting information, not the number of comments received. Multiple comments / topics with the same concern are considered one comment.
- Avoid using form letters to convey your opinion. Your unique way of writing a comment helps the BLM understand your point of view.

EXAMPLE OF A HELPFUL COMMENT	EXAMPLE OF AN UNHELPFUL COMMENT
I disagree with closing Route 245A in Alternative E. I need this road to access my private land!	Stop closing our roads!

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4.2.a

Planning Process

National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy—Western Region

Issued

Dec 9 2011

Issue Notice of Intent to prepare RMPAs/ EISs and begin scoping

Document Existing Conditions and Management

Dec 2011-Feb 2012

Conduct Scoping
Provide minimum 60-day comment period on issues & planning criteria
Document results in **Scoping Report**

Indicates Opportunity for Public Involvement

* documents for public review in **black**

Formulate Alternatives

Analyze Effects of Alternatives

Select Preferred Alternative

Spring—Summer 2012

Prepare Draft RMPAs/Draft EISs

Summer—Fall 2012

Publish Notices of Availability

January 2013

Prepare Proposed RMPAs/Final EISs

Spring-Fall 2013

Publish Notices of Availability
Provide 30-day protest periods
Resolve protests

Provide 60-day Governor's Consistency Review periods

Prepare Records of Decision/Approved RMPAs

Winter-Spring 2014

Implement, Monitor and Evaluate Plan Decisions

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4.2.a

National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy

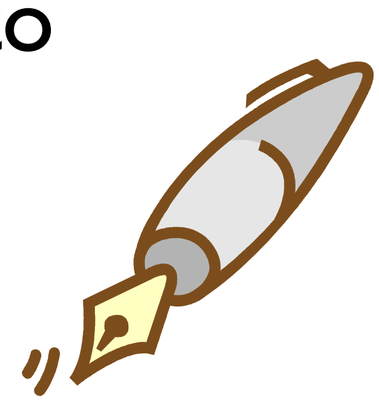
How to Get Involved

Get on the mailing list by sending a request to sagewest@blm.gov

Visit the National Strategy Web site at: www.blm.gov/sagegrouse

Visit the Western Region's strategy Web site at: www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse/western.html

Submit questions: Questions regarding the National Sage-Grouse Strategy can be submitted to SageQuery@blm.gov



How to Submit Comments

Submit comments via one of the methods listed below.

Comment Form: Submit a completed comment form at public meeting

E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

Fax: 775-861-6747

US Mail: Western Region Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502

*** Comments will be considered as part of the scoping process until February 16th 2012.**

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IN-ALL

GBR_PUB_000743
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [x] Individual (no affiliation) Family Rancher
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: Steve Damele
Organization (if applicable): Ditto Creek Ranch
Street Address (optional): 928 E. Rumsey Ln
City/State/Zip (optional): Mountain home, ID 83647

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-PLI-FIR

Fire & nesting and brooding are the biggest threats to Sage grouse further decline. Proper "Savory" like grazing is the answer. Simple statistical correlation proves this. Raven population has increased by ~~1000~~ 1100% since 1980. A 15 year study by ISU ~~pro~~ came up with this raven statistic while finding ravens are the number one nest ~~pred~~ egg predator.

2. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

3. BLM-FS-WL-BR

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

over

GBR_0000554

Couple this with grazing cuts and increased fires since 1980 and there you have simple statistical analysis of the 3 ~~#~~ reasons for sage grouse decline.

4. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

4. BLM-FS-PLI-FIR

I'm not advocating past grazing practices, I'm advocating more grazing animals for less time. Yes this means ranchers who turn their livestock out and forget about them will have to change or go away.

5. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

We need to have flexibility within grazing permits to hit invasive species hard then move on.

OR-ALL

GBR_PUB_000744
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
_v_	Private Organization NON-PROFIT
___	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: KATIE FITE
Organization (if applicable): WESTERN WATERSHEDS PROJECT
Street Address (optional): PO BOX 2863
City/State/Zip (optional): BOISE, ID 83701

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

- PLEASE EXTEND COMMENT PERIODS. MAPS, GIS DATA, ETC. ARE NOT EVEN AVAILABLE ON-LINE

- THE CORE AREA "PRIORITY HABITAT" IS APPALLINGLY BAD FOR IDAHO. IDAHO HAS ALREADY LOST SO MUCH SAGEBRUSH THAT PROTECTING ALL WHAT REMAINS IS THE ONLY WAY TO SUSTAIN POPULATIONS. CORE = TRIAGE = SACRIFICE = IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN VIABLE POPULATIONS

1. BLM-FS-GEN

2. BLM-FS-SG-GN

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

AF-IDMT

GBR_PUB_000746
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
___	Private Organization
X	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: Mark Arana / Ryan Newman
Organization (if applicable): BOR - Burley
Street Address (optional): 1359 Hansen Ave.
City/State/Zip (optional): Burley, ID 83318

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-SG-LK

1. BLM-FS-SG-WR

1) - Where are the Sage Grouse (habitat & locations) delineated on maps for the Tex Creek WMA? The BOR/IDFG conducted lek surveys as well as winter surveys in 2008 and there are a lot of birds using the area year round. This is primary winter habitat!

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

GBR_0000558

OR-ALL

GBR_PUB_000748
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
X	Private Organization
___	Federal, State, or Local Government
X	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: Richard Smith DDS
Organization (if applicable): LRLT, Salmon River BCH
Street Address (optional): 156 Lemhi Rd
City/State/Zip (optional): Salmon, ID 83467

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: I have roamed this region steadily since the late 1960s. Sage grouse were abundant in those days. During that period 1080 was distributed widely by the Govt. Trapper, also we had more intense grazing. You should set aside an area where predators can be reduced and a creative grazing system can be developed that will be more intense in some key areas

ACK

1. BLM-FS-PLI-OR-ALL

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

IN-UT

GBR_PUB_000753
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [x] Individual (no affiliation)
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: Lincoln Brown
Organization (if applicable):
Street Address (optional): Box 228
City/State/Zip (optional): Vernal UT. 84078

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: The local offices of the BLM, DWR, USF&W and County gov'ts have worked very hard to develop a Sage Grouse plan for the Uintah Basin please consider their plan as a substitute or supplement to a Federal Plan

1. BLM-FS-GEN

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

IN-ALL

GBR_PUB_000754
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [X] Individual (no affiliation)
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: Randy Long
Organization (if applicable): none
Street Address (optional): 8610 Kings Hill Dr.
City/State/Zip (optional): Cottonwood Heights, Utah, 84121, (S.L.C.)

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-GEN

The sage grouse should be protected as if it were endangered, and then ultimately designated as such. This would also greatly help out with other issues such as Southern Utah coal, and wilderness.

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

OR-ALL

GBR_PUB_000757
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- ____ Individual (no affiliation)
- ____ Private Organization
- X Federal, State, or Local Government
- ____ Citizen's Group
- ____ Elected Representative
- ____ Regulatory Agency

Name: Robert Riddle
Organization (if applicable): Wasatch Co. Public Lands Comm.
Street Address (optional): 333 East 100 North
City/State/Zip (optional): Midway, Ut. 84049

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

ACK

I am strongly opposed to listing of the Sage Grouse.
See Attached for written comments.

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN-UT

The Strawberry Population is increasing and listing will stop our efforts to improve Habitat.

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

Sage Grouse Comments

In an assessment, the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies said that sage grouse populations have "tended to stabilize" after a period of sharp decline from the 1960s to mid-1980s. With the development of oil and gas that has taken place since the 1980's how can environmentalist blame oil and gas as a need to list the species. 1. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

In the heart of the nation's natural gas territory, a bird most Americans have never heard of, is being portrayed as threatening a piece of the multibillion-dollar energy industry. Federal scientists are weighing whether to put the sage grouse on the endangered species list. If that happens, it's likely to mean significant restrictions on energy development across a huge swath of the West. Much of the bird's habitat overlaps with the nation's prime gas drilling territory, in Wyoming, Montana, Colorado and Utah. 2. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

Hundreds of natural gas wells have been drilled around the west in recent years, and thousands more are on the way. Much of the drilling would grind to a halt if the grouse's habitat came under federal protection. It is obvious to many of us that this effort is an attempt to STOP oil and gas and has little to do with sage grouse populations. 3. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

Salazar's IM pointed out several concerns with sage grouse habitat and did not list the major cause for population declines i.e. predators and hunting. A prime example is that Raven and Red Fox have rapidly increased in populations and are creating the heaviest impact on the Sage Grouse population. Also, when states allow hunting of a species, it has a direct toll on that population that is often not fully measured i.e. illegal hunting, over bag limits and wounded birds. 4. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

The fight over the grouse is about more than a bird. It symbolizes a larger dispute over the future of the West and the region's vast network of public land. Many expect the bird to touch off an ecological battle not seen since the feud over the northern spotted owl in the 1990s that ended up devastating the timber industry in the Pacific Northwest. **Do not let** this bird become a political battle to stop oil and gas much like the resent attempt by this administration with BLM's Wilderness Study Areas. 5. BLM-FS-PLI-LR-PU 6. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

While it's impossible to gauge just how much the grouse's endangered species listing could cost the energy industry, many experts, including Interior Secretary Gale Norton, say the economic impact could be enormous. **Stop the listing and have the BLM start managing MY land.** 7. BLM-FS-PLI-SOC

A federal judge instigated an uproar in 1989 when he issued an injunction on federal timber sales to protect many forests where spotted owls live.

Millions of acres were set aside for the owls, and thousands of jobs were lost in the woods and in sawmills as the timber industry adjusted to downsizing. **I want jobs to be created and not as this administration has done to decrease job opportunities i.e. Keystone pipeline. Once** 8. BLM-FS-PLI-SOC 9. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

9. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG cont'd

again, it is obvious that listing of this species is directed toward stopping oil and gas. DON'T stop self reliant efforts to become energy independent.

10. BLM-FS-PLI-ED-OG

The lesson isn't forgotten. Stakes are high enough that energy development supporters have begun a major effort to block the sage grouse from making it on the endangered species list. The campaign is being waged by a non-profit organization called Partnership for the West. Based in Golden, Colo., the group represents **oil, gas, mining and ranching interests.** I would ask that the BLM get back to basics and work for those that are paying their wages and tell the environmentalist to get a real job.

11. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

With a number of state and local groups pushing hard to develop sage grouse conservation strategies, the **National Wildlife Federation opposes a federal endangered species listing**.

I also oppose the listing of the Greater Sage Grouse as an endangered species.

Article Submitted with this comment:
"The enviro litigation industry"
By Leonard Blackham

IN-ALL

GBR_PUB_000760
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Twin Falls, ID

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [x] Individual (no affiliation)
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: Paul McClain
Organization (if applicable):
Street Address (optional): 619 Elm Circle
City/State/Zip (optional): Gooding ID 83330

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

I am especially concerned that a "hard look" is taken at livestock grazing, it's affects on the environment, it's affects on sage grouse

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

AL-IDMT

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Twin Falls, ID

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
___	Private Organization
↘	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: John Pitz
Organization (if applicable): Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce
Street Address (optional): 215 Fair Ave
City/State/Zip (optional): Filer ID 83328

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: As you consider grazing Allotments please keep in mind the Agricuture based economy in the Magic Valley and the possible Negative impact that the reduction of grazing Rights will have on the base economy in Twin Falls County.

1.BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

2.BLM-FS-PLI-SOC

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

OR-ALL

GBR_PUB_000762
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Pocatello, ID

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- ___ Individual (no affiliation)
- X Private Organization
- ___ Federal, State, or Local Government
- X Citizen's Group
- ___ Elected Representative
- ___ Regulatory Agency

Name: M.K. Huffle SELEN (PIH)
Organization (if applicable): South East Id. Environmental Network
Street Address (optional): _____
City/State/Zip (optional): _____

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-SS

Please use range ecology science for restoring healthy NATIVE sagebrush and healthy native species under story - RANGE-WIDE!

Please also rely upon sage grouse xperts such as Clait Braun and Jack Connelly

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

Please include ALL the factors (variables) impacting native sage habitats including domestic livestock, fences, whatever. wind mills, ravens, hunting.

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

IN-ALL

GBR_PUB_000768
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Ontario

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [x] Individual (no affiliation)
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: MICHAEL F. HANLEY III
Organization (if applicable): HANLEY RANCH
Street Address (optional): 682 STATE BLVD
City/State/Zip (optional): DENIO VALLEY ORE 97720
541 586 2216

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE THE DISTRUCTION OF THE WESTERN PUBLIC LAND BASED LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY. SINCE IT IS SO IMPORTANT I STRONGLY BELIEVE OPEN PUBLIC HEARINGS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED SO THAT THE TOTAL IMPACT ON THE AREAS CULTURE AND ECONOMY CAN BE PRESENTED.

1. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

2. BLM-FS-GEN

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

Michael F. Hanley III

SAGE GROUSE REPORT

PREPARED BY MICHAEL F. HANLEY IV

PRESENTED AT: ONTARIO, OREGON 23JAN2012

MIKE HANLEY
682 YTURRI BLVD
JORDAN VALLEY, ORE
97910

GBR_0000587

THE STATUS OF SAGE GROUSE IN THE GREAT BASIN AS SEEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A PERMITTEE AND RESIDENT

Hudson's Bay Company brigade leader, Peter Skene Ogden, recorded in his journal the situation that greeted him as he prepared to enter the Snake Country, from Crooked River, in present Central Oregon.

Friday, 30th December 1825

The cold still increasing. My guide, this morning, refused to proceed. He stated the following reasons: "The country you are going to there are no animals of any kind nor will you find any beaver. Our horses will die for want of grass and we cannot cross the mountains that are not far distant from us."..on promising he should receive a gun on his return to Fort Nezperce, he consented to proceed with us.

ACK

On 8th March, 1826, Ogden remarked in his journal...A winter voyage to the Snake Country may be, and is by some, considered a trip of pleasure but from what I have experienced the two last winters I am of a different opinion...If the winter be mild or severe; starve you must...

