

Appendix U

Detailed Description of the No Action Alternative



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U. Detailed No Action Alternative

U.1 Existing GRSG Guidance in Land Use Plans

U.1.1 Introduction

Nearly all LUPs within the Idaho and southwestern Montana sub-region have some guidance regarding GRSG and/or sagebrush habitats. These goals, objectives, and actions for BLM and objectives, standards, and guidelines for the Forest Service are presented by LUP in Table U-1 below.

**Table U-1
GRSG and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance in Land Use Plans**

Bureau of Land Management
Bruneau Field Office – Bruneau MFP
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Objective (WL-4): Manage upland game and waterfowl habitats in the BPU to increase populations of the highly desired species.
Action (WL-4.4): Manage 520,000 acres of sage grouse range in the BPU including those areas under Wilderness IMP classification and within IMP management guidelines to improve nesting, brood rearing and winter habitats.
Action (WL-4.4(1)): To improve the quality of sage grouse nesting and brood rearing habitats, all poor and fair big sagebrush, meadow, and riparian ecological sites should be improved and managed for good ecological condition, based on the SCS ecological site classification system.
Action (WL-4.4(2)): When making management decisions affecting areas used by sage grouse in the BPU, refer to and address the “Guidelines for Habitat Protection in Sage Grouse Range” as published by the Western States Sage Grouse Committee, June, 1974. Significant among these are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Manage sage grouse habitat by maintaining the density of sagebrush canopy cover at 20-30% within nesting habitats and at least 20% in present wintering habitats and in areas known to have supported wintering concentrations within the previous ten years. Canopy cover should not be confused with hiding cover. b) Designate sage grouse nesting and wintering habitat as “active” wildfire suppression areas wherein fire suppression activities are geared to fire behavior and the potential resource threat from any fire after it has been initially evaluated. If significant sage grouse cover is destroyed by any fire, sagebrush seed will be included in any mixture used in fire rehabilitation projects, seeded at a rate sufficient to reestablish suitable cover for sage grouse. c) In brood rearing areas where the big sagebrush canopy cover is 20% or greater, improve herbaceous vegetation by sagebrush manipulation and seeding of small irregular areas. These manipulations must not however, reduce the existing sagebrush canopy below 10%. Carefully evaluate the sage grouse response of these habitat manipulations before expanding the program to a large scale. Prescribed burning in most cases will be used for the cover alteration. d) No rehab projects will be implemented where live sagebrush crown cover is less than 20%, or on steep upper slopes (20% + gradient) where big sagebrush is 12 inches or less in height. e) Range vegetal control/rehab projects within two miles of known strutting grounds will be limited to practices which also enhance sage grouse habitat since this area constitutes the breeding complex for sage grouse. f) No vegetal control using herbicides will be conducted along streams, meadows, or secondary dry/intermittent drainages. A minimum of a 100 yard strip of living sage will be retained on each edge of meadows and drainages. g) Restrict during March-May any intensive disturbance activities such as gravel pit operation or ORV

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<p>aces within 2 miles of sage grouse strutting grounds and avoid the establishment of major roads within 1/2 mile.</p> <p>h) Restrict vehicular traffic to existing roads from November 1 to February 28 in sage grouse wintering habitats.</p> <p>i) Retain in public ownership all tracts of land on which strutting grounds are located and all lands within a two-mile radius of those strutting grounds, but allow exchanges if higher quality habitat can be acquired and such exchanges are in the public interest.</p> <p>j) Prescribed burning shall be the primary tool for habitat improvement.</p>
<i>Livestock Grazing</i>
Action (RM1.1): Implement AMPs on 14 allotments and less-intensive management on 5 allotments (Overlay RM-4). Allotments are listed in priority order. Adjust management or exclude grazing on sage grouse brood-rearing areas to improve habitat. Design grazing management to improve crucial antelope winter/early spring ranges. Establish grazing systems and seasons to meet bighorn sheep requirements.
Burley Field Office - Cassia RMP
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Objective: Management Areas 2, 4, 7, 10: Maintain or improve sage grouse winter habitat and sage grouse strutting/brood-rearing habitat. (# of acres of habitat is identified in each Management Area in the LUP)
Action: Management Areas 9, 11, 13: Maintain or improve sage grouse brood-rearing habitat. (# of acres of habitat is identified in each Management Area in the LUP)
Action: Allow for limited vegetation manipulation in areas of known sage-grouse brood-rearing areas and winter areas. Refer to Sage-grouse Management in Idaho, Wildlife Bulletin Number 9, Idaho Department of Fish and Game 1981, for habitat requirements for sage-grouse.
<i>Livestock grazing</i>
Action: Implement livestock grazing systems that will provide a 20-40% canopy cover of brush, an average plant height of 20” and 50% average utilization of grass understory in upland game habitat areas.
<i>Fluid Minerals (Oil and Gas, Tar Sands, and Geothermal Resources)</i>
Action: Management Area 4: Open to leasing subject to the following stipulation: No exploration/development work in sage grouse strutting/brood-rearing habitat from April 11 through June 15.
Action: Management Areas 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13: Open to leasing subject to the following stipulation: No exploration/development work in sage grouse strutting/brood-rearing habitat from April 1 through June 15.
Burley Field Office - Twin Falls MFP
<i>General Wildlife</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through the use of intensive grazing management systems maintain and enhance nesting-brood rearing complexes and wintering areas for sage grouse. 2. Limited work will be permitted along streams, meadows or secondary drainages (dry and intermittent). A 100-yard strip (minimum) of living sagebrush will be retained on each edge of meadows and drainages for protection of sage grouse habitat. Install protective fencing on selected springs, seeps, meadows, and well overflow areas, as they become identified, to protect succulent forage and improve sage grouse habitat. 3. Give sage grouse nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitat needs priority consideration in these habitat areas. The guidelines developed by IDFG will guide the habitat management of these areas. Maintain existing range improvement practices that exist within these habitat areas. The key in determining the nesting-brood rearing habitat sites will be the location of leks relative to the 2-mile radius rule. Multiple use management of these areas will aim at maintaining adequate nesting cover. Brood-rearing needs in these are will strive to maximize succulent forbs and insects. management of wintering areas will be to maintain adequate sagebrush cover in identified winter areas.