Southeastern Oregon, southwestern Idaho, and northern Nevada, the areas Ogden's brigades traversed, are now known as the Great Basin. For millennium it was inhabited by migratory populations of hunter gatherers. In later times, incursions by trappers intent on collecting beaver pelts, passed through. Following close behind, were settlers bound for more hospitable lands beyond the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountains. Gold rush fever brought in boomers who wanted to strike it rich but had little or no desire to stay.

ACK

It wasn't until the Homestead Act of 1862, opened the flood gates, that settlement began. After the Civil War, other acts followed including the Carey Act of 1894 and Reclamation Act of 1903. What had been harsh and unforgiving, within a few decades, became an area of promise and industry.

ACK

Remaining public lands were held in trust and administered by the Department of Interior until they too could be passed into private ownership. Unclaimed lands supported an expanding livestock industry, which ran unchecked until the Taylor Grazing Act was passed in 1934. The act's mission statement was "To bring conservation to the public lands and stabilize the livestock industry and communities dependent upon it."

In 1976, Congress passed the Organic Act which decreed that remaining public lands remain in federal ownership. That same year, the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC) won a lawsuit requiring environmental impact studies (EIS) on public lands. An inventory was done in 1977 to determine needed improvements. In 1978, Congress passed the Rangeland Improvement Act, which was never funded. Lack of funding led to continuing impasse over EIS findings inventoried for improvements that largely never

ACK

ACK cont'd

came. In the meantime, many acts were mandated including the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

ACK

NEPA has led to a proliferation of lawsuits against managing agencies and permittees by those whose goal is the elimination of livestock grazing on public lands.

3. BLM-FS-GEN

The Endangered Species Act has fallen heavily on the Great Basin. Charges, under NEPA, have been that livestock grazing is endangering species including sage grouse. Were sage grouse listed, it would have the same effect listing the spotted owl had on the Pacific Northwest timber industry and related economy.

4. BLM-FS-PLI-SOC

The Taylor Grazing Act's goal of stabilization has been superseded by the Endangered Species Act which raises the question: Is a candidate species more important than economic and social vitality or can they exist together? To find the answer it's imperative that all issues are weighed.

ACK

ACK

With settlement came the need to protect livestock from predators. An added benefit was wild life protection. Trapping and hunting was supplemented in 1918 when the federal government initiated use of compound 1080. Poison stations were established and immediately predators of all kinds were "controlled." In 1972, environmental pressure prompted President Nixon to issue an executive order banning the use of compound 1080. Upon termination, some environmentalists conceded that predator control may have artificially elevated sage grouse numbers despite grazing on public land that was nearly two times current levels.

5. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

Various sage grouse population figures show a decline after the 1972 1080 ban. However, population figures in Oregon over the past 30 years suggest stable populations which is an indicator of what they may have been historically. Therefore, Oregon chose 2003 as a baseline for spring level breeding numbers. Idaho, in the meantime, chose a baseline based on population data taken prior to the 1080 ban which is unrealistic.

6. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-GE

Since Ogden trekked through, vegetation in the Great Basin has changed. Flood irrigated meadows and ground watered alfalfa transformed lands in private ownership while others in the public domain have changed from sage to grasslands. This has been the results of both fire and mechanical treatment.

7. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-GE

Crested wheat seedings, which were established on treated and burned over range lands, are returning, in part, to sage brush, an important food source and cover for sage grouse.

8. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-GE

Cattle graze grasses exposing forbs, which also are important for sage grouse survival. Looming on the horizon is the very real threat of invasive species. Much is made of cheatgrass and juniper encroachment but both are runners up to medusahead rye. The Idaho Fish and Game Department conducted a study with chuckers in three plots. One had a food supply of crested wheatheads, another with cheatgrass heads and the third with medusahead rye heads. The first two groups thrived and the third starved. The study concluded that medusahead rye had no protein value in its dry seed ripe condition. An official involved predicted that, unchecked, those areas infested with medusahead would become a biological desert within twenty years.

9. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-WD

10. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-WD

At this writing, Oregon is under a court ordered injunction limiting use of herbicides on public lands. Currently Oregon BLM is requesting public comment on the ban with the goal of getting it lifted. In the meantime, the state will continue on as a seed source for invasive species.

I believe the solution to resource issues and working toward resolving them can be found at home.

11. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-WD

Jordan Valley hosts what is known as the cooperative weed management area (CWMA). It encompasses roughly five million acres; four in Malheur County, Oregon and one in Owyhee County, Idaho. Coordinator, Eric Morrison, says, "What makes this group work is it is land-owner driven." Representatives from the ranching community, irrigation district, state and federal agencies, counties, and environmental groups work together for the common goal of conducting a meaningful weed control program.

12. BLM-FS-PLI-GRZ

Malheur County has added vector control bringing attending to the issue of west nile virus. The virus is known to affect horses, sage grouse, and humans which leads me to conclude that blaming the livestock industry for sage grouse issues is unfounded scientifically and if taken to the extreme will result in economic and ecosystem damage.

AF-ALL

GBR_PUB_000770
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Alturas, CA

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- ____ Individual (no affiliation)
- ____ Private Organization
- ✓ Federal, State, or Local Government
- ____ Citizen's Group
- ____ Elected Representative
- ____ Regulatory Agency

Name: BRIDGET NIELSEN REFUGE MGR.
Organization (if applicable): USFWS KBNWRC
Street Address (optional): 4009 Hill Rd
City/State/Zip (optional): Tule lake Ca 96134

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: Interpretation of old growth juniper needs to be reassessed – NRCS-SG1 funded projects need to be able to cut all trees in areas with over @2million acres of juniper in the ModocNF. It won't hurt to cut all the trees in NRCS project areas.

1. BLM-FS-PLI-VG-GE

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

AL-OR

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION: Burns, OR

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
___	Private Organization
___	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
X	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: Dan Nichols
Organization (if applicable): Harney County Court
Street Address (optional): _____
City/State/Zip (optional): _____

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments: Oregon has the strictest land use laws in the nation. Thirty six Oregon counties have individual county plans protecting their resources and their residents. This seems to be duplicitous and unnecessary for the state. We will remain engaged in the process. One size does not fit all. Work with Oregon

1. BLM-FS-GEN-OR

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

OR-ALL

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- ___ Individual (no affiliation)
- ✓ Private Organization
- ___ Federal, State, or Local Government
- ___ Citizen's Group
- ___ Elected Representative
- ___ Regulatory Agency

Name: John Keeler
Organization (if applicable): Utah Farm Bureau
Street Address (optional): 406 E. Union St.
City/State/Zip (optional): Manti, Ut. 84642

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

1. BLM-FS-GEN

We encourage strongly to use the work of the local Sage Grouse Working Groups in your planning process and as you implement your plans. They have done a great deal of work and have done several reseaarce projects that could be very useful. Todd Black, Nicki Frey and others from usu would be good contacts. Please do not try to reinvent the wheel.

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

IN-ALL

GBR_PUB_000777
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

- [X] Individual (no affiliation)
- [ ] Private Organization
- [ ] Federal, State, or Local Government
- [ ] Citizen's Group
- [ ] Elected Representative
- [ ] Regulatory Agency

Name: Gary McBride
Organization (if applicable):
Street Address (optional): 112 Sedona Valley Rd
City/State/Zip (optional): Kanab UT 84741

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Comments:

I believe that cutting alot of the juniper trees in certain areas and replacing them with sage brush will help the sage-grouse and the mule deer both. Also where the coal mine is concerned you should replace when the area is recovered replace the area with sage brush for both habitat.

1. BLM-SG-PLI-VG-GE

2. BLM-SG-PLI-MIN

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

GBR_0000604

OR-ALL

GBR_PUB_000778
4.2.b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
✓	Private Organization
___	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: John Keeler
Organization (if applicable): Utah Farm Bureau
Street Address (optional): 406 E. Union St.
City/State/Zip (optional): Manti, UT. 84642

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

Additional
Comments:

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-LK

When working with the SWARM working group a retired DWR Employee was hired to look for leks and Grouse one summer. He located many unknown leks. We encourage more resources devoted to locating and mapping Sage grouse. There are more birds out there than we know and it is less expensive to locate them than create habitat for them. It will require many methods to keep them from being listed.

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

AL-ALL

GBR_PUB_000789
42b

NATIONAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PLANNING STRATEGY

LOCATION:

MEETING DATE:

SCOPING COMMENT CARD

Please check your affiliation below:

___	Individual (no affiliation)
___	Private Organization
_X_	Federal, State, or Local Government
___	Citizen's Group
___	Elected Representative
___	Regulatory Agency

Name: Beaverhead Co Commission
Organization (if applicable):
Street Address (optional): 2 S. Pacific St
City/State/Zip (optional): Dillon, MT. 59725

If you wish to provide written comments, please write your comments below (use back if needed). Written comments may be submitted using this card, an e-mail, or any other written format provided to the BLM by the means noted below and within the scoping period.

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

Comments:

The Beaverhead Co Board of Commissioners are concerned that the sage-grouse planning process not add further restrictions on noxious weed control methods, on domestic livestock grazing allotments and on the use of fire for vegetation management. Also, the greater increase of avian predators on sage-grouse should be documented. - Garth Haugland, Chairman

ACK

Please submit tonight or mail/fax by February 16, 2012 to:
Western Regional Project Manager, BLM Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
Fax: 775-861-6747
E-mail: sagewest@blm.gov

2. BLM-FS-PLI-SG-GN

GBR_0000620

BC- ALL

James J Wright Ranch
HC 32 Box 180
Tuscarora, Nv 89834

(1) ACK

I, James Wright, 85 years old, have been in the ranching business my entire life; except for time in the navy in WWII and years in college.

In 1953, my wife and I purchased a ranch in the Tuscarora area. Then in 1965, we purchased our neighboring ranch. The BLM allotment that went with this ranch had been repeatedly overgrazed. At that time, when driving cows up a sagebrush draw, sage hens would routinely fly up. There was a nice population of sage hens. Today, I am proud to say thru management, the ecological condition is excellent on this allotment. One-half of our allotment is not grazed until seed ripe. Our cows probably harvest 20% of the grass but there are few sage hen. Why?

(2) BLM-FS PLI-GRZ PLI-WL-BR

In the 1960's, I owned the hay meadows that ran near the B.L.M. foothills. Then these foothills were totally overgrazed. My hay meadow would green-up after haying. About five o'clock, bunches of sage hen would fly from the foothills onto my meadow. We had marvelous hunting!

Today, the foothills are only slightly grazed in comparison, the meadow is still green, but no sage hens. Why? In my humble opinion, the culprit may be the crow.

40 years ago, one would see a crown occasionally. Today, there are crows everywhere. Bunches of fifty crows are common.

(3) ACK

I have the opportunity to study the crow! I still am actively involved in ranching and harvesting hay every summer. When harvesting the hay, as soon as I start my swather… here come the crows. The alight on the windrows behind the swather, hunting bugs and mice. Many times, I have seen crows flying thirty feet above ground and suddenly dive and pick mice from the stubble. What incredible eyesight the crow has!

(4) BLM-FS PLI-WL-BR

One day, I swathed by a pond. Three half-grown ducks were scared onto the meadow. Five minutes later, I came by the pond. Again, the crows had two of the ducks torn apart. The crow is a smart and aggressive bird.

As long as we have large numbers of crows, it will be difficult to increase sage hen numbers!

(5) BLM-FS PLI-VG-GE PLI-GRZ

Curiously, grass may be a limiting factor to the sage grouse numbers. Sagebrush habitat is the ecological home of the greater sage grouse. So it is interesting to note, lands with an abundance of grass tend to have less sagebrush. Plus, grass encourages large wild land fires which are devastating to sage grouse habitat. We have read stories and seen

James J Wright Ranch
HC 32 Box 180
Tuscarora, Nv 89834

(5) cont.
BLM-FS
PLI-VG-GE
PLI-GRZ

pictures of large numbers of sage grouse in the early 1900's. Then, large numbers of livestock also grazed these federal lands. Grass was not in abundance then, as it is now. So…why have sage grouse numbers declined? The axiom--more cows… more sage grouse--less cows…less sage grouse; may have merit.

(6)
BLM-FS
PLI-GRZ
PLI-SOC

…"the world population is seven billion and growing. Global agriculture production needs to continue growing at a significant pace to keep up with demand." so states the 2011 Global Agricultural Report. The report states that we need to double agriculture output in the next forty years.

What does this mean to federal and state agencies managing our state and federal lands? The mind-set of limiting livestock grazing on federal lands need to be reviewed. Pressure will mount to harvest as much protein as possible.

We need to do our share feeding the people of our world!