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<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Provide improved upland game bird habitat by planting vegetation which will out compete noxious weeds, are non-spreading in nature but will provide the same benefits as many of the noxious weeds. Until this can be accomplished, herbicide and pesticide use will have to be selective.5. Enhance upland game habitat by developing the following wildlife enclosures.6. Implement the following cooperative farm agreements to enhance upland game bird habitat.7. All land treatment proposals affecting brushy islands or buffer strips, should receive multiple resource input to assure consideration of the wildlife habitat needs and keep the needed patches and islands of brush habitat. The existing islands and leave areas from the initial projects will remain leave areas in future maintenance unless wildlife input indicates that the areas are not critical habitat, in which case treatment can be done in a manner that benefits the wildlife values.8. Improve upland game habitat by making all existing and future water developments available to all upland game birds. Improve the Chukar habitat by installing permanent water sources in Chukar range. Construct and install bird guzzlers along Salmon Falls Creek Rim for Chukar an near the juniper trees by Mule Creek for quail. Install additional guzzlers as locations become identified.9. Provide upland game habitat, primarily pheasants and public hunting areas, by: maintaining small isolated parcels of public land which are surrounded by private land in public ownership (these tracts must be in legal subdivision); in all future desert land entries, Carey Act, public sales, land exchanges, etc.; retain a minimum of 15 percent of the land in public ownership; retain the following isolated parcels in public ownership and maintain them in their present condition until such time when the surrounding private land goes in to agriculture.10. Improve and maintain terrestrial, aquatic and wetland-riparian habitat for upland games species throughout the planning unit.11. Acquire the following parcel of land to provide additional upland game habitat: T 10 S, R 18 E, Section 11 N 1/2 N1/2 SE 1/412. Maintain and enhance habitat for sharptailed grouse through the use of intensive grazing management systems. Maintenance of a 12 inch high grass understory is important. Maintain present cover on public lands adjacent to dry land grain fields. Protect grass areas intermixed with bitterbrush and sagebrush in draws and small canyons with dense stands of berry producing vegetation.13. Allow vehicular use and oil and gas exploration without restriction except during the period from March 15 through June 15 in critical sage grouse nesting-brood rearing complexes. During this period, vehicular use will be limited to existing roads and trails.14. Close critical sage grouse wintering areas to snowmobiling.15. Determine the boundary of each agricultural trespass, determine the party in violation, settle the damages due the government based on fair market value: 1.) Terminate the unauthorized use by one of the following actions. Restore the land to its prior stat for multiple resource management. 2.) Enter into cooperative wildlife farming agreement. Use the Sieks Act authority where applicable.3.) Enter into an agricultural lease with multiple resource values identified and collect fair market value rental for the government. 4.) Dispose of the farmed land to the private sector through public sale. Sites containing any of the following criteria will be retained in public ownership for multiple use resource management: a. cultural or archeological b. natural history values c. threatened or endangered plant species d. threatened or endangered animal species and their habitats e. critical wildlife habitat such as mule deer winter, sage grouse winter, pheasant winter, pheasant nesting, etc.16. Modify multiple-use recommendation to finalize the Twin Falls Off-Road Vehicle Designation Plan based on the Step recommendations. Complete the designation plan and an EA through public review as needed local motorcycle and 4-wheel clubs. Change the ORV limitation in mule deer critical winter range from the date November 1 to November 15. Designate area between powerline and Salmon Falls Creek as limited to existing roads and trails (Accept CRM-1.5 WL-4.2). Limit ORV use in sage grouse nesting and strutting areas (Accept WL-2.12).
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<p>17. Practice limited fire suppression on the existing seedings and proposed seedings with modifications as shown in RM-2.3 RM2.4 and RM-2.5 Multiple Use Recommendations that provide for normal fire suppression on sage grouse ranges antelope and mule deer winter ranges, mule deer critical summer range and isolated tracts</p> <p>18. Do not use aerial retardant on resource value Class II lands except when needed to protect or ensure the safety of private property, structures, livestock, general public and fire suppression personnel. Do not use aerial retardant on any open waters such as reservoirs ponds, streams and springs. Aerial retardant can be used to aid in protecting identified sage grouse, antelope and mule deer winter areas, mule deer critical summer range and isolated tracts.</p> <p>19. Modify the multiple use recommendation to include all the identified area and to agree with the range multiple use recommendation RM-2.7 RM2.7 says practice limited fire suppression on existing seedings and proposed seedings with the modifications shown in RM-2.3 RM-2.4 and RM2.5. Aggressive fire suppression will be initiated to protect wildlife values on sage grouse strutting grounds, antelope and mule deer winter range, mule deer critical summer range and on the Twin Falls-Cassia Isolated Sikes Act Tracts. Fire management will consult closely with the area manager on actions in these areas.</p>
Twin Falls District - Fire Management Direction Amendment
<i>Wildland Fire Management</i>
GOAL: Maintain, protect, and expand sage grouse source habitats.
Action: Suppress wildland fires in source habitats (Figure 3-3), except where WFU would benefit habitat.
Action: Allow WFU in sage grouse source habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site specific project level coordination with IDFG (Figure 3-3).
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in areas that pose a wildland fire risk to source habitats.
Action: Treat areas within source habitats that have low resiliency (i.e., areas characterized by low species diversity, undesirable composition, and dead or decadent sagebrush).
Action: When multiple wildland fire ignitions occur, the criteria for establishing suppression priorities would follow the two prioritization criteria described under Section 2.4.4.1, followed by the following prioritization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize risks to sage-grouse source, key, and restoration habitats. • Minimize risks to habitats occupied by T&E species. • Minimize risks to resources where changes in fuel accumulation and fire occurrence have occurred (i.e., FRCC 2 and FRCC 3 areas).
Action: Use AMR to wildland fire in all sage grouse restoration and key habitats and healthy wildlife habitats.
GOAL: Treat sage grouse key and restoration habitats to expand source habitats. Improve and maintain sage grouse Restoration (R1-3) and key habitats.
Action: Use appropriate management response to wildland fire in all sage grouse restoration and key habitats and healthy wildlife habitats.
Action: WFU may be allowed in historically frequent fire regimes to restore fire's natural role and in sage grouse restoration and key habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site specific project level consultation/collaboration with IDFG (Figure 3-3).
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in restoration and key habitats to reduce risk of wildland fire and reconnect restoration and key habitats.
Action: Treat areas of restoration and key habitats that have low resiliency characterized by low species diversity.
Action: T&E and Candidate species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, and conservation strategies will be protected as specified in their respective plans/agreements/strategies. These protections include such measures as adequate habitat and range for a given species, including mitigation measures for

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multiple land use activities authorized by the BLM.
Action: R.1 PRESCRIBED FIRE: Leave adequate untreated sagebrush areas for loafing/hiding cover near leks for sage-grouse.
Action: R.1 PRESCRIBED FIRE: Avoid the use of prescribed fire or other sagebrush treatments in habitats prone to the expansion or invasion of cheatgrass or other invasive species unless adequate measures are taken to control the invasive species and ensure subsequent dominance by desirable perennial species. In many—if not most—cases, this will likely require chemical treatments and reseeding.
Action: R.2 ANNUAL GRASSLANDS Seed used in sage-grouse habitat restoration seedings, burned area rehabilitation projects, and hazardous fuels/wildland urban interface projects will be tested and certified as weed-free, based on prevailing agency policy and protocol. Private landowners are encouraged to use only certified seed, as well.
Action: R.2 ANNUAL GRASSLANDS Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency to facilitate firefighter safety; reduce the risk of extreme fire behavior; reduce the risk and rate of fire spread to stronghold, key, and restoration habitats(sic sage-grouse); reduce fire frequencies; and shorten the fire season.
Action: R.2 ANNUAL GRASSLANDS Human activities such as fence and pipeline maintenance or construction, facility maintenance, utility maintenance, or any project or related work at or within 1 km (0.6 miles) of occupied leks that results in or will likely result in disturbance to lekking birds should be avoided from approximately 6:00 PM to 9:00 AM. In general, this guideline should be applied from March 15 through May 1 in lower elevation habitats and March 25 through May 15 in higher elevation habitats.
Action: R.4 CONIFER ENCROACHMENT Remove Douglas fir or other conifers where they are encroaching on wet meadows, riparian areas, or sagebrush stands that provide potential sage-grouse habitat.
Action: R.4 CONIFER ENCROACHMENT Remove juniper, Douglas fir, pinyon pine, or other trees within at least 100 m (330 ft) or an 8-acre area of occupied sage-grouse leks. The purpose of this procedure is to reduce perching opportunity for raptors or other avian predators within view of leks. Techniques could include chainsaw, chipper, or other suitable mechanical means. Ensure cutting and slash disposal is completed between approximately July 15 and January 30 to minimize disturbance to grouse that may be in the vicinity (e.g., males at leks, nesting females, and young broods). This practice serves to reduce raptor predation on sage-grouse by eliminating potential perches, thereby improving survival, recruitment, and productivity. It may be particularly valuable where avian predation may be of greater concern such as in areas with fragmented habitat, nearby infrastructure features, and/or in the case of small, isolated sage-grouse populations.
Action: R.4 CONIFER ENCROACHMENT Where juniper or other conifer species have encroached upon sagebrush communities at larger scales, employ prescribed fire, chemical, mechanical (e.g., chaining, chipper, chainsaw, or commercial sale), or other suitable methods to reduce or eliminate juniper. Priority should be given to areas where there is a strong likelihood for recovery of perennial herbaceous vegetation or where preparatory and follow-up actions (e.g., control of invasive species and seeding) are likely to be successful. Whenever possible, but especially if sagebrush habitat is limited locally, use juniper-control techniques that are least disruptive to the affected stand of sagebrush. For example, if junipers are only scattered, and the associated sagebrush community is otherwise relatively healthy, cutting junipers with chainsaws will remove the encroachment threat while allowing for immediate use of the sagebrush by sage-grouse. In all cases, control efforts should be planned using interdisciplinary expertise.
GOAL: Protect and enhance sage grouse stronghold habitats.
Action: Suppression Priorities: Minimize risk to source, key, and restoration sage grouse habitat. Minimize risk to threatened, endangered, and candidate species habitat. Minimize risk to resources where changes in