Sincerely,
James Wright

ACEC Proposal: Bi-State PMU's ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

2. ACK

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Bi-state PMU

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

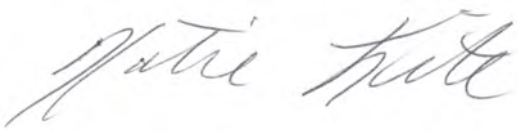
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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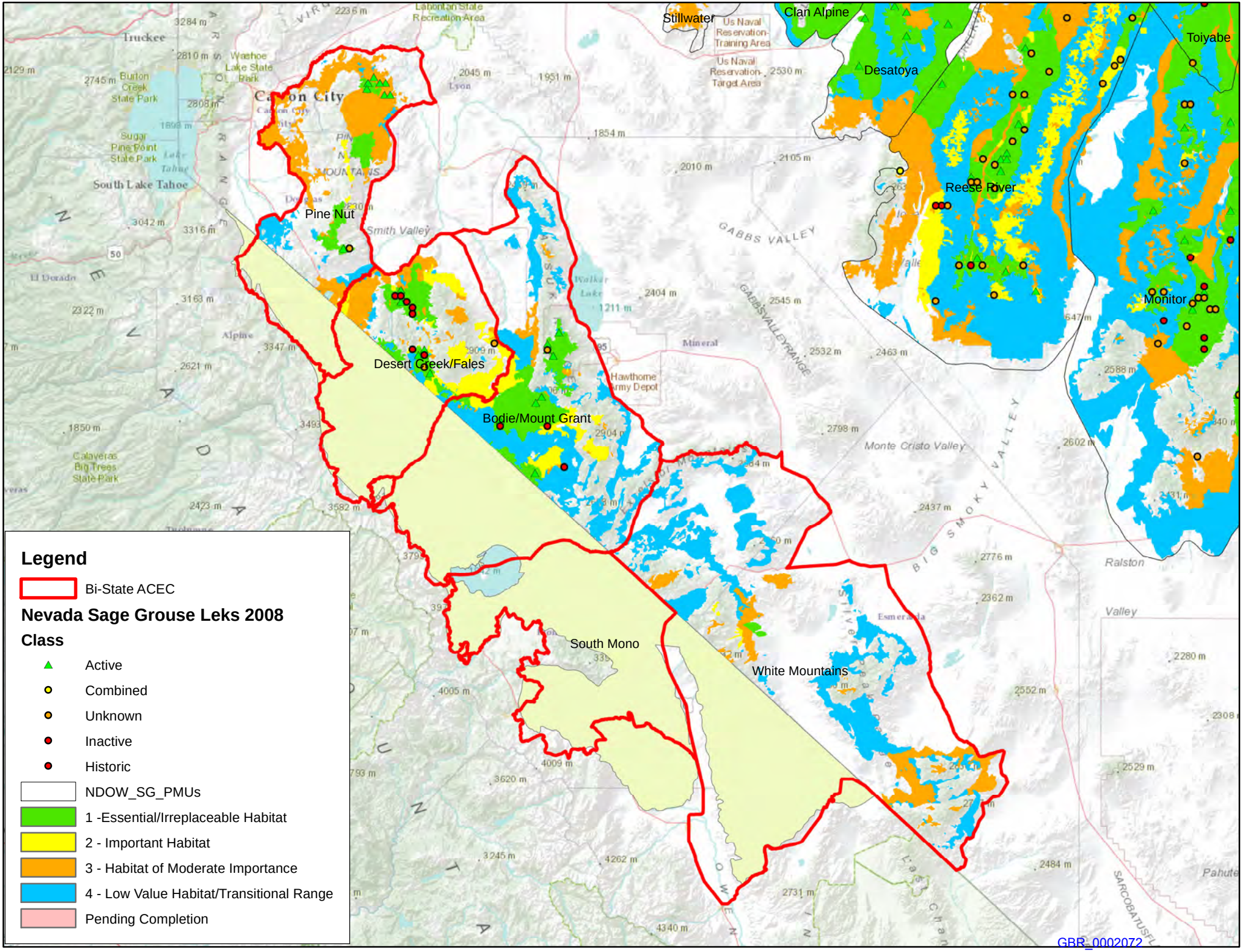
Stillwater
Clan Alpine
Toiyabe
Desatoya
Reese River
Monitor
Pine Nut
Desert Creek/Fales
Bodie/Mount Grant
South Mono
White Mountains
Legend
Bi-State ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
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Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
GBR_0002072

ACEC Proposal: Butte-Buck-White Pine PMU ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

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To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

2. ACK

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
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2 cont.

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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Butte-Buck-White Pine

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

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Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

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Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

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Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

3 cont.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

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Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

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Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

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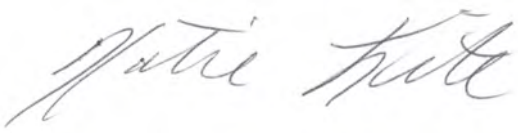

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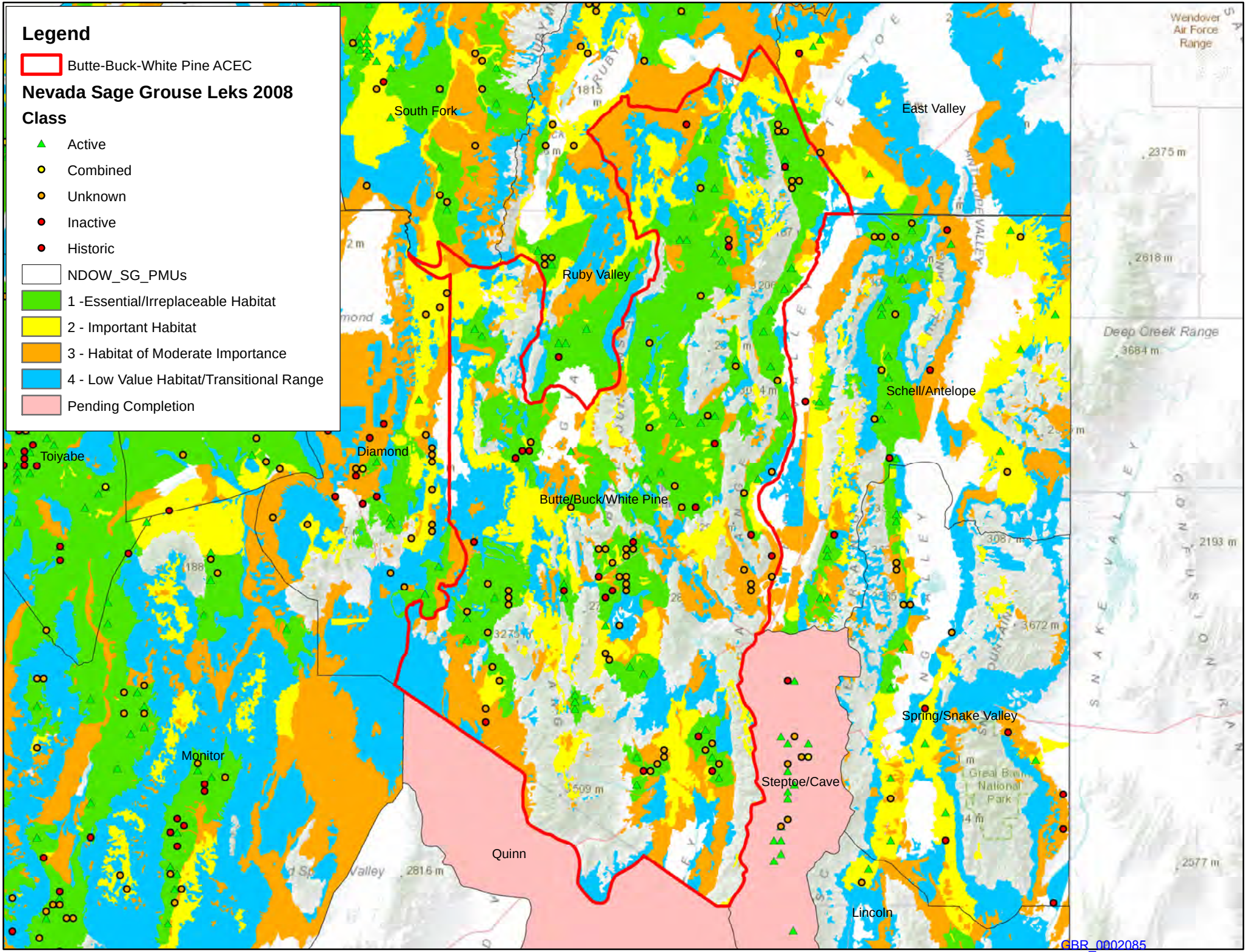
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4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
South Fork
East Valley
Ruby Valley
Schell/Antelope
Toiyabe
Diamond
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Monitor
Steptoe/Cave
Spring/Snake Valley
Quinn
Lincoln
Wendover Air Force Range
Deep Creek Range
Great Basin National Park
2375 m
2618 m
3684 m
2193 m
3672 m
2577 m
2816 m
GBR_0002085

ACEC Proposal: East Valley, Schell-Antelope PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

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2. ACK

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2 cont.

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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

East Valley, Schell-Antelope

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

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3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

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Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

3 cont.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

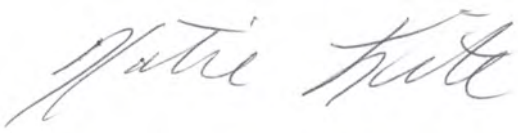
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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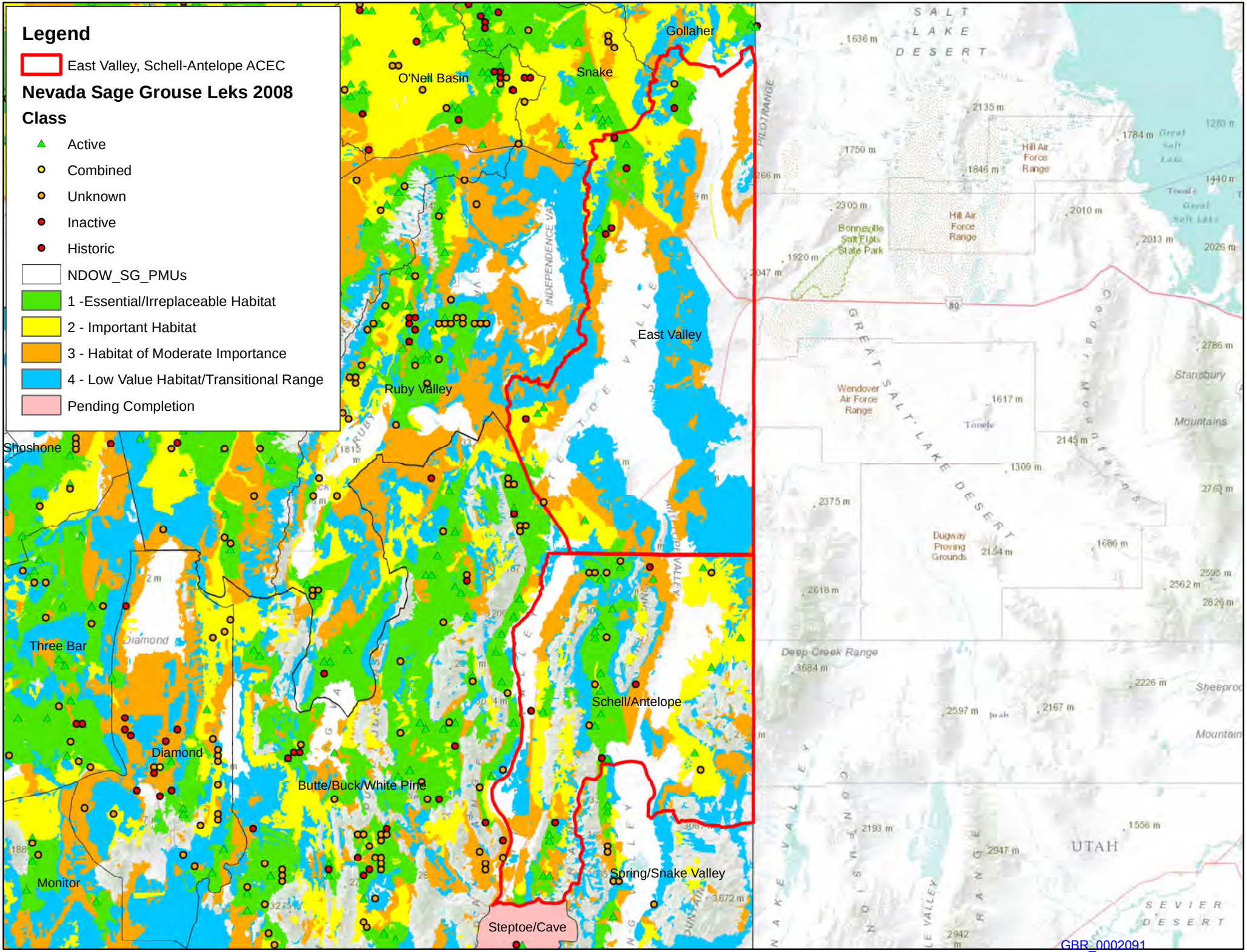
Legend
East Valley, Schell-Antelope ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
Gollaher
O'Neil Basin
Snake
East Valley
Ruby Valley
Shoshone
Three Bar
Diamond
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Monitor
Schell/Antelope
Spring/Snake Valley
Steptoe/Cave
SALT LAKE DESERT
Hill Air Force Range
Bonneville Salt Flats State Park
Wendover Air Force Range
Dugway Proving Grounds
Deep Creek Range
Stansbury Mountains
UTAH
SEVIER DESERT
GREAT SALT LAKE DESERT
GBR_0002091

ACEC Proposal: Gollaher, Snake PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

2. ACK

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Gollaher, Snake

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

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Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

3 cont.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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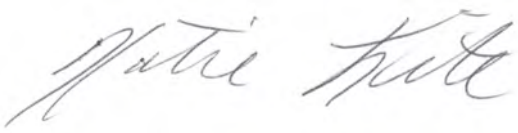