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fuel accumulation and fire occurrence have occurred.
Action: Design vegetation treatments potentially affecting Greater sage-grouse (in Low-elevation Shrub, Mid-elevation Shrub, and Mountain Shrub), conservation measures identified in Appendix R would be considered.
Action: Manage fuels and fire across the sagebrush steppe landscape to provide habitat for a variety of sagebrush-obligate wildlife species as well as other resource benefits. Progress made toward DFC would result in improved habitat for sagebrush steppe obligate species.
Challis Field Office – Challis RMP
<i>Special status species</i>
Goal: Maintain populations of special status species and/or their habitat over the range of natural distribution and habitat conditions. Eliminate the need for listing of sensitive and candidate species and contribute to recovery of listed species by increasing the number or size of populations or by removing threats to species and their habitats.
Objective: Within 10 years, develop BLM Species Management Plans or other types of conservation plans for at least five of the species inventoried under Special Status Species, Goal 1, #4 and 5 above.
<i>Wildlife Habitat</i>
Objective: In the following wildlife habitat areas, unless NEPA analysis and consultation with the IDFG determine that restrictions on a permitted activity are not necessary, BLM permitted activities (other than permitted livestock use, unless restricted elsewhere) would be (1) restricted to prevent disturbance during the specified crucial periods, and (2) designed to eliminate adverse effects (in consultation with the IDFG and other interested publics): Habitat Area Restricted Period Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds 3/1-5/15 Sage Grouse Nesting/Brood-rearing Areas 4/15-6/30
Dillon Field Office – Dillon RMP
<i>Travel and Transportation</i>
See Appendix X pg. 214 Roads and Motorized Vehicles <i>Issue: Roads may increase sage grouse mortality through collisions with vehicles, displacement because of human disturbance, or other factors.</i> 1. Identify, map, quantify, and evaluate impacts of existing roads, including 2-tracks, in relation to known lek locations and sage grouse winter ranges. 2. Consider impacts to sage grouse when designing new roads and modifying existing roads. 3. Consider seasonal use restrictions or signing to avoid disturbance of critical times, such as winter and nesting periods.
<i>Issue: Roads and their associated disturbances and cumulative effects contribute to the loss of habitat and declining sage grouse populations.</i> 1. Develop a transportation management plan across ownership boundaries in critical sage grouse habitats. 2. Participate in travel planning efforts and educate the general public about the impacts of roads on sage grouse and critical habitat. 3. Consider buffers, removal, realignment, or seasonal closures where appropriate to avoid degradation of habitat. 4. Re-vegetate closed roads with plant species beneficial to sage grouse. 5. Close and re-vegetate travel ways in sage grouse habitats where appropriate. 6. Provide sage grouse habitat information during the planning phases of transportation development, working with MDOT, FHWA, industry, counties, etc.

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<p><i>Recreation and Visitor Services</i></p> <p>Appendix X pp. 214 Recreational Disturbance of Sage Grouse</p> <p><i>Issue: Management of lek viewing may be necessary.</i></p> <p>Action 5. Issue special use permits for certain activities with distance and timing restrictions to maintain the integrity of breeding habitat.</p>
<p><i>Lands and Realty</i></p> <p>See appendix X pg. 213 Powerlines and Generation Facilities</p> <p><i>Issue: Existing power lines near a lek, brood-rearing habitat, or winter habitat increases the risk of predation on sage grouse by raptors.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document the segment(s) of line causing problems. 2. Determine by cooperative action- agencies, utilities, and landowners- whether or not modification of poles to limit perching will prevent electrocution of raptors and decrease predation on sage grouse. 3. Emphasize the following if perch prevention modifications do not work to protect sage grouse and sagebrush habitat: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) reroute the line using distance, topography, or vegetative cover; or b) bury the line. 4. Explore opportunities for technical assistance and funding. 5. Remove power line when use is completed. <p><i>Issue: Existing power line is causing consistent or significant collision mortality on sage grouse.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document the segment(s) of line causing consistent or biologically significant mortality- with agencies, utilities, and landowners cooperating in the effort. 2. Initiate collision prevention measures using guidelines (Avian Power Line Action Committee 1994) on identified segments. Measures are subject to restriction or modification for wind and ice loading or other engineering concerns, or updated collision prevention information. 3. Remove power lines that traverse important sage grouse habitats when facilities being serviced are no longer in use or when projects are completed.
<p><i>Range Management</i></p> <p>Pg. 69 Action 3 - identifies SG habitat as priority habitat.</p> <p>3 Consider the following habitats priority wildlife habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all listed and special status species habitats, with grizzly bear and lynx receiving the most emphasis in coniferous forest habitats, and sage grouse receiving the most emphasis in sagebrush steppe habitats • coniferous forest and sagebrush habitats that provide important big game winter habitat • sagebrush habitats that provide bighorn sheep year-long or seasonal habitats • sagebrush habitats that provide sage grouse breeding, early brood rearing, or winter habitat • mountain mahogany and sagebrush steppe habitat associations in the Lima Sweetwater Breaks key raptor management area • all riparian and wetland habitats <p>4 Consider the following species priority wildlife species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all listed and special status species, with grizzly bear, lynx, and sage grouse receiving the most emphasis • bighorn sheep <p>Pg. 73 Actions 42, 43, 44 <i>Sagebrush Steppe Wildlife Habitats</i></p> <p>42. Use the National and Montana sage grouse conservation strategies (see Appendix X) as the basis to address habitat management in the watershed planning process and in project level analysis.</p> <p>43. Manage sagebrush habitats so that mid-scale level shrub cover includes a mix of height classes with</p>