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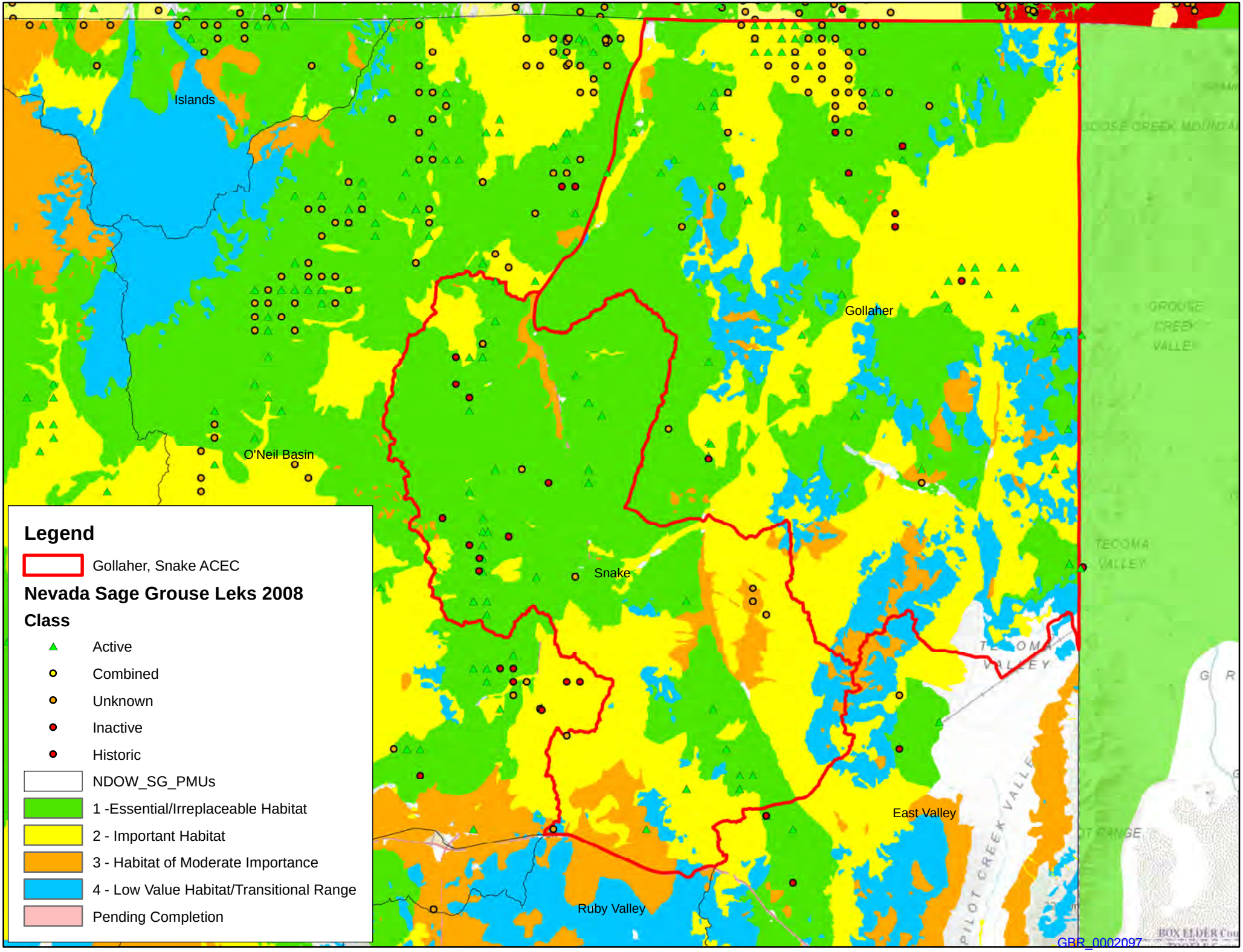
Islands
Gollaher
O'Neil Basin
Snake
East Valley
Ruby Valley
GROUSE CREEK VALLEY
TECOMA VALLEY
PILOT CREEK VALLEY
Legend
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ACEC Proposal: Islands, O'Neil Basin PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

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Relevant Values

Islands, O'Neil Basin

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

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Important Values

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

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Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

3 cont.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

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Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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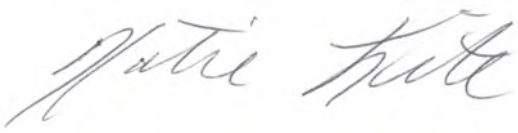

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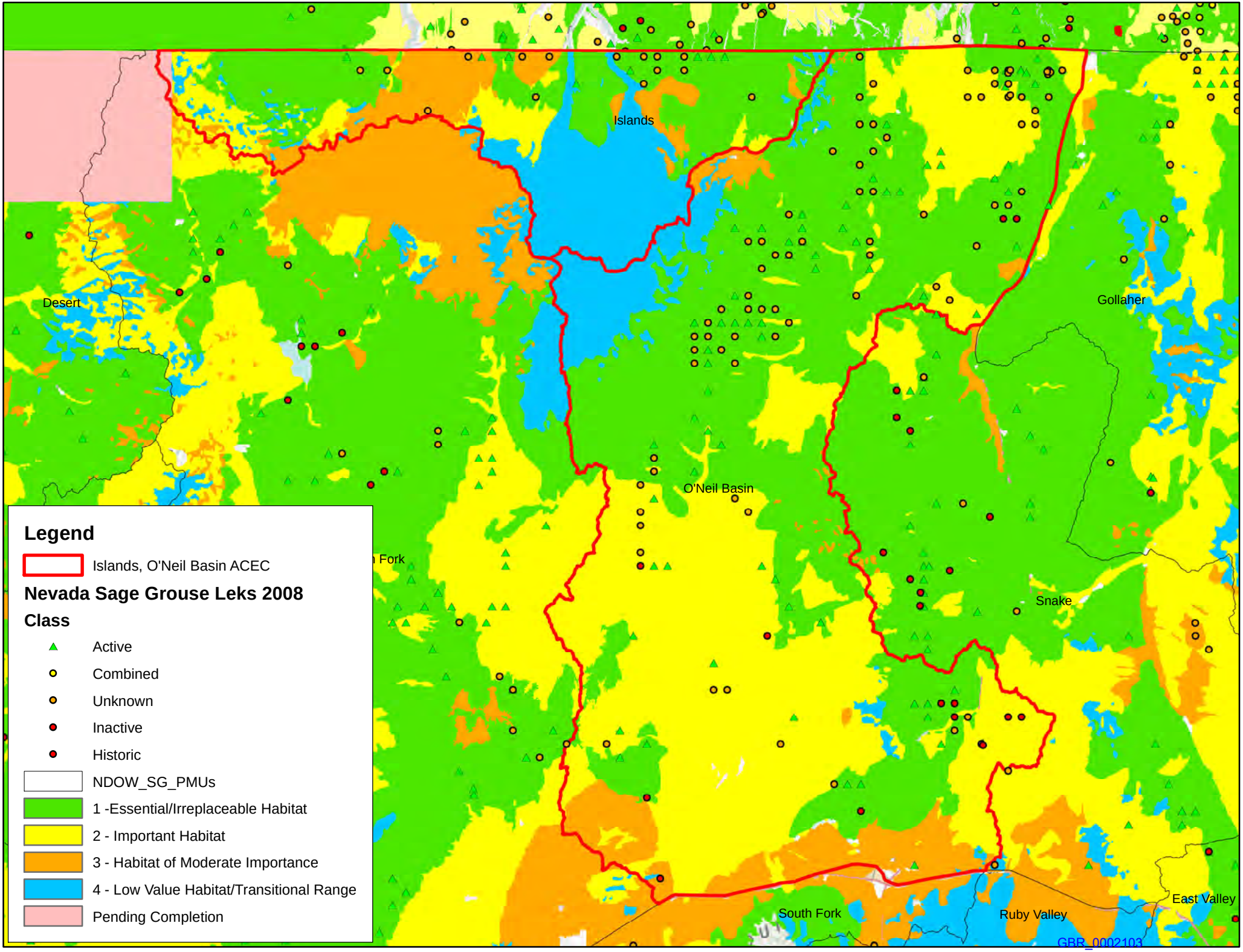
Islands
Desert
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Fork
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South Fork
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2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
GBR_0002103

ACEC Proposal: Kawich PMU ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

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- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Kawich

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

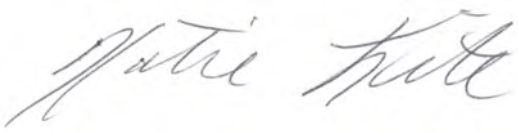
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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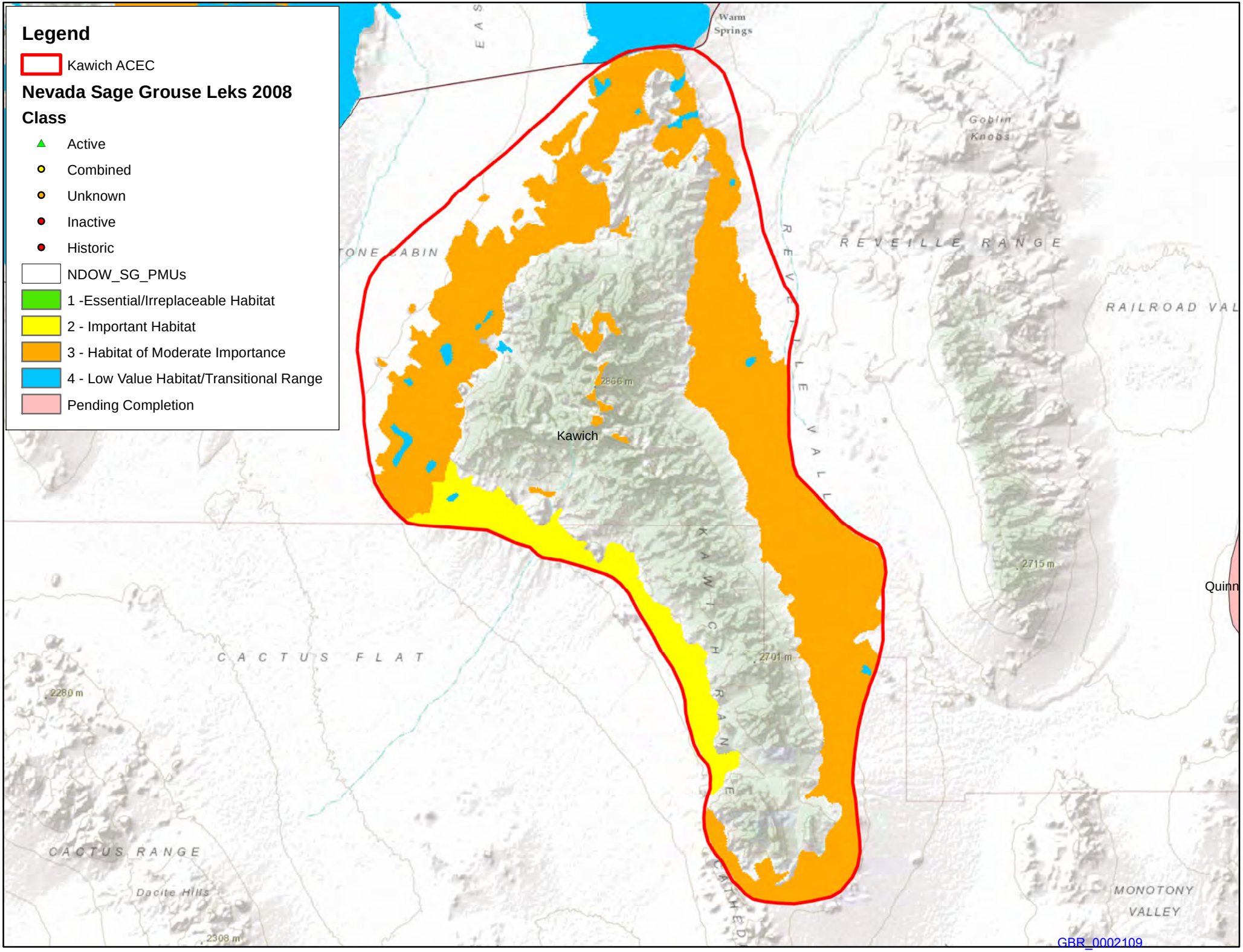
Legend
Kawich ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
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Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
Warm Springs
Goblin Knobs
REVEILLE RANGE
RAILROAD VAL
2866 m
Kawich
2715 m
Quinn
CACTUS FLAT
2701 m
2280 m
CACTUS RANGE
Dacite Hills
2308 m
MONOTONY VALLEY
GBR_0002109

ACEC Proposal: Limbo, Nightingale, Sahwave, Majuba, Trinity, Eugenes, Humboldt, East Range, Sonoma, Battle Mountain, Fish Creek PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

2. ACK

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2. ACK

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values **Limbo, Nightingale, Sahwave, Majuba, Trinity, Eugenes, Humboldt, East Range, Sonoma, Battle Mountain, Fish Creek**

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

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Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

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The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

3 cont.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

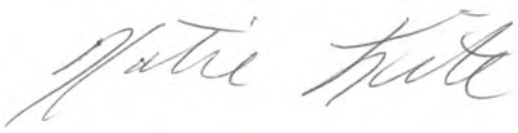
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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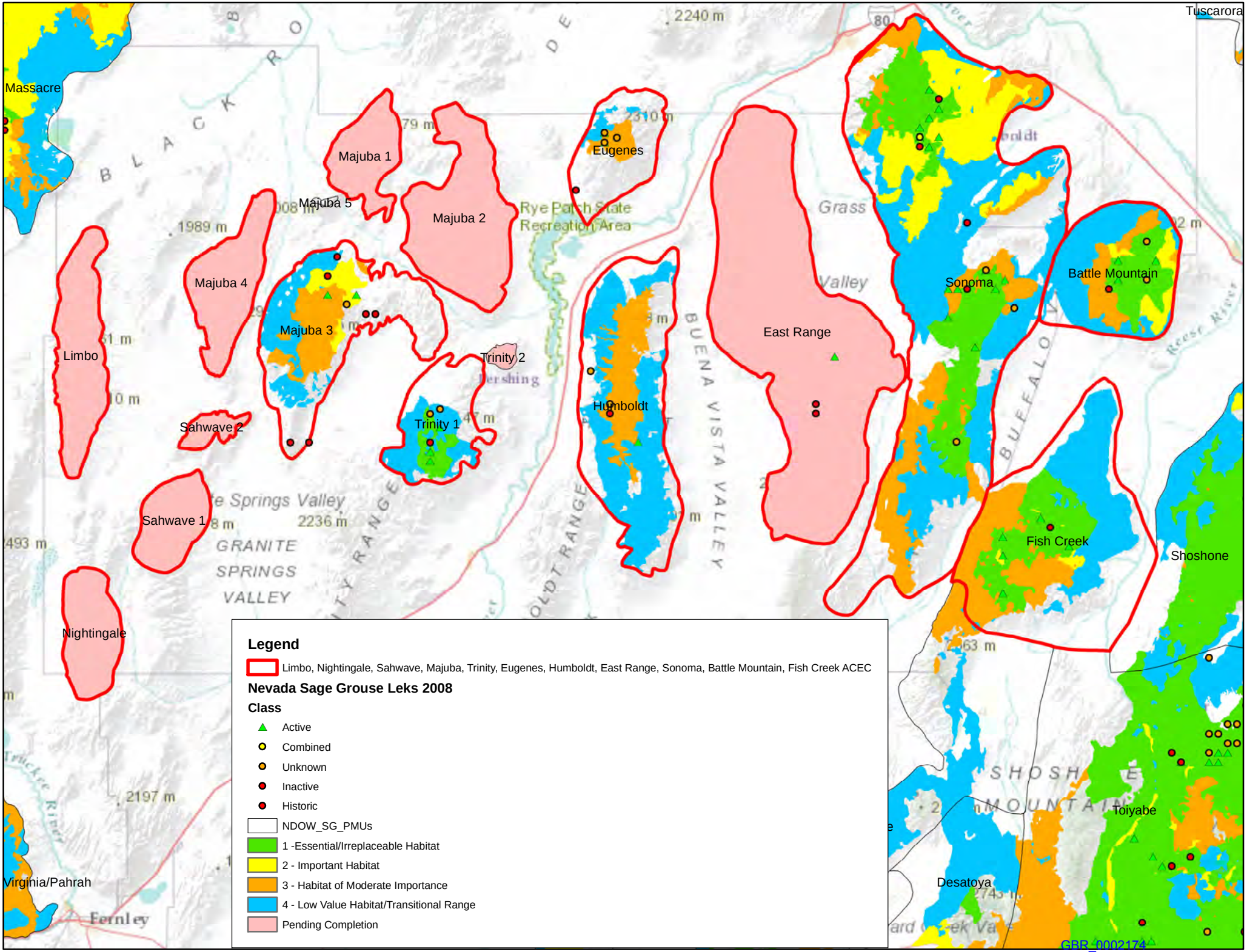
Massacre
Majuba 1
Majuba 2
Majuba 3
Majuba 4
Majuba 5
Eugenes
Rye Patch State Recreation Area
Limbo
Sahwave 1
Sahwave 2
Trinity 1
Trinity 2
Humboldt
East Range
Sonoma
Battle Mountain
Fish Creek
Shoshone
Toiyabe
Desatoya
Nightingale
Virginia/Pahrah
Tuscarora
Grass Valley
Buena Vista Valley
Granite Springs Valley
Shoshone Mountains
Legend
Limbo, Nightingale, Sahwave, Majuba, Trinity, Eugenes, Humboldt, East Range, Sonoma, Battle Mountain, Fish Creek ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
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Unknown
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NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion