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<p>herbaceous understory adequate for meeting seasonal habitat requirements for sage grouse and other wildlife species that use sagebrush habitat including wintering antelope and mule deer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In habitats with predominately mountain big sage-brush, manage sites with the potential to support sagebrush in a manner that maintains > 70 percent of those areas in canopy closure of 5 to 25 percent. • In habitats that include predominately Wyoming big sagebrush, manage sites with ecological potential to maintain sagebrush over at least 60 per-cent of those areas in a canopy closure of 5 to 25 percent. • Maintain an herbaceous understory emphasizing multiple species of native forbs and grasses, recognizing that herbaceous productivity decreases at >10-15 percent canopy cover. • Emphasize restoration and rehabilitation of sage-brush in areas that are capable of supporting sage-brush and contribute to the distribution and connectivity of patches. <p>44. When making project decisions located in sage grouse habitats, objectives for sage grouse habitats and relevant information about sage grouse seasonal habitat will be considered when determining the desired resource condition. If specific issues regarding sage grouse are identified, applicable conservation actions or guidelines will be reviewed by interdisciplinary teams and considered in the decision-making process. None of the conservation actions or guidelines in the Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage Grouse in Montana will be construed as mandatory or standards.</p> <p>Appendix X – pg. 208 Grazing Management <i>Issue: Conflicting priorities for land uses, species, and habitats.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use scientific data and historic information to establish baseline information when evaluating soil conditions and ecological processes and when monitoring seasonal sage grouse habitats. 2. Set specific habitat objectives and implement appropriate grazing management to achieve those objectives and maintain or improve vegetation condition and trends.
<p>Appendix X pg. 208 action 3 Grazing Management <i>Issue: Conflicting priorities for land uses, species, and habitats.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Offer private landowners incentives when and where appropriated to achieve sage grouse objectives.
<p>Appendix X pg. 208 <i>Issue: Some sagebrush communities may have been significantly altered by past grazing management practices.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement appropriate grazing management strategies and range management practices where soil conditions and ecological processes will support sage grouse and desired commodities and societal values. 2. Establish suitable goals for sagebrush communities that have deteriorated to such an extent that livestock management alone may not contribute to habitat objectives.
<p>Pg. 55 <i>Goal</i> Restore and maintain riparian wetland areas so that at least 955 miles of streams and 2,050 acres of wetlands are in proper functioning condition. Design management to achieve objectives (Desired Future Conditions) or initiate an upward trend in 20 years.</p> <p>Appendix X - Grazing Mngmt pg. 209 <i>Issue: Riparian areas (wet meadows, seeps, streams) are important resources for sage grouse and livestock.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and implement livestock grazing management practices (riparian pastures, seasonal grazing, development of off-stream water facilities, etc.) to achieve riparian management objectives. 2. Modify or adapt pipelines and natural springs, where practical, to create small wet meadows as brood habitat.

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<p>3. ensure the sustainability of desired soil conditions and ecological processes within upland plant communities following implementation of strategies to protect riparian areas. This can be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• protecting natural wet meadows and springs from over-use while developing water for livestock, and• plan the location, design, and construction of new fences to minimize impacts on sage grouse.
<p>Pg 51 Action 14</p> <p>Improve existing seedings that are not meeting range-land health standards for plant vigor and density by implementing grazing management systems or re-seeding with appropriate species of natives or cultivars. Focus restoration of any existing seedings on areas containing high resource values and/or priority habitats and species. Allow the use of all available tools.</p> <p>Appendix X pg. 215</p> <p><i>Issue: The age distribution of sagebrush may have been altered by management, such as a young stand recovering from disturbance or a mature stand with poor regeneration.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Map and inventory areas believed to be deficient in quality of habitat or exhibiting poor health.2. Evaluate the site potential and desired condition, and develop specific objectives accordingly within specific landscapes.3. If sagebrush is lacking:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) develop and implement grazing practices that influence sagebrush growth,b) inter-seed historical breeding and winter habitats with the appropriate sagebrush species,c) identify and promote seed sources for habitat restoration efforts,d) encourage the voluntary use of sagebrush in habitat incentive programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, and work to develop additional funding sources for such programs,e) reclaim and/or re-seed areas disturbed by treatments when necessary, andf) promote sage plantings, where appropriate, on project areas occurring within sage grouse habitats. <p><i>Issue: The plant community has been altered and lack a diverse herbaceous understory.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Map and inventory areas believed to be important sage grouse breeding habitats.2. Evaluate the site potential and desired condition within the context of a larger landscape.3. Develop and implement techniques to increase herbaceous diversity and density in sagebrush-steppe within ecological limits.4. Ensure that grazing practices allow plants to grow to seed ripe on a rotational basis.5. Adjust livestock grazing management when necessary, such as the season of use/projects, to promote forb establishment and recruitment.6. Identify large areas of introduced plant species, such as crested wheat, and determine if restoration efforts are deemed appropriate. <p>7. Inter-seed appropriate breeding habitats with forbs as identified by the specialists and affected interests.</p>
<p>Pg. 73 Action 44</p> <p>44. When making project decisions located in sage grouse habitats, objectives for sage grouse habitats and relevant information about sage grouse seasonal habitat will be considered when determining the desired resource condition. If specific issues regarding sage grouse are identified, applicable conservation actions or guidelines will be reviewed by interdisciplinary teams and considered in the decision-making process. None of the conservation actions or guidelines in the Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage Grouse in Montana will be construed as mandatory or standards.</p> <p><i>Issue: It is important to maintain viable sagebrush habitat and populations of sage grouse while eradicating infestations of noxious weeds.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Employ integrated weed management treatment methods such as a combination of biological and cultural, such as grazing, mowing, or seeding treatments in conjunction with herbicides to manage weeds in sage

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<p>grouse habitat.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Use the most selective herbicides where chemical treatment is appropriate, to minimize loss of non-target plant species. 3. Restore plant communities with desired species adapted to the site, using proven management techniques where biologically feasible. A restoration program may be necessary if conditions prevent natural plant species.
<p>Appendix X pg. 211 <i>Issue: Water discharge and impoundments can degrade or inundate breeding, nesting, and winter habitat.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design impoundments and manage discharge so as not to degrade or inundate leks, nesting sites, and wintering sites. 2. Protect natural springs from any source of disturbance or degradation from energy-related activities.
<p>Appendix X pg 209 <i>Issue: Potential for sage grouse to be disturbed or displaced by concentrations of livestock near leks or winter habitat.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discourage concentration of livestock on leks or other key sage grouse habitats. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid placement of salt or mineral supplements near leks during the breeding season (March-June), and • Avoid supplemental winter feeding of livestock, where practical, on sage grouse winter habitat and around leks <p><i>Issue: Existing fences near breeding, brood-rearing, or winter habitats can increase the risk of collision mortalities and / or predation on sage grouse by hawks, eagles, and ravens by providing perches.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If portions of existing fences are found to pose a significant threat to sage grouse as strike sties or raptor perches, mitigate through moving or modifying posts, implementation of predator control programs, etc. Actions may include increasing the visibility of the fences by flagging or by designing “take-down” fences. 2. Offer private landowners incentives when and where appropriate to achieve sage grouse objectives.
<p><i>Fluid Minerals</i></p> <p>RMP Final EIS Alt. C Pg. 53 Table 6 lists stipulations that were analyzed. Winter/Spring habitat – NL Leks – NL ½ mile buffer Breeding habitat – NSO</p> <p>NL = no lease NSO = no surface occupancy</p> <p>Under Alternative C, 80 percent (1,086,596 acres) of the planning area would not be available for oil and gas leasing. This includes all the lands identified in Alternative B, plus lands in these additional locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sage Grouse Winter/Spring Range • Lands within 1/2 mile of Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds (leks)
<p>Appendix X. pg 210-211 Mining and Energy Development <i>Issue: Energy development may adversely affect sage grouse.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work cooperatively – agencies, utilities, and landowners – to identify and map important seasonal ranges for sage grouse. 2. Complete a broad scale assessment to identify important areas that require additional protection or conservation during land use planning and leasing of energy reserves.