GBR_0002174

ACEC Proposal: Lone Willow PMU ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

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An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

2. ACK

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
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2 cont.

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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Lone Willow

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

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Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

3 cont.

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Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

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Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

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Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

3 cont.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

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Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

3 cont.

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We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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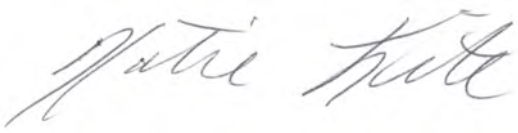

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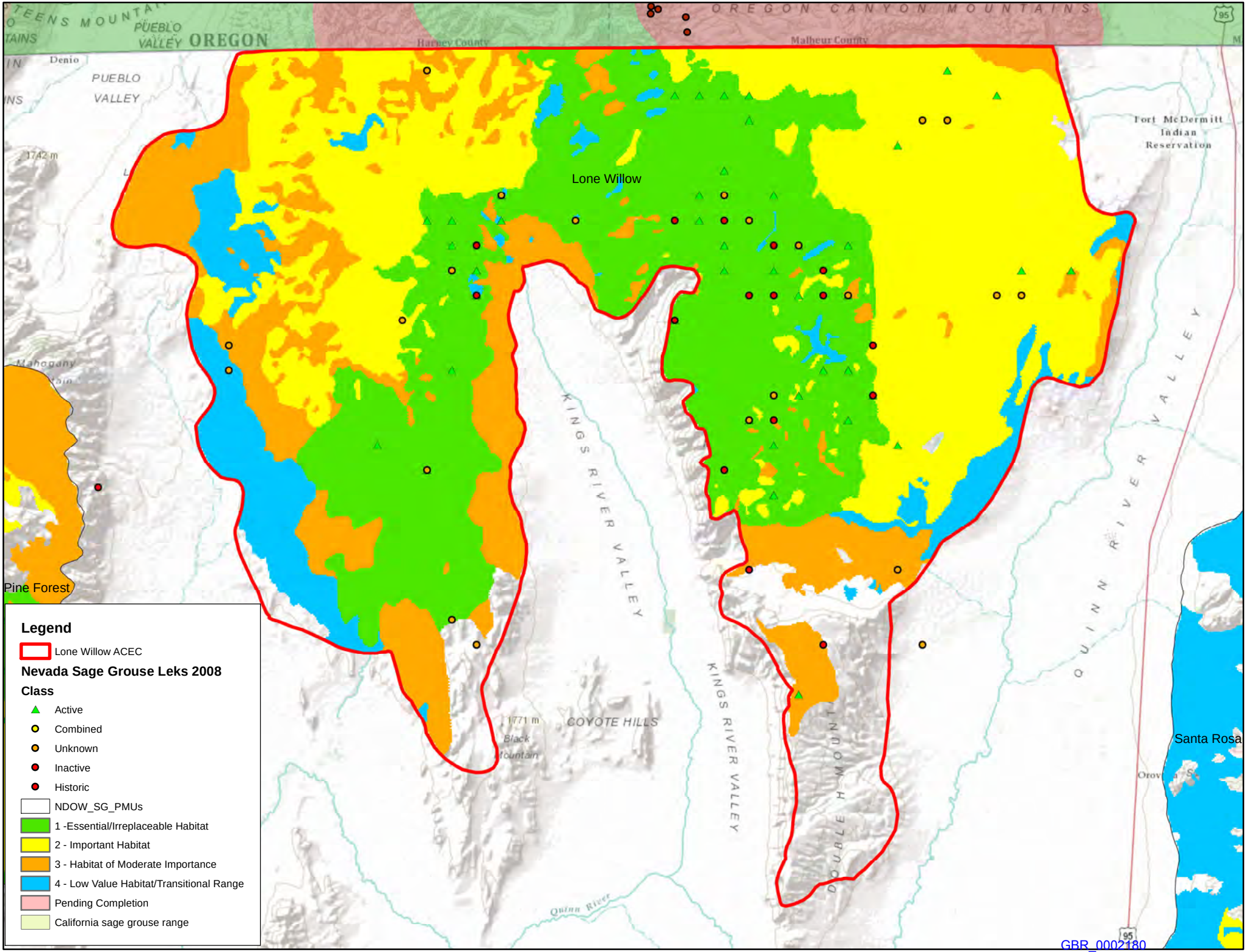
Lone Willow
Pine Forest
Santa Rosa
Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation
OREGON CANYON MOUNTAINS
Harney County
Malheur County
PUEBLO VALLEY
OREGON
Denio
KINGS RIVER VALLEY
QUINN RIVER VALLEY
COYOTE HILLS
DOUBLE MOUNTAIN
Black Mountain
Quinn River
Mahogany
1742 m
1771 m
Legend
Lone Willow ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
California sage grouse range

ACEC Proposal: Santa Rosa, Desert, Eden Valley PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

2. ACK

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Santa Rosa, Desert, Eden Valley

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

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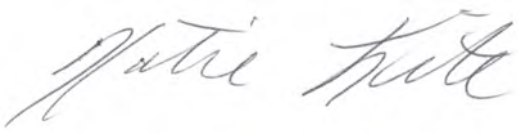

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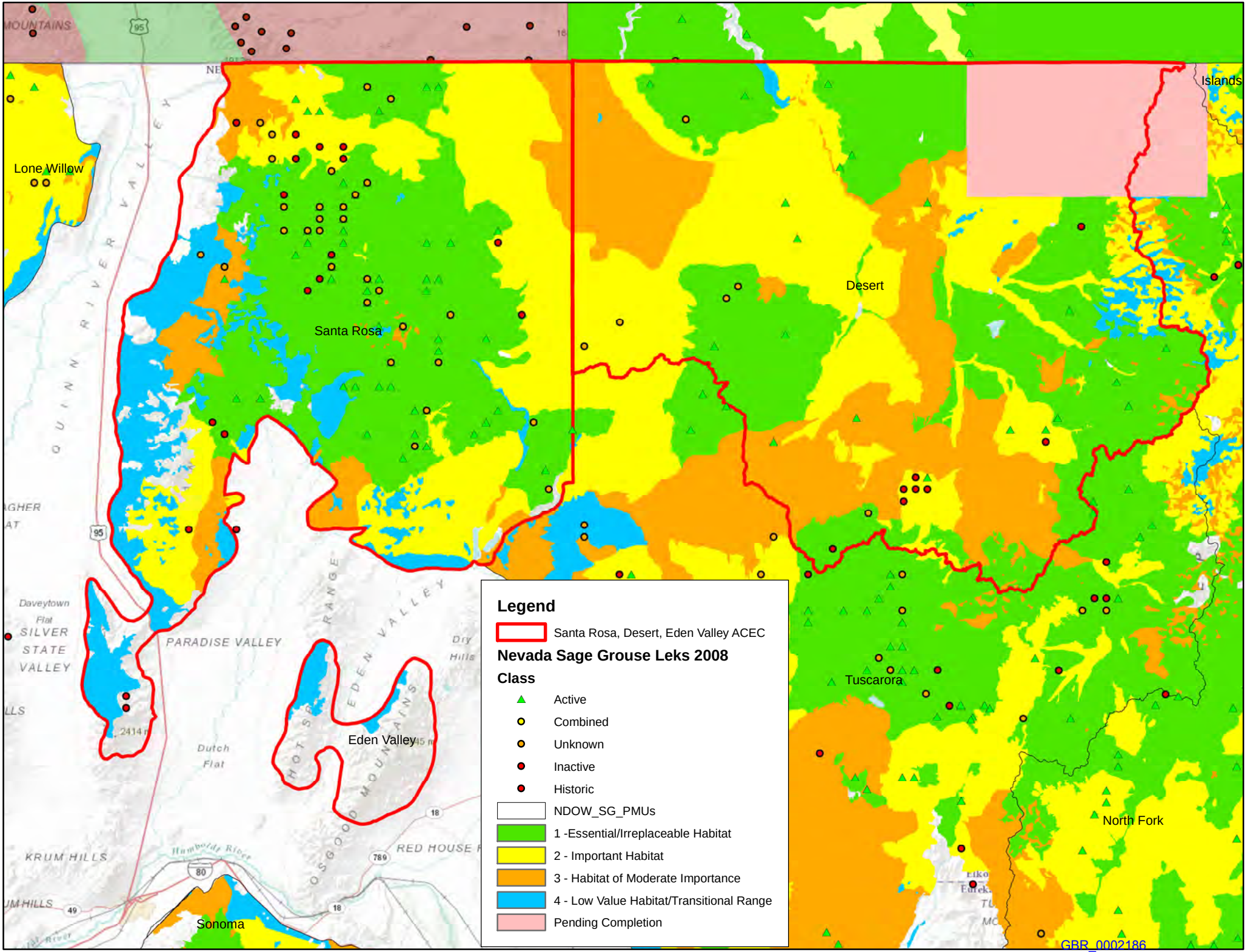
Lone Willow
Santa Rosa
Desert
Islands
Tuscarora
North Fork
Eden Valley
Sonoma
PARADISE VALLEY
SILVER STATE VALLEY
KRUM HILLS
Dutch Flat
Daveytown Flat
Dry Hills
RED HOUSE
Legend
Santa Rosa, Desert, Eden Valley ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
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Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
GBR_0002186

ACEC Proposal: Quinn PMU ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Quinn

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

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Important Values

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3 cont.

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Management Actions
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New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

3 cont.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

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Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

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3 cont.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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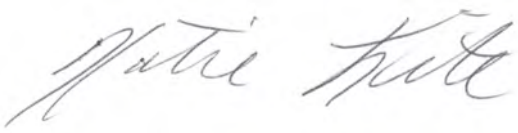

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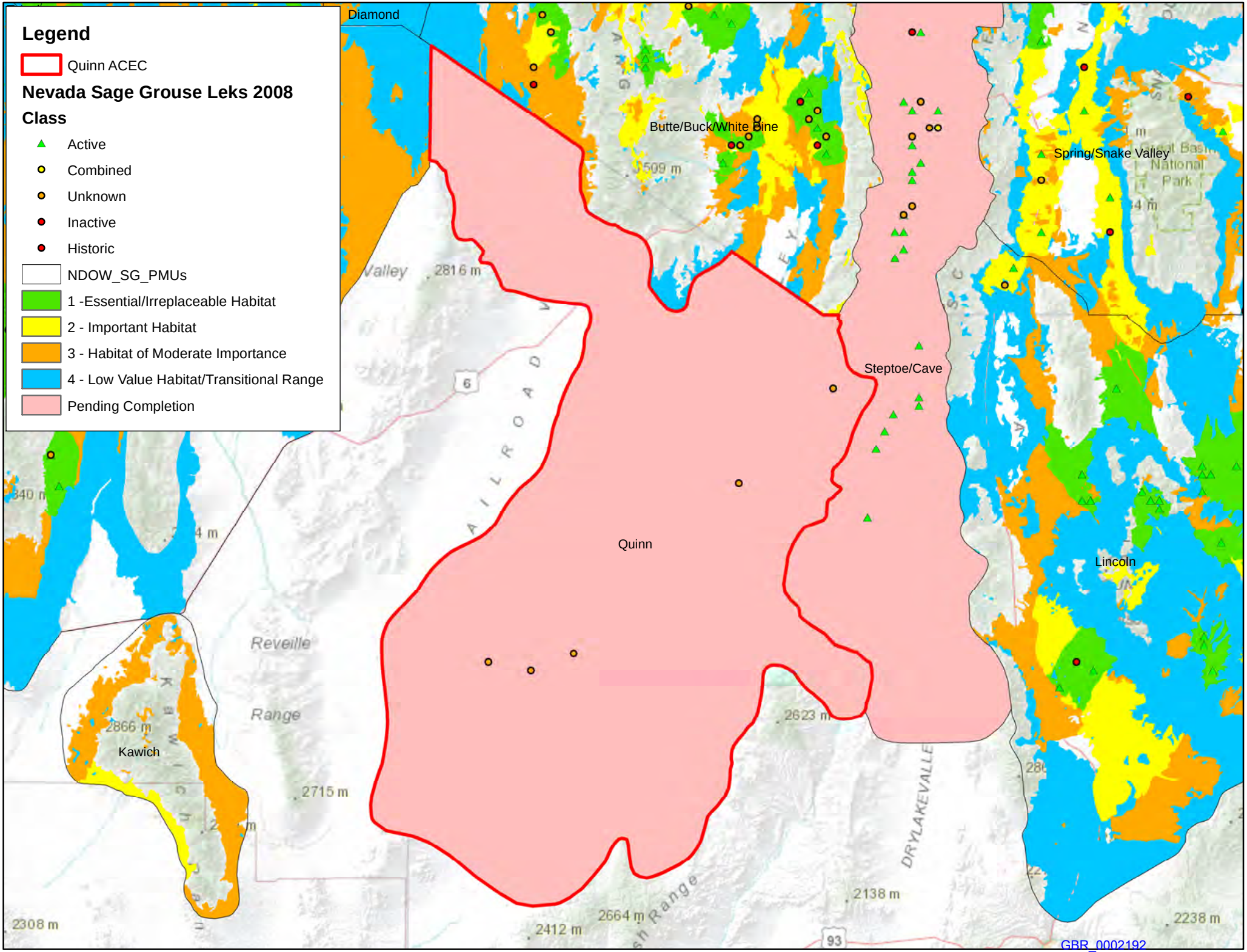
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Pending Completion
Diamond
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Spring/Snake Valley
Steptoe/Cave
Quinn
Lincoln
Reveille
Range
Kawich
2866 m
2715 m
2623 m
2138 m
2664 m
2412 m
2308 m
2238 m
2816 m
1509 m
6
93
GBR_0002192

ACEC Proposal: Steptoe-Cave, Lincoln, Spring-Snake Valley PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

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Relevant Values

Steptoe-Cave, Lincoln, Spring-Snake Valley

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Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

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3 cont.