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<p>3. Prioritize areas relative to their need for protection – ranging from complete protection to availability for moderate to high levels of energy development.</p> <p>4. Encourage development in incremental stages to stagger disturbance (federal leases range from 3-10 years); design schedules that include long-term strategies to localize disturbance and recovery within established zones over a staggered time frame.</p> <p>5. Provide technical assistance to private landowners who lease privately owned fee minerals.</p> <p>6. Use off-site mitigation, such as the creation of sage-brush habitat, or purchase conservation easements with industry dollars to offset habitat losses.</p> <p>7. Remove facilities and infrastructure when use is completed.</p> <p>8. Enhance our understanding of the effects of energy development through:</p> <p>a) pre-activity inventory,</p> <p>b) monitoring over the life of the development, and</p> <p>c) Annual evaluations.</p> <p><i>Issue: Increased roads, pipelines, and power lines can fragment sagebrush habitats.</i></p> <p>1. Develop a comprehensive infrastructure plan prior to energy development activities to minimize road densities.</p> <p>2. Avoid locating roads and power lines in crucial sage grouse breeding, nesting, and wintering areas.</p> <p>3. See conservation actions for siting and constructing power lines.</p> <p>4. Use minimal surface disturbance to install roads and pipelines and reclaim site of abandoned wells to natural communities.</p> <p><i>Issue: Energy-related facilities located within 2 miles of a sage grouse lek can degrade habitat quality within existing leases.</i></p> <p>1. Locate storage facilities, generators, and holding tanks outside the line of sight and sound of important breeding habitat.</p> <p>2. Minimize ground disturbance in sagebrush stands with documented use by sage grouse:</p> <p>a) breeding habitat – the lek and associated stands of sagebrush,</p> <p>b) nesting habitat – stands of sagebrush within 2 miles of a lek, and</p> <p>c) wintering habitat – sagebrush stands with documented winter use by sage grouse with portions that would remain above the snow even during years of deep-snow conditions.</p> <p>3. Concentrate energy-related facilities when practicable.</p>
<p><i>Wildland Fire Management</i></p> <p>Appendix X pg.207</p> <p>Conservations measures for Fire Management</p> <p><i>Issue: Reduction of sagebrush by prescribed fire.</i></p> <p>1. Sites should not be burned unless:</p> <p>a) biological and physical limitations of the site and impact on sage grouse are identified and considered,</p> <p>b) management objectives for the site, including those for wildlife, are clearly defined,</p> <p>c) potential for weed invasion and successional trends are well understood, and</p> <p>d) capability exists to manage the post-burn site properly, including a funded monitoring schedule, to achieve a healthy sagebrush community.</p> <p>2. Develop local or regional guidelines, such as the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge Forest/FWP guidelines in the intermountain valleys, or consider the following guide-lines if fire is used as a tool elsewhere:</p> <p>a) analyze cumulative effects of sagebrush treatment by considering ecological units, evaluate the degree of fragmentation, and maintain a good representation of mature sagebrush,</p> <p>b) predict effects for the length of time necessary for sagebrush to return to desired condition for</p>

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<p>deter-mine treatment types and intervals,</p> <p>c) identify suitable patch size based on site-specific characteristics of the natural community and treat patches in a mosaic pattern that provides sagebrush cover for snow capture, hiding cover, and a seed source,</p> <p>d) use available literature to research the effects of fire on sagebrush communities,</p> <p>e) use caution in reducing sagebrush cover in and following drought periods,</p> <p>f) work cooperatively with public agencies, academia, and private landowners to establish conservation objectives for the project area, and</p> <p>g) map all burns within one year of treatment, monitor vegetative response, and develop a GIS layer of burn history.</p> <p>3. Develop treatments to improve habitats over the long term if sagebrush stands do not meet objectives for sage grouse, such as confining treatments to small patches.</p> <p>4. Consider mechanical treatment as the primary method and prescribed fire as a secondary method to remove conifers that encroach on sage grouse habitat, except where forested habitat is limited.</p> <p>5. Avoid treatments to sage grouse habitat in areas that are susceptible to invasion by cheatgrass or other invasive plant species. Treatment will be accompanied by restoration, and reseeded if necessary, to re-establish native vegetation.</p> <p>6. Protect sagebrush along riparian zones, meadows, lakebeds, and farmlands that include important sage grouse habitat:</p> <p>a) winter habitat,</p> <p>b) breeding habitat, and</p> <p>c) nesting habitat.</p> <p>7. Wash vehicles and heavy equipment for fires prior to arrival at a new location to avoid introduction for noxious weeds.</p> <p>Livestock Grazing Pg 43 Action 16</p> <p>16. Rest vegetation treatment areas (e.g., prescribed burns) from livestock grazing up to one year prior to treatment (if necessary) to maintain fine fuels for burning, and for a minimum of two growing seasons following treatment to promote recovery of vegetation. Livestock rest for less than two growing seasons could be justified on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>Appendix X pg.208 Conservations measures for Fire Management <i>Issue: Reduction of sagebrush by wildfire.</i></p> <p>1. Schedule annual coordination meetings – with appropriate resource staff including fire specialists, wildlife biologists, and range ecologists – to incorporate new sage grouse habitat and other wildlife habitat information needed to set wildfire suppression priorities related to resources. Distribute updates to fire dispatchers for initial attack planning.</p> <p>2. Identify the location of know sage grouse habitat and other wildlife habitats of concern, such as latitude and longitude with a polygon and radius, to avoid disturbance or degradation by temporary facilities, such as fire camps, staging areas, and helibases.</p> <p>3. Incorporate known sage grouse habitat information into each Wildfire Situation Analysis to help determine appropriate suppression plans and prioritize multiple fires.</p> <p>4. Retain unburned areas of sage grouse habitat, such as interior islands and patches between roads and fire perimeter, unless compelling safety, resource protection, or control objectives are at risk.</p>

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<p>Appendix X pg.208 <i>Issue: Rehabilitation and restoration of sagebrush grass-lands.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assure that long-term wildfire rehabilitation objectives are consistent with the desired natural plant community. 2. Re-vegetate burned sites in sage grouse habitat within one year unless natural recovery of the native plant community is expected. Areas disturbed by heavy equipment will be given priority consideration. 3. Emphasize native plant species adapted to the site that are readily available and economically and biologically feasible. 4. Monitor the site and treat for noxious weeds. 5. Allow a minimum of two growing seasons of rest from grazing by domestic livestock unless there are specific restoration objectives using livestock. <p>WAFWA guidelines are incorporated in Appendix X and include restoration guidelines.</p>
Four Rivers Field Office - Cascade RMP
<i>Wildlife – Sage-grouse</i>
Action: No sagebrush control work would be allowed on sage grouse nesting and wintering habitat where live sagebrush canopy cover is less than 20%.
Action: Treatment measures should be applied in irregular patterns using topography and other ecological considerations to minimize adverse effects to the sage grouse resource.
Action: Where fire is used as a habitat management tool, it should be used in such manner as to result in a mosaic pattern of shrubs and open areas, with openings, optimally from 1 to 10 acres in size.
Action: Maintain the density of sagebrush canopy coverage at 20-30% within nesting habitats and at least 20% in wintering habitats.
Action: No control of sagebrush would be considered in any area known to have supported important wintering populations of sage grouse in the past 10 years.
Action: Seed mixtures for range improvement projects and fire rehabilitation projects will include a mixture of grasses, forbs and shrubs that benefit sage grouse.
Action: Improve sage grouse brood rearing habitat where sagebrush canopy cover is greater than 20% by removing sagebrush in small irregular areas and then reseeding.
Action: Sage Grouse Winter Range Occupancy Restrictions for Oil, Gas, Geophysical Exploration and Development and Major Construction 12/1 to 2/15 Entire Habitat Area
Action: Sage Grouse Breeding Grounds Occupancy Restrictions for Oil, Gas, Geophysical Exploration and Development and Major Construction 2/15 to 6/30 Entire Habitat Area
Action: Sage Grouse Nesting/Brood Rearing Occupancy Restrictions for Oil, Gas, Geophysical Exploration and Development and Major Construction 4/15/6/30 2-mile radius from lek
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Objective: Manage 185,860 acres of sage grouse habitat to improve brooding and nesting habitat.
Four Rivers Field Office – Kuna MFP
Wildlife
Objective WL-1: Protect and/or improve endangered species habitat within the Kuna Planning Unit.
Objective WL-2: Manage sensitive species habitat in the KPU to maintain or increase existing and potential populations.
WL-4.4 Manage 83,600 acres of sage grouse range to improve nesting, brood rearing, and winter habitats by: (1) improving all poor and fair big sagebrush, meadow, and riparian ecological sites to good ecological condition, and (2) referring to and addressing the "Guidelines for Habitat Protection in Sage Grouse Range" as published by the Western States Sage Grouse Committee, June 1974, when making management decisions affecting areas used by sage grouse in the KPU.