Important Values

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Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

3 cont.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

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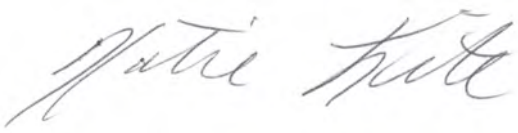

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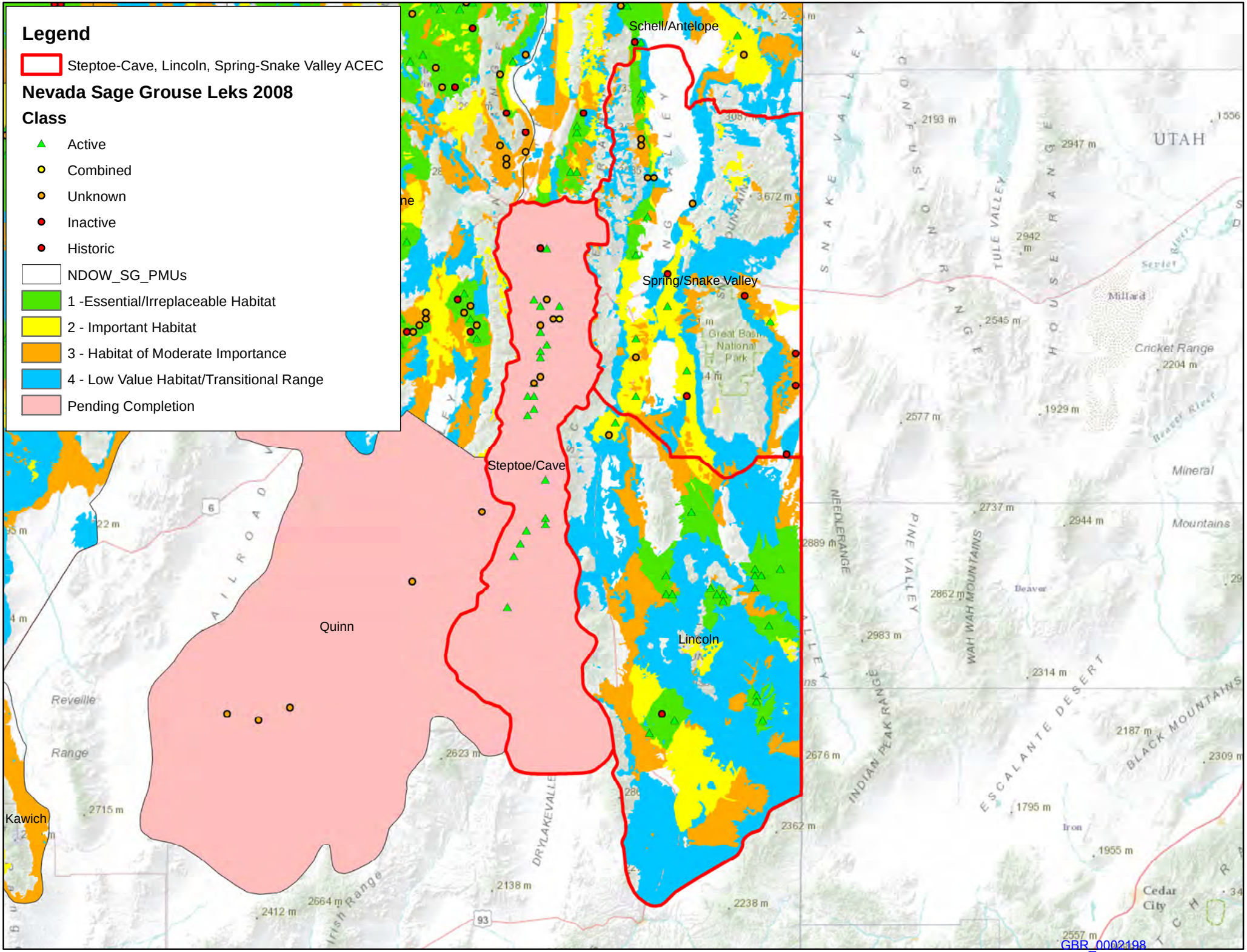
Legend
Steptoe-Cave, Lincoln, Spring-Snake Valley ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
Schell/Antelope
Spring/Snake Valley
Steptoe/Cave
Quinn
Lincoln
Kawich
UTAH
Millard
Mineral
Beaver
Iron
Cedar City
Great Basin National Park
Cricket Range
Mountains
Reveille
Range
SNAKE VALLEY
TULE VALLEY
HOUSE RANGE
PINE VALLEY
NEEDLE RANGE
WAH WAH MOUNTAINS
INDIAN PEAK RANGE
ESCALANTE DESERT
BLACK MOUNTAINS
DRYLAKEVALLEY
Irish Range
2193 m
2947 m
2942 m
2545 m
2204 m
2577 m
1929 m
2737 m
2944 m
2889 m
2862 m
2983 m
2314 m
2187 m
2309 m
2676 m
1795 m
2362 m
1955 m
2715 m
2623 m
2138 m
2238 m
2412 m
2664 m
2557 m
3672 m
6
93
GBR_0002198

ACEC Proposal: South Fork, Ruby Valley PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

2. ACK

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

South Fork, Ruby Valley

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

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Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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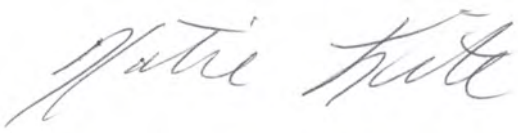

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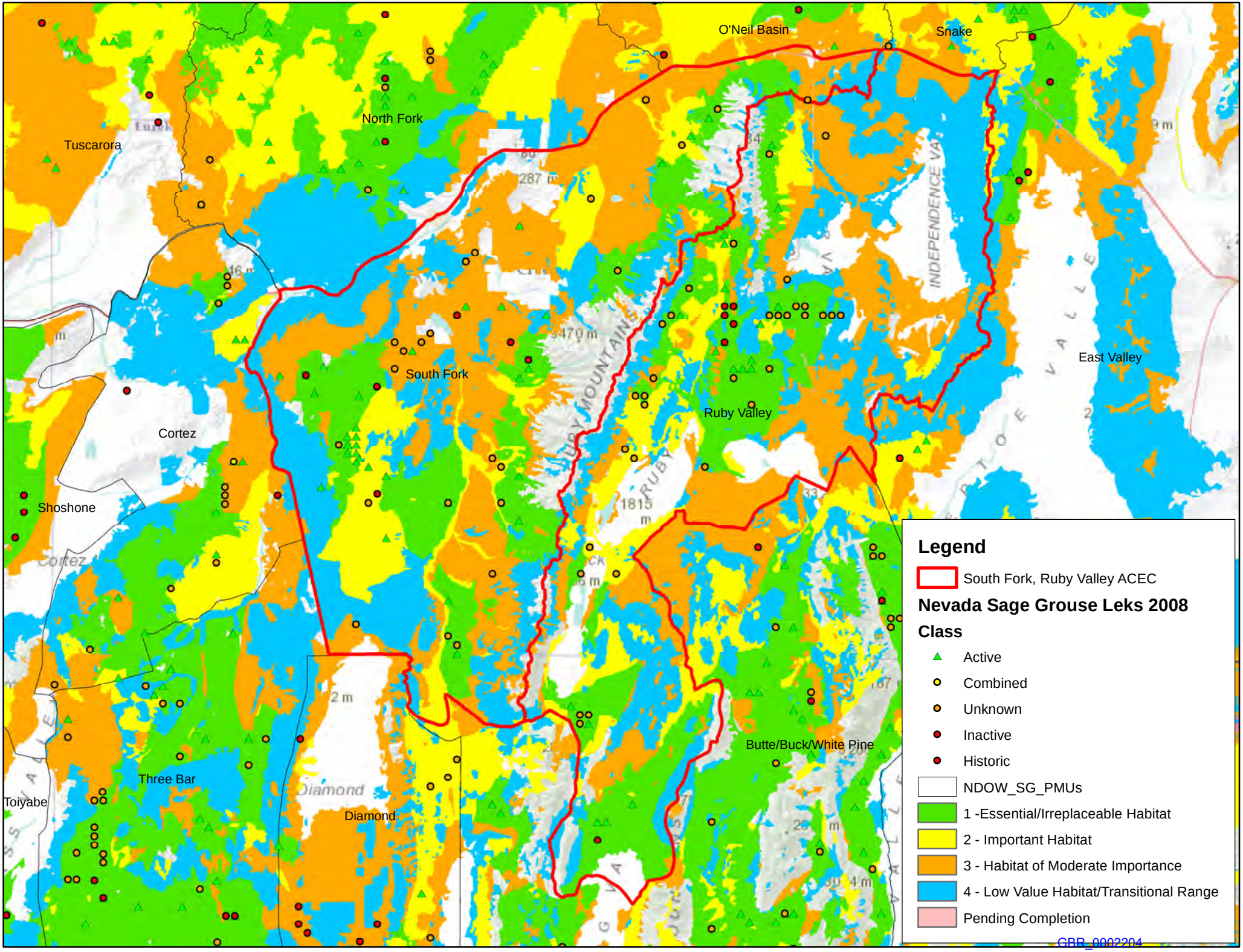
O'Neil Basin
Snake
North Fork
Tuscarora
INDEPENDENCE VA
East Valley
South Fork
Ruby Valley
Cortez
Shoshone
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Three Bar
Toiyabe
Diamond
Legend
South Fork, Ruby Valley ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
GBR_0002204

ACEC Proposal: Shoshone, Cortez, Three Bar, Diamond PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

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An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

2. ACK

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Shoshone, Cortez, Three Bar, Diamond

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

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Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

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Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

3 cont.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

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3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

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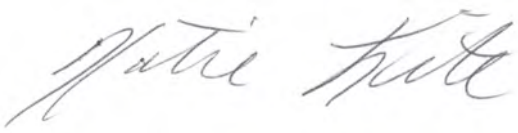

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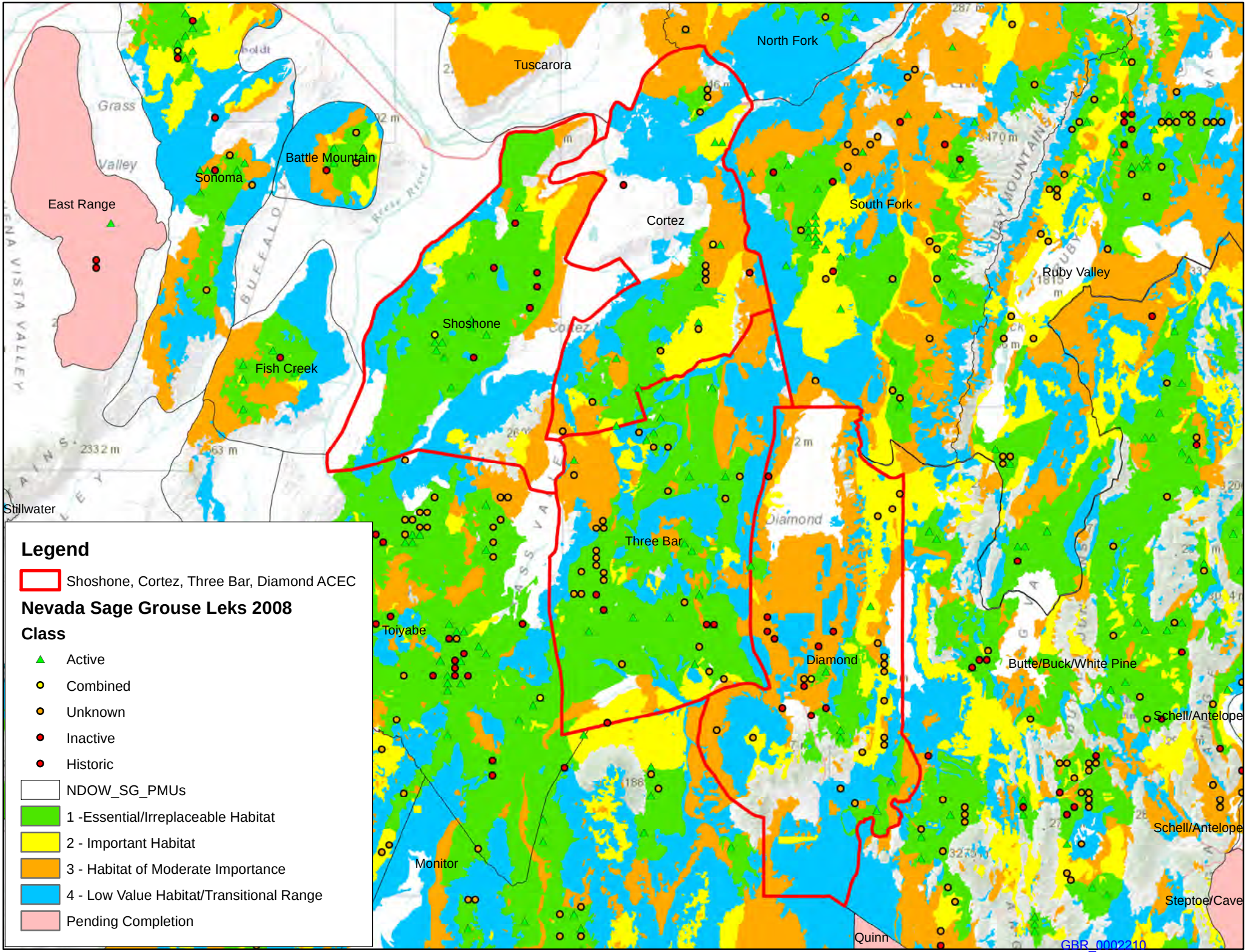
Tuscarora
North Fork
Grass
Valley
Battle Mountain
Sonoma
East Range
Cortez
South Fork
Ruby Valley
Shoshone
Fish Creek
Stillwater
Three Bar
Diamond
Toiyabe
Diamond
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Schell/Antelope
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Monitor
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4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
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ACEC Proposal: Stillwater, Clan Alpine, Desatoya PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