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<i>Livestock Grazing</i>
RM1.1 Implement AMPs on 7 allotments and less-intensive management on 19 allotments (Overlay RM-4). Allotments are listed in priority order. Adjust management or exclude grazing on sage grouse brood-rearing areas to improve habitat. Design grazing management to improve crucial antelope winter/early spring ranges.
RM-1.8 Treat an estimated 4,600 acres (2,900 acres brush control and 1,700 acres brush control and reseeding) to reduce invasion of less desirable species, improve range condition, and increase grazing capacity, subject to the following conditions: a. If sprays are used, maintain a buffer of 150 feet around perennial streams and riparian habitat. b. Allow for a sufficient forage-to-cover ratio to meet wildlife needs in winter ranges for mule deer, antelope, and sage grouse. c. Design projects with irregular control lines, feathered edges, and natural contours. On sites treated by mechanical means, drainages and occasional brush islands will be left untreated.
Four Rivers Field Office - Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area
<i>Vegetation - General</i>
Goal: The uplands would provide habitats to increase the populations of shrub obligate animals.
Goal: Sagebrush and salt desert shrub communities would be the dominant vegetation type and would include a mosaic of multi-aged shrubs, forbs, and native and adapted non-native perennial grasses.
Objective: Limit further loss of existing native shrub habitat to no more than 30,000 acres and increase the acres of restored shrub habitat.
<i>Wildlife</i>
Goal: The distribution, abundance, and quality of wildlife habitats would be maintained or improved to provide food, cover, and space for healthy populations of game and nongame wildlife through the seasons, as well as through various life stages.
Goal: Distribution and condition of habitats would contribute to the long-term viability of federally listed and BLM sensitive species and to their resilience to environmental change.
Convert approximately 100,000 acres of annual grasslands to a perennial plant community through a combination of biological, chemical, and mechanical fuels management projects. This is in addition to habitat restoration projects.
Jarbidge Field Office - Jarbidge RMP
<i>Vegetation - Rangeland</i>
Action: No chemical control of sagebrush will be allowed.
Goal: Manage all ecological sites on mule deer, pronghorn, elk, bighorn sheep and sage grouse habitat currently in fair or poor ecological condition, for good ecological condition.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Goal: Protect and enhance endangered, threatened, and sensitive species habitats in order to maintain or enhance existing and potential populations within the planning area.
Objective: Where applicable, “Guidelines for Habitat Protection in Sage Grouse Range” and “Sage Grouse Management Practices” (Technical Bulletin No. 1) – Western States Sage Grouse Committee, June 1974, and 1982 respectively, will be followed.
Action: No control work would be allowed where live sagebrush cover is less than 20%.
Action: Treatment measures should be applied in irregular patterns using topography and other ecological considerations to minimize adverse effects to the sage grouse resource.
Action: Maintain the density of sagebrush canopy coverage at 20-30% within nesting habitats and at least 20% in wintering habitats.
Action: No control of sagebrush would be considered in any area known to have supported important wintering populations of sage grouse in the past 10 years.



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Action: Seed mixtures for range improvement projects and fire rehabilitation projects will include a mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs that benefit sage grouse.
Action: Improve sage grouse brood rearing habitat where sagebrush canopy cover is greater than 20% by removing sagebrush in small irregular areas and then reseeding.
Action: Wildlife Habitat Occupancy Restrictions: No occupancy in sage grouse winter range (entire habitat area) from December 1 through February 15.
Action: Wildlife Habitat Occupancy Restrictions: No occupancy in sage grouse breeding grounds (entire habitat) from February 15 through June 30.
Action Wildlife Habitat Occupancy Restrictions: No occupancy in sage grouse nesting/brood rearing habitat within 2 miles radius from a lek from April 15 through June 30.
Goal: Priority for habitat management will be given to habitat for listed and candidate threatened or endangered species and sensitive species.
<i>Livestock Grazing</i>
Objective: Maintain present levels of upland game bird nesting and cover habitat.
<i>Lands and Realty</i>
Action: Any public lands where rare, endangered, threatened, or sensitive species of plant or animal are known to live (or nest) would be found unsuitable for disposal, unless mitigation is possible.
<i>Fluid Minerals</i>
Action: Occupancy for oil and gas activities will be restricted in crucial wildlife habitats as shown in Table 1. (see sage-grouse section for occupancy restrictions).
Owyhee Field Office – Owyhee RMP
<i>Soil and Water</i>
Action: Implement a juniper abatement plan for appropriate sites on which juniper is invading.
<i>Wildlife</i>
Action: Design and implement vegetation treatments to improve habitat where juniper or shrub density is contributing to unsatisfactory habitat conditions. All treatments will be designed to protect scarce, unique and highly productive wildlife habitat types, retain large interconnected blocks of more common habitat types and accommodate specific wildlife habitat requirements including migration corridors for big game. Reseed burns with a variety of shrubs, forbs and grasses. Rest all burns and seedings from livestock grazing for a minimum of two growing seasons following treatment.
Action: Retain all public land within crucial and other high quality wildlife habitats unless exchanging for land of equal or higher value and acquire additional high quality habitat through purchase or exchange with willing landowners. These include but are not limited to wetland/riparian habitats, crucial big game winter habitat and isolated tracts and shrublands adjacent to agricultural areas that provide important cover for upland game. Isolated tracts will be grazed only if needed to maintain or improve wildlife habitat.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, sage-grouse</i>
Objective (SPSS 1): Manage special status species and habitats to increase or maintain populations at levels where their existence is no longer threatened and there is no need for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. See Tables SPSS-1 and SPSS-2.
Action (9): Identify, protect, and enhance key sage grouse habitats and populations. Guidance for enhancement and protection is addressed in the Memorandum of Agreement in the 1997 Idaho Sage Grouse Management Plan (March 1998). Subsequent guidance may become available through the development of plans by local sage grouse working groups or similar efforts.
Action (1): Prepare, revise, and implement Habitat Management Plans (HMPs) and other resource activity plans and cooperate in the development and implementation of Recovery Plans, Conservation Agreements and Strategies and species management plans to ensure that objectives for special status plant and animal species are incorporated and met.

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Action (4): Acquire additional high quality habitat for special status species through purchase or exchange with willing landowners.
<i>Wildland Fire Management</i>
Objective (FIRE 5): Modify standard suppression techniques to protect sensitive resource values.
Action (2): Use any and all available fire suppression techniques to protect the Silver City area, cultural ACECs, and unique wildlife habitat areas.
Pocatello Field Office - Pocatello RMP and Malad MFP
<i>Wildlife - Malad</i>
Objective: Improve and maintain the sage grouse habitat to support current sage grouse population numbers (1200 birds on public lands) through 1985.
Decision: At least 20% of live vegetation left within land treatment projects will be composed of sagebrush where sage grouse needs have been identified. A 100 yard sage brush buffer will be retained along meadows and perennial drainages.
Decision: Vegetative control will exclude known sage grouse winter areas.
<i>Wildlife - Pocatello</i>
Objective: Improve 3,126 acres of sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse seasonal ranges from fair to good ecological range condition.
<i>Wildland Fire Management – Malad & Pocatello</i>
Goal: Protect and enhance sage grouse source habitats as well as enhance key ecological components in plant and animal communities.
Objective: Maintain, protect, and expand sage grouse source habitats.
Action: Suppress wildland fires in source habitats, except where WFU would benefit habitat.
Action: Allow WFU in sage grouse habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site-specific project level coordination with IDFG.
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in areas that pose a wildland fire risk to source habitats.
Action: Treat areas with source habitats that have low resiliency (i.e., areas characterized by low species diversity, undesirable composition, and dead or decadent sagebrush)
Action: Following wildland fire, WFU and prescribed fire treatments, use chemical, mechanical, and seeding treatments with appropriate plant materials to attempt to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive, annual vegetation, and noxious weeds.
Action: Use native plant materials where determined to be appropriate and practical at the project-implementation level.
Objective: Treat sage grouse key and restoration habitats to expand source habitats. Improve and maintain sage grouse Restoration (R1-3) and key habitats.
Action: Use AMR to wildland fire in all sage grouse restoration and key habitats and healthy wildlife habitats.
Action: WFU may be allowed in historically frequent fire regimes to restore fire's natural role and in sage grouse restoration and key habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site-specific project level consultation/collaboration with IDFG.
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in restoration and key habitats to reduce risk of wildland fire and reconnect restoration and key habitats.
Action: Treat areas of restoration and key habitats that have low resiliency characterized by low species diversity.
Objective: Apply Greater sage-grouse conservation measures and management restrictions for fire suppression and fire and non-fire vegetation treatments for the following disciplines:
Action: Implement the following Greater sage-grouse conservation measures:



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Conservation Measures Considered in Developing Vegetation Treatments Potentially Affecting Greater Sage-Grouse

Prescribed Fire

- Prior to planning prescribed burns or other vegetation management treatments in sagebrush communities, ensure that sage-grouse seasonal habitats have been mapped (see 5.3.2 for additional discussion of mapping).
- Once seasonal habitats have been mapped, ensure that proposed project areas have been evaluated on the ground in the context of the appropriate seasonal habitat characteristics (see 5.3.2).
- Avoid the use of prescribed fire and other sagebrush-reduction projects in areas where sagebrush is limiting on the landscape or in habitats that currently meet, or are trending toward meeting, breeding or winter habitat characteristics.
- If the analysis shows that a vegetation treatment may still be advisable, design habitat-manipulation projects to achieve the desired objectives, considering the following:
 - Where prescribed burning, or other treatments, in sage-grouse habitats may be warranted (e.g., sagebrush cover exceeds desired breeding or winter habitat characteristics; understory does not meet seasonal habitat characteristics and restoration is desired; there is a need to restore ecological processes; or a proposed treatment site is in an exotic seeding being managed for overall sage-grouse benefits on the surrounding landscape).
 - Project design should be done with interdisciplinary input and in cooperation with IDFG.
 - Ensure that any proposed sagebrush treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding seasonal habitats and landscape.
 - Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse (see Connelly 2000 for additional discussion).
 - Leave adequate untreated sagebrush areas for loafing/hiding cover near leks for sage-grouse.
- Evaluate and monitor prescribed burns, and other treatments, as soon as possible after treatment and periodically thereafter to determine whether the project was successful and is meeting or trending toward desired objectives.
- Avoid the use of prescribed fire or other sagebrush treatments in habitats prone to the expansion or invasion of cheatgrass or other invasive species unless adequate measures are taken to control the invasive species and ensure subsequent dominance by desirable perennial species. In many—if not most—cases, this will likely require chemical treatments and reseeding.
- Plan, execute, and monitor prescribed fires in a manner that provides for adequate control and provision for contingency resources.
- Ensure that burn plans address the importance of preventing escaped fires when prescription fires are planned in the vicinity of stronghold and key habitat.

Annual Grasslands

- Local working groups (LWG), land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize annual grassland areas for restoration. Work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for specific projects.
- In general, the priority for implementation of specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands should be given first to:
 - Sites adjacent to or surrounded by sage-grouse stronghold habitats, then
 - Sites outside stronghold habitats but adjacent to or within approximately two miles of key habitat, and
 - Sites beyond two miles of key habitat. The intent here is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.

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- All seeding project designs should include measures for noxious weed control and monitoring for at least 3 years following implementation.
- Seed used in sage-grouse habitat restoration seedings, burned area rehabilitation projects, and hazardous fuels/wildland urban interface projects will be tested and certified as weed-free, based on prevailing agency policy and protocol. Private landowners are encouraged to use only certified seed, as well.
- In designing rehabilitation and restoration projects, use the best available science relative to seeding technology and plant materials. Use of NRCS's "VegSpec" website may be helpful. VegSpec is a web-based decision support system that assists land managers in the planning and design of vegetation establishment practices. VegSpec uses soil, plant, and climate data to select plant species that are site-specifically adapted, suitable for the selected practice, and appropriate for the purposes and objectives for which the planting is intended. (See <http://plants.usda.gov>).
- Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency to facilitate firefighter safety; reduce the risk of extreme fire behavior; reduce the risk and rate of fire spread to stronghold, key, and restoration habitats; reduce fire frequencies; and shorten the fire season.
- Where rangelands are dominated by annuals (such as cheatgrass) or where they border farmlands or railroad right-of-ways, convert cheatgrass areas to perennials, or establish buffers of perennial species to reduce the risk of fire spread from railroad or agriculture-related activities (e.g., sparks from trains, field burns, burn barrels), where appropriate and feasible.
- To discourage the spread of invasive annuals and noxious weed seed, require the washing of fire vehicles (including undercarriage) prior to deployments and prior to demobilization from wildfire incidents.
- Human activities such as fence and pipeline maintenance or construction, facility maintenance, utility maintenance, or any project or related work at or within 1 km (0.6 miles) of occupied leks that results in or will likely result in disturbance to lekking birds should be avoided from approximately 6:00 PM to 9:00 AM. In general, this guideline should be applied from March 15 through May 1 in lower elevation habitats and March 25 through May 15 in higher elevation habitats.

Perennial Grasslands

- LWGs, land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize perennial grasslands (exotic versus native) where plant species diversity or sagebrush is limiting on the landscape. Further, they should work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for reestablishing sagebrush in higher priority areas.
- When seeding sagebrush, source-identified, tested seed adapted to local conditions should be used.
- One or more of the following approaches for restoring sagebrush should be considered to improve likelihood of success (see Dalzell 2004 and Monsen et al. 2004):
- Use of the "Oyer" compact row seeder, which compacts soil and presses seed into the surface.
- Use of the Brillion cultipacker seeder, where seed is broadcast over the surface followed by cultipacking.
- Transplant bare-root or containerized stock in small critical areas to establish a seed source.
- Use the "mother plant" technique, and transplant bare-root or containerized stock in select locations throughout the area to establish a seed source.
- For large areas (e.g., large wildland fires), aerial seed onto a rough seedbed (Monsen et al. 2004) coupled with one or more of the above options.



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- In established stands of introduced perennial grasses, transplant sagebrush into strategic patches or strips in critical sites or throughout the area. Scalp spots or strips to reduce grass competition prior to planting. Or, as an alternative to scalps, consider the use of herbicides (see Monsen et al. 2004, Volume 3).
- Where the diversification of crested wheatgrass or similar seedings with native species of grasses, forbs, and/or shrubs is desired, Pellant and Lysne (2005) recommend a three-step process:
- Reduce competition of crested wheatgrass to facilitate the establishment and persistence of the desired species. Possibilities include use of livestock, capitalizing on drought episodes that reduce grass vigor, herbicides such as glyphosate, and mechanical treatments.
 - Introduce desired, site-adapted species through drill seeding; aerial seeding followed by harrow, cultipacker or churning; livestock trampling; or transplanting container stock, bareroot stock, or individual plants from native sources ("wildings"). Lambert (2005) provides descriptions, recommended seeding rates, and other useful information for nearly 250 species of native and non-native grasses, forbs, and shrubs.
 - As part of post-treatment management, ensure that livestock grazing and rest intervals are matched with the phenology and life history characteristics of the desired/seeded/transplanted species. Implement monitoring to clearly document how, what, when, and where treatments were implemented. Follow up with suitable effectiveness monitoring to document success of the treatments relative to project objectives.