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Relevant Values

Stillwater, Clan Alpine, Desatoya

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (reference attachment)

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

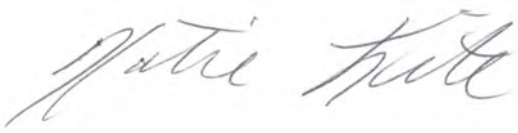
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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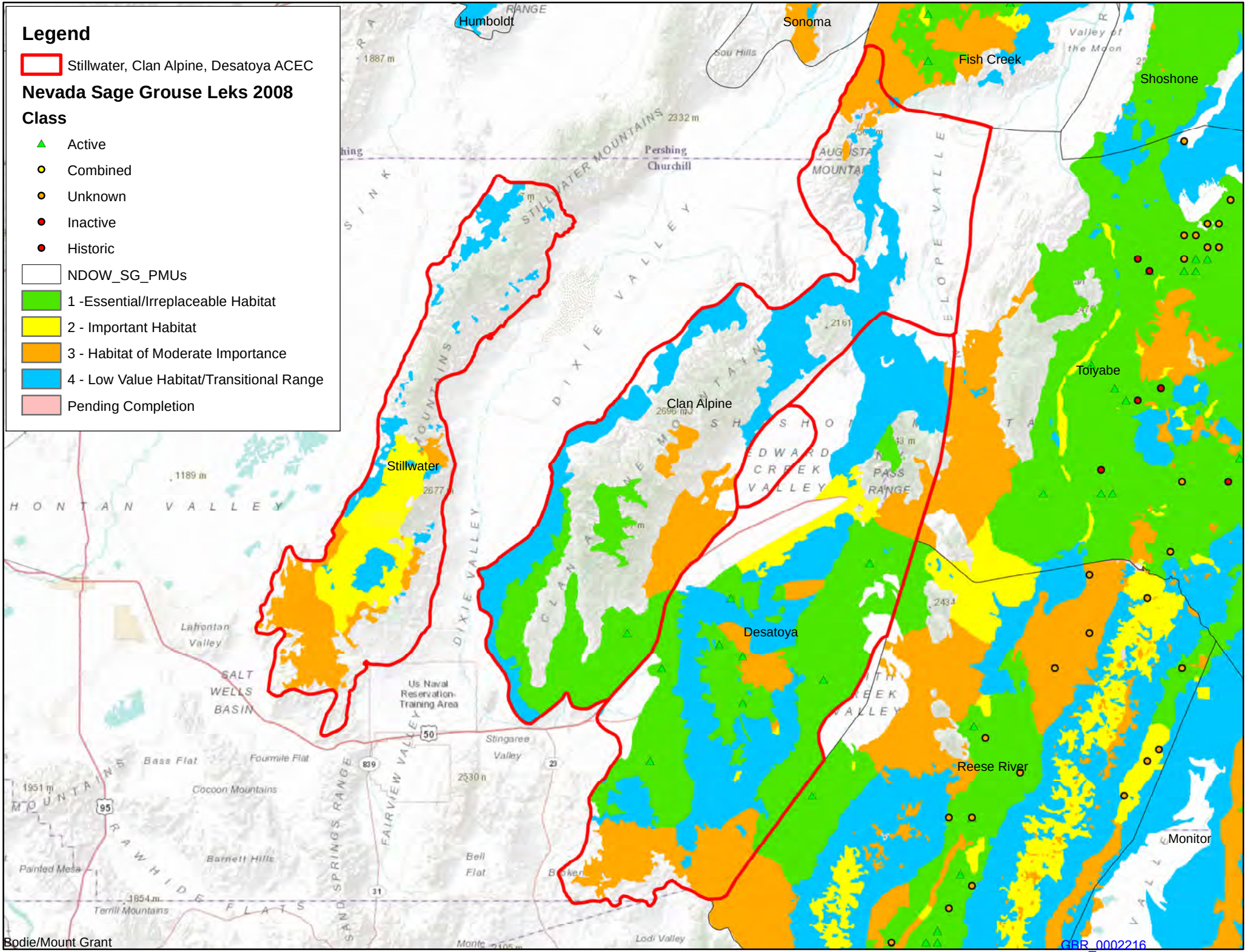
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Sonoma
Fish Creek
Shoshone
Toiyabe
Clan Alpine
Stillwater
Desatoya
Reese River
Monitor
Pershing
Churchill
Lahontan Valley
SALT WELLS BASIN
Us Naval Reservation-Training Area
Stingaree Valley
Bass Flat
Fourmile Flat
Cocoon Mountains
Barnett Hills
Painted Mesa
Terrill Mountains
Bell Flat
Lodi Valley
Bodie/Mount Grant
GBR_0002216

ACEC Proposal: Toiyabe, Reese River, Monitor PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

2. ACK

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Toiyabe, Reese River, Monitor

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse. This landscape was also a proposed National Monument.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

3 cont.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

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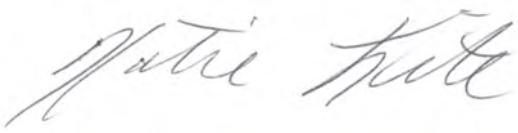

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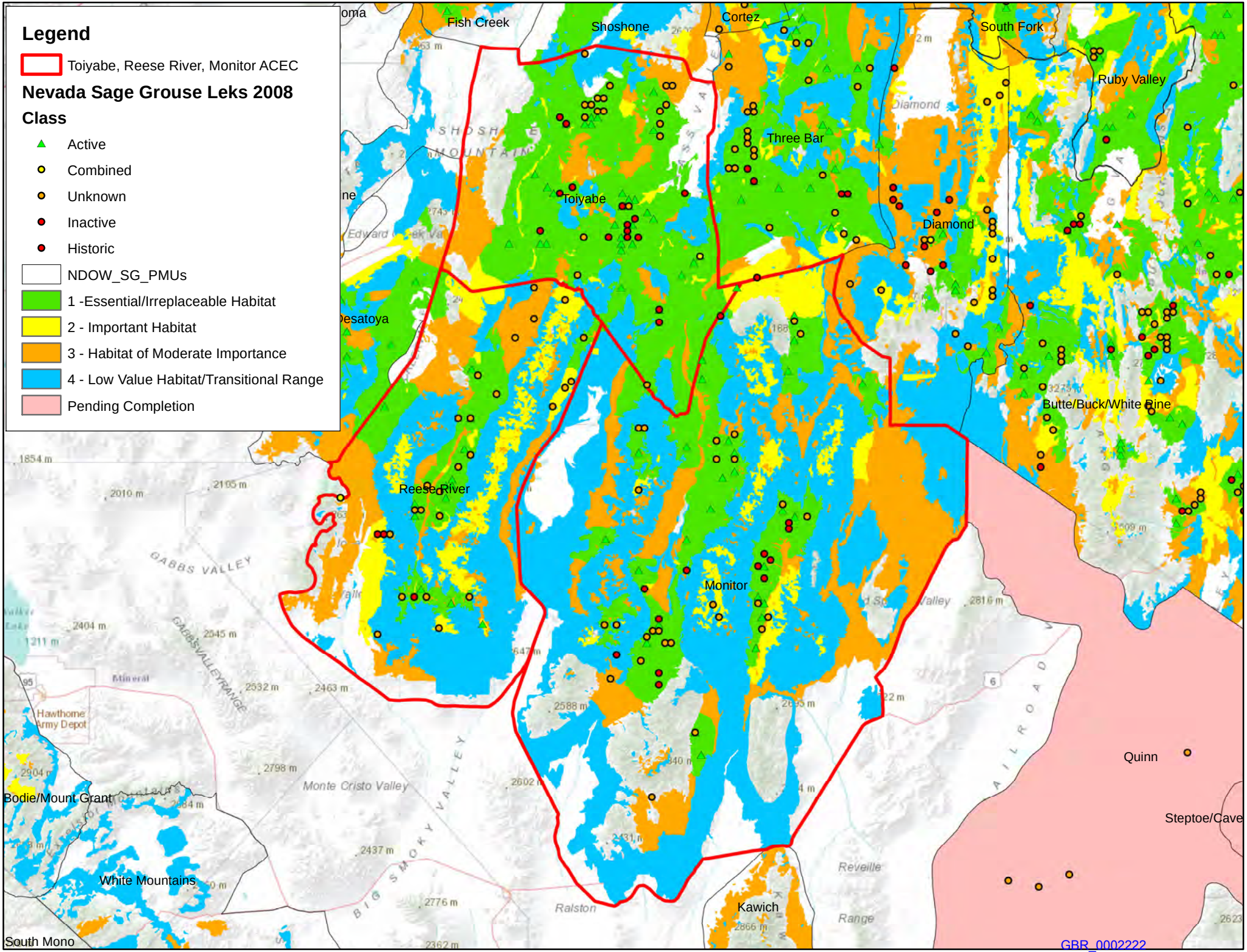
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South Fork
Ruby Valley
Three Bar
Toiyabe
Diamond
Butte/Buck/White Pine
Reese River
Monitor
Quinn
Steptoe/Cave
Bodie/Mount Grant
White Mountains
South Mono
Kawich
Ralston
Monte Cristo Valley
GABBS VALLEY
Hawthorne Army Depot
GBR_0002222

ACEC Proposal: Virginia-Pahrah PMU ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

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Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Virginia-Pahrah

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

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Important Values

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3 cont.

Management Actions
This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

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Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

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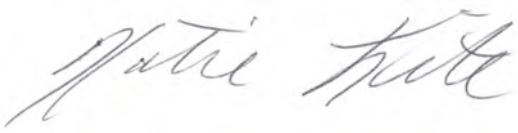

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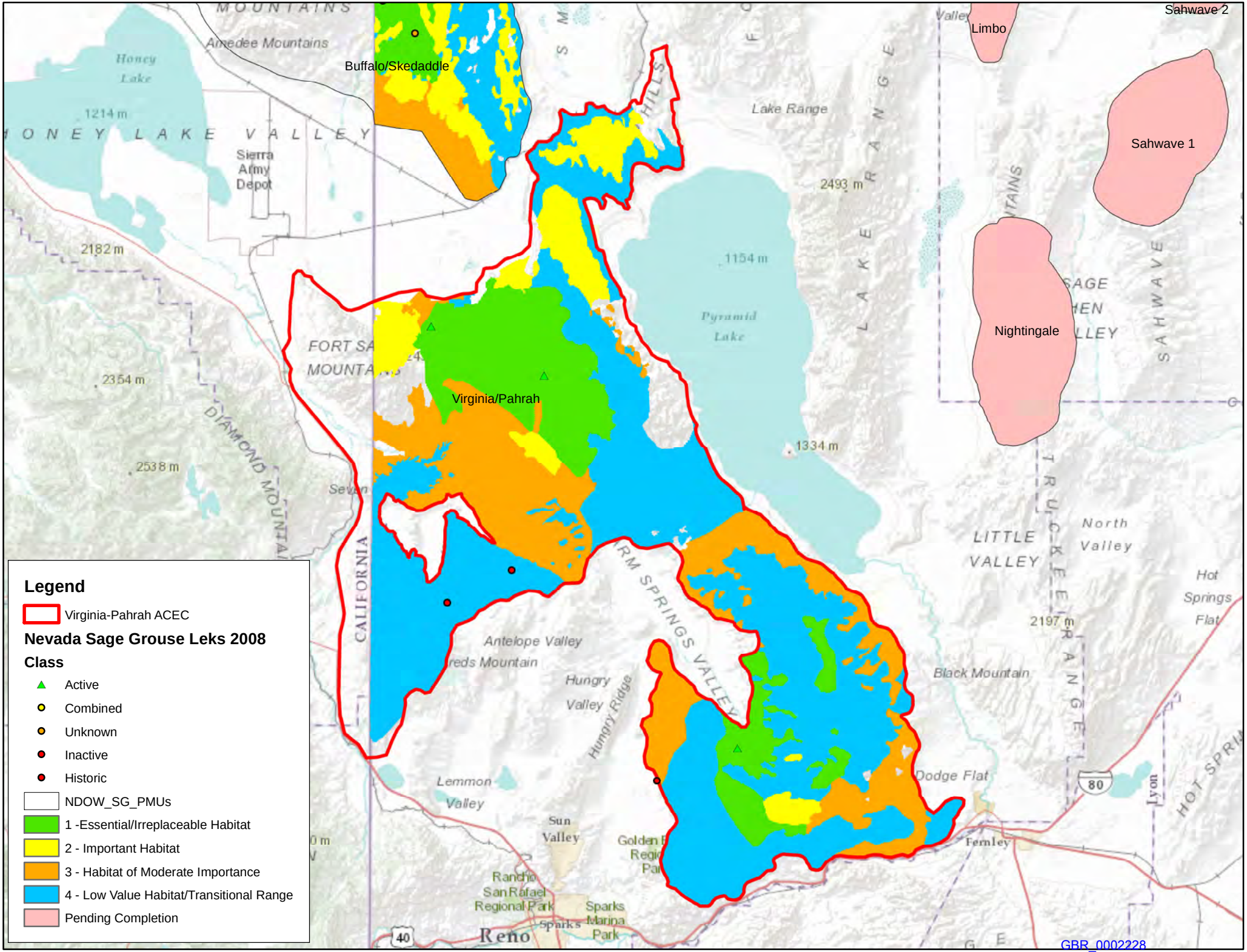

Sahwave 2
Limbo
Buffalo/Skedaddle
Sahwave 1
Nightingale
Virginia/Pahrah
Amedee Mountains
Honey Lake
1214 m
HONEY LAKE VALLEY
Sierra Army Depot
2182 m
2354 m
2538 m
DIAMOND MOUNTAINS
Lake Range
2493 m
1154 m
Pyramid Lake
LAKE RANGE
SAHWAVE
1334 m
LITTLE VALLEY
North Valley
Hot Springs Flat
2197 m
TRUCKEE RANGE
Black Mountain
Dodge Flat
80
Fernley
Lyon
HOT SPRINGS
CALIFORNIA
Antelope Valley
Hungry Valley
Hungry Ridge
SPRINGS VALLEY
Lemmon Valley
Sun Valley
Rancho San Rafael Regional Park
Sparks
Sparks Marina Park
Reno
40
Legend
Virginia-Pahrah ACEC
Nevada Sage Grouse Leks 2008
Class
Active
Combined
Unknown
Inactive
Historic
NDOW_SG_PMUs
1 -Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat
2 - Important Habitat
3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance
4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range
Pending Completion
GBR_0002228

ACEC Proposal: Tuscarora, North Fork PMU's Combined ACEC Proposal

1. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA

BLM must designate ACECs that protect occupied sage-grouse habitats across the landscape that are necessary for sage-grouse to fulfill all their seasonal needs to sustain viable populations in the short, mid and long term.

In areas where BLM and the Forest Service (or USFWS or other federal agency) lands together provide critical linked habitat, special designations must span artificial administrative unit boundaries. The Forest too must designate RNAs, Reserves or Conservation Areas.

FLPMA directs the secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values … giving priority to ACECs …".

ACECs are to be designated in areas "where special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural and scenic values; fish, wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect human life and safety from natural hazards." (43 USC § 1702(a) 43 CFR 1601.0-5a).

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2

2. ACK

An area meets **relevance** criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to native Americans).
- A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).
- A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).
- Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described in the relevance section must have substantial significance and values to meet the **importance** criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.
- Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

2 cont.

- Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.
- Has qualities that warrant highlighting, or poses a threat to human life or safety.

Sage-grouse ACECs: Protect the complex of seasonal habitats required by sage-grouse. Provide for viable populations over time. Allow for integrated management to prevent further fragmentation, and to implement passive and active restoration and rehab to recover essential habitats like springs that provide critical brood rearing habitat that are on the verge of being lost altogether in this very arid landscape. Provide habitat security for sage-grouse during lekking and nesting periods. Limit disturbance, stress and displacement of birds from winter habitats.

Relevant Values

Tuscarora, North Fork

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having Relevant values.

Significant wildlife and other resources are found here. These are significant and substantial values. The qualities are of more than local significance. They are of special worth, consequence, distinctiveness and cause for concern. NDOW identified these lands as important for populations of sage-grouse.

3. BLM-FS-PLI-SMA (Reference attachment)

The values of the Proposed ACEC are greatly threatened by livestock disturbance and livestock-associated vegetation treatments and infrastructure. Livestock disturbance, facilities and vegetation treatments promote weed invasion, especially cheatgrass. Livestock water facilities and trampling promote West Nile virus. Livestock presence and facilities subsidize nest and egg predators. Livestock disturbance promote further desertification and add to stresses caused by climate change which are predicted to adversely impact the Great Basin and this land area. Climate change is expected to amplify adverse impacts of livestock grazing, further stress waters, and promote cheatgrass and other invasive species. See Fleischner (1994), Belsky and Gelbrad (2000), Connelly et al. 2004, USDI Pellant 2007 Congressional Testimony, Knick and Connelly (2009) Studies in Avian Biology.

Poor management decisions by agencies, and a series of deeply flawed segmented livestock grazing and facility actions, have torn apart the fabric of the sagebrush landscape in many areas, including very important sage-grouse habitats of the ACEC.

The uplands, including mature and old growth Wyoming big sagebrush communities are critical for sage-grouse nesting. The black sagebrush, along with Wyoming big sagebrush, is at times critical for wintering habitats. The fragile, small streams, springs and seeps, and associated sagebrush habitats, provide essential sage-grouse brood rearing habitat. These, and higher elevation mountain big sagebrush communities, are all greatly threatened by continued livestock grazing disturbance which occurs at high levels during sensitive periods that conflict with sage-grouse needs for habitat security. These high levels of grazing are also degrading soils and microbiotic crusts which are essential as a frontline defense to prevent invasive species like cheatgrass. These high levels of grazing also degrade native vegetation structure, composition and function, deplete forbs, reduce essential native bunchgrass nesting cover, and cause other adverse impacts.

Agencies have also allowed mining exploration and development, and energy development to intrude on important and essential sage-grouse seasonal habitats.

The complexly interspersed sagebrush habitats have nationally significant values. They are essential habitat for the existing declining population of sage-grouse. They provide critical connectivity with neighboring PMU's and opportunity for genetic interchange. Their further degradation by livestock and any intensified mining, energy or other development will increase fragmentation and serve to further isolate birds and populations.

Loss of this PMU would further isolate sage-grouse in neighboring areas.

There are identified leks within the Proposed ACEC. These areas are critical for the survival of the birds and livestock grazing during lekking season may disrupt breeding activities. Livestock associated infrastructure may provide perches for raptors which prey on breeding sage grouse. Livestock disturbance of vegetation may reduce the quality and quantity of escape cover used by breeding sage grouse.

Important Values

The Proposed ACEC meets the criteria of having important values.

3 cont.

The Proposed ACEC has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern especially when compared to any similar resource.

The Proposed ACEC has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened or vulnerable to adverse change.

These lands have suffered 150 years of livestock grazing disturbance. This has resulted in large losses of riparian area and water flows. Large-scale historical mining disturbance, and deforestation and other impacts have also occurred. Uplands have suffered large amounts of soil erosion, reducing site potential. Any continued livestock grazing disturbance occurs in a landscape that has been altered by historical uses – so adverse impacts of even smaller amounts of disturbance to remaining lands, waters, and sage-grouse habitats may be amplified.

The Proposed ACEC has microbiotic crusts, which are a frontline defense against weed invasion, are very fragile and readily damaged by livestock trampling and cross-country motorized disturbance. Their disturbance promotes invasive species that alter natural processes and fire cycles. Whisenant 1994, Belsky and Gelbard (2000), USDI BLM Belnap et al. 2001 Technical Bulletin on microbiotic crusts

The Proposed ACEC should be recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandate of FLPMA.

Benefits of the Protection of Relevant and Important Values Habitat Recovery Will Provide Long-term Viability for Sage-grouse and Other Sagebrush-dependent Species.

Invasion of cheatgrass is alarming. Unfortunately disturbance and desertification associated with livestock grazing has continued, and has been intensified by facilities disturbance, salting, and overstocking.

These lands are of local, regional and national significance for conservation and recovery of sage grouse and other rare and sensitive species populations.

Fragmented and Disconnected Habitat; Sage Grouse Habitats Require Passive Restoration for Recovery.

Springs, springbrooks, intermittent drainages, and overall water quality and quantity are jeopardized by grazing practices and now climate change

In the past, agencies have treated sagebrush and other upland areas as throwaway landscapes. Sagebrush has been "treated" and subjected to continued chronic grazing disturbance. Uplands have been carved with new fences. Livestock spring developments, water pipelines have proliferated. Agencies have adopted a disjointed, piecemeal approach, and treated uplands as sacrifice area.

3 cont.

Management Actions

This ACEC must be withdrawn from locatable, leasable and fluid mineral development.

New rights-of-way will not be allowed for energy, transmission or other infrastructure or developments. Existing ROWS will be amended.

Livestock grazing will be phased out of occupied habitats over a period of three years. In any areas where grazing might continue longer, Appendix A practices will be applied.

Livestock infrastructure, including fences, spring developments, pipelines, stock ponds and other harmful facilities will be removed (active restoration). Livestock and other disturbed areas will be seeded with local native ecotypes of shrubs, grasses and forbs.

Native upland and riparian vegetation communities will undergo passive restoration, where natural processes return as a result of stopping activities that degrade them or prevent recovery.

Spring and stream flows will be restored to their natural condition to the maximum extent possible as developments are removed through active and passive restoration.

Sagebrush manipulation/treatment is prohibited.

Selective hand-cutting of conifers only in areas where they are shown to conflict with sage-grouse needs will be allowed. Mastication, chaining, and other treatments involving use of large machinery are prohibited. (Active restoration).

Ownership of all public lands will be retained.

Travel will be restricted to designated roads.

3 cont.

No utility corridors will be designated. Existing utility corridors may be retained. Maintenance activity for these areas will be carried out with minimal disturbance.

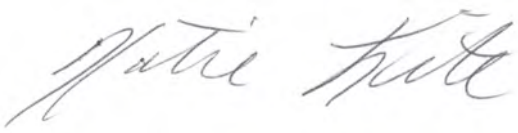
All lands will be managed as VRM 1 or 2.

We request a meeting with BLM to discuss this ACEC proposal, and its incorporation into this Sage-grouse EIS process.

4. ACK

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, need further information, supporting evidence for, or clarification of issues raised here.

Sincerely,



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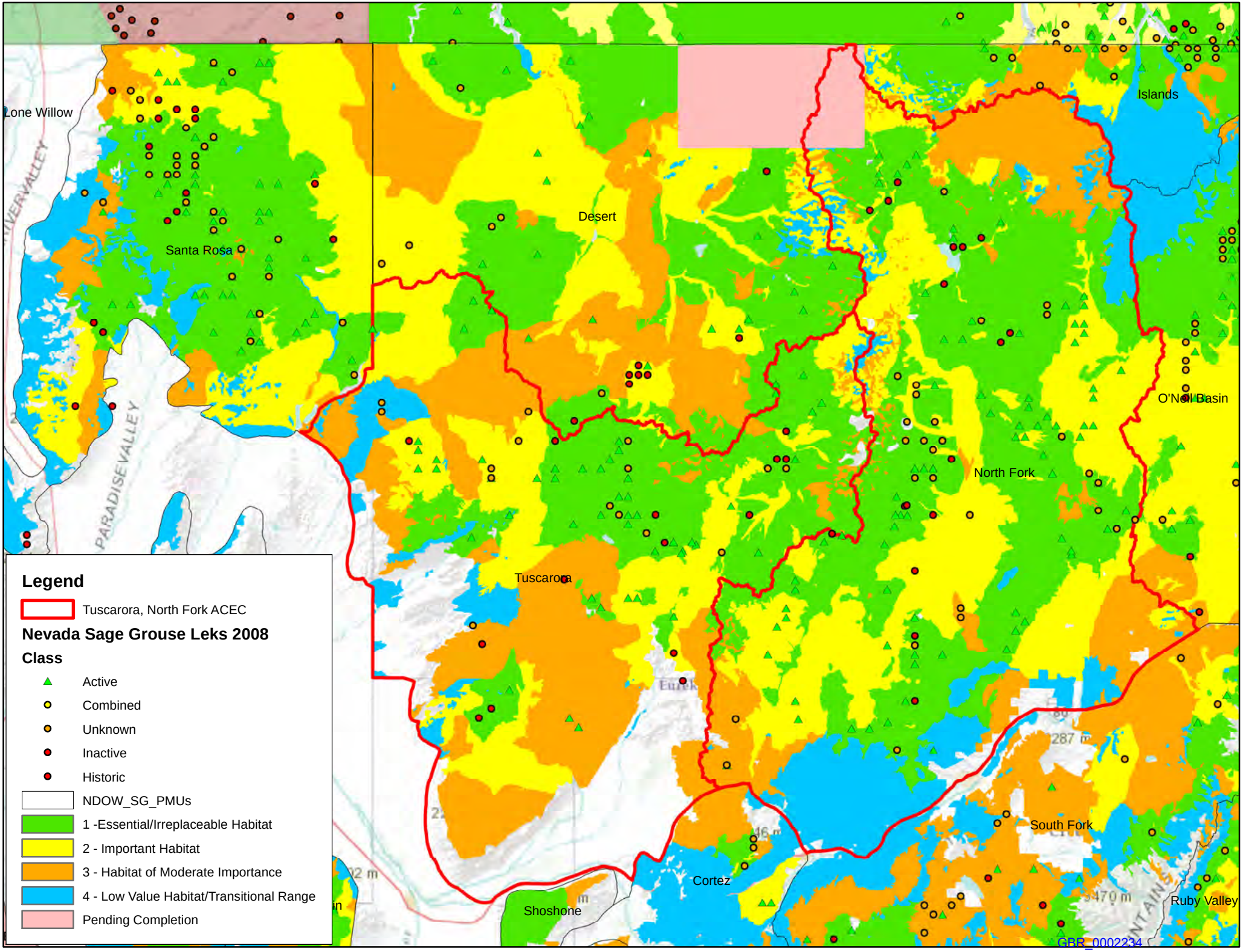
Lone Willow
Santa Rosa
Desert
Islands
O'Neil Basin
North Fork
Tuscarora
South Fork
Cortez
Shoshone
Ruby Valley
PARADISE VALLEY
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