Conifer Encroachment

- LWGs, land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize conifer encroachment areas for further management action. Work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for specific projects. For western juniper, Miller et al. (2005) provide *Guidelines for Selecting the Most Appropriate Management Actions*, pages 54–57.
- IDFG, land management agencies, LWGs, and other partners should work closely together to identify leks where conifer encroachment may be affecting lek attendance or nearby habitat quality.
- Remove Douglas fir or other conifers where they are encroaching on wet meadows, riparian areas, or sagebrush stands that provide potential sage-grouse habitat.
- Remove juniper, Douglas fir, pinyon pine, or other trees within at least 100 m (330 ft) or an 8-acre area of occupied sage-grouse leks. The purpose of this procedure is to reduce perching opportunity for raptors or other avian predators within view of leks. Techniques could include chainsaw, chipper, or other suitable mechanical means. Ensure cutting and slash disposal is completed between approximately July 15 and January 30 to minimize disturbance to grouse that may be in the vicinity (e.g., males at leks, nesting females, and young broods). This practice serves to reduce raptor predation on sage-grouse by eliminating potential perches, thereby improving survival, recruitment, and productivity. It may be particularly valuable where avian predation may be of greater concern such as in areas with fragmented habitat, nearby infrastructure features, and/or in the case of small, isolated sage-grouse populations.
- Where juniper or other conifer species have encroached upon sagebrush communities at larger scales, employ prescribed fire, chemical, mechanical (e.g., churning, chipper, chainsaw, or commercial sale), or other suitable methods to reduce or eliminate juniper. Priority should be given to areas where there is a strong likelihood for recovery of perennial herbaceous vegetation or where preparatory and follow-up actions (e.g., control of invasive species and seeding) are likely to be successful. Whenever possible, but especially if sagebrush habitat is limited locally, use juniper-control techniques that are least disruptive to the affected stand of sagebrush. For example, if junipers are only scattered, and the associated sagebrush community is otherwise relatively healthy, cutting junipers with chainsaws will remove the

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<p>encroachment threat while allowing for immediate use of the sagebrush by sage-grouse. In all cases, control efforts should be planned using interdisciplinary expertise.</p> <p>Where juniper control around leks is planned, monitor leks for at least three consecutive years post-treatment to document effects on lek attendance. Ideally, two to three years of pre-treatment monitoring is also recommended, but this may not always be feasible.</p>
<p>Suppression Restrictions</p> <p><u>Fire Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis will be initiated as per the Redbook (Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations).• Interagency cooperation will be maintained to facilitate coordinated fire management activities across administrative boundaries.• Wildland fire suppression activities will continue to exercise Tribal trust responsibilities.• In the event a wildland fire escapes initial attack, a BLM resource advisor will be assigned to ensure that resource management concerns are adequately addressed and that necessary mitigation occurs. If one of the following is being threatened or has the potential to be threatened, the appropriate manager will be notified with the following information and a resource advisor will be dispatched: 1) Public health and safety, 2) WUI, 3) Sage grouse habitat and, 4) Any ACEC, Resource Natural Area (RNA), congressionally delegated watershed or any other area of significant concern.• Prior to wildland fire season potential areas of conflict between archeological resources and wildland fire suppression activities should be identified. <p><u>Noxious Weeds</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To minimize spread of noxious weeds, equipment used for extended attack or Type I/II incidents should be cleaned before arriving on-site and prior to leaving the incident. Staging areas and fire camps should avoid sites with noxious weed infestations. <p><u>Vegetation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blading should occur on existing roads where possible. Blading through undisturbed areas, especially those supporting native cover types, should be avoided unless necessary to protect life, property, or resource values. <p><u>Wildlife</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When conducting fire suppression actions, species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, Partners in Flight species, and Birds of Conservation Concern will be protected as specified in their respective plans and or agreements.• Establishment of control lines, base camps, and support facilities in known SSS habitat will be avoided unless life and property are threatened. <p><u>Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species</u></p> <p>The following restrictions apply to Proposed, Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species and to “designated” critical habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire fighter safety and public safety are top priorities in response to fire suppression. At no time will the activities described in this EIS compromise fire fighter safety and public safety.

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- The BLM will coordinate annually with the USFWS to update species status in the planning area.
- Field Managers will ensure resource staff initiates emergency consultation with the USFWS whenever suppression activities may impact listed species habitat and, more specifically, during emergency suppression actions to protect life and property.
- Control lines, base camps, support facilities, and other suppression-related facilities should not be established within:
 - 1/2 mile of known bald eagle or yellow-billed cuckoo nests (February 1-August 15)
 - 1 mile of occupied gray wolf den sites (April 15 - June 30)
 - 300 feet of occupied Ute ladies'-tresses habitat
 - 300 feet of all water bodies and springs occupied by T & E and Candidate species
 - Secure habitat within designated grizzly bear management unit (BMU).
- Minimum Impact Suppression Techniques (MIST) guidelines will be followed in occupied T&E and Candidate species habitat where appropriate (Appendix T in Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, 2005). MIST guidelines direct suppression techniques, procedures, tools, and equipment that least impact the environment. Wet-lining (using water to soak/saturate fuels) is the preferred fireline construction tactic.
- Field Managers will assign a Resource Advisor or other designated representative as per the current Red Book guidance.
 - BLM will notify USFWS when appropriate to discuss T&E species mitigation within the suppression area to assure conservation practices are being followed to avoid adverse effects.
 - When Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are required, the Resource Advisor will brief the IC about conservation measures needed to avoid adverse effects.
- Where grizzly bears may reasonably occur:
 - The BLM Resource Advisor will brief all fire crews on general operating procedures including proper bear safety, sanitation, and food storage.
 - Incident Commanders, Fire Management Officers, and Scouts should be equipped with and trained to use bear deterrent spray.
 - Garbage should be disposed of in bear-proof containers when possible and removed from camps daily, preferably in the evening.
- No water-dipping by helicopters will occur within 1/2 mile of any occupied bald eagle nest.
- Fuel storage, fuel trucks, and refueling activities will not occur within 300 feet of live waters containing T&E and Candidate species. The current Planning Area Hazardous Material plan will be followed to ensure T&E and Candidate species and habitat will not be adversely affected in the event of a spill.
- Dozer blading should not occur within 300 feet of perennial streams or their tributaries occupied by T&E and Candidate species.
- Drafting equipment for pumps will be properly screened to prevent entrapment of T&E fish species. Maximum screen mesh size shall be 3/32-inch diameter.
- Any sump created by blocking flow in any occupied T&E habitat will be performed in coordination with a natural resource specialist to prevent dewatering.
- If chemical products will be injected into the system, water will not be pumped directly from the streams. If chemicals are needed, water will be pumped from a portable tank, or a backflow check valve will be used.
- Application of retardant or foam (aerial or ground) will be avoided within 300 feet of perennial streams or their tributaries occupied by T&E and Candidate species pursuant to the current Red Book guidance.
- To minimize spread of noxious weeds, equipment used for extended attack or Type I/II incidents

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should be cleaned before arriving on-site and prior to leaving the incident. Staging areas and fire camps will avoid sites with noxious weed infestations.

TES Reporting Requirements

Because of the programmatic nature of this EIS process, the exact timing, site-specific suppression methods, location, and size of fires are currently unknown. In order to monitor the impacts of wildland fire-suppression activities, the Level I team will meet immediately after the fire season to review a summary of activities (fire suppression) that may have occurred in or adjacent to T&E and Candidate habitat. If the Level I team identifies fire-suppression activities for which more information is needed to ascertain potential effects to the environmental baseline for a particular listed or candidate species, BLM will provide a report providing the necessary information identified by the Level I team to the USFWS Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office or the Eastern Idaho Field Office no later than December 31 for the preceding 12-month period. The types of information that may be needed include:

- The location, timing, size, intensity, and suppression activities used for each fire.
- Any mitigations used during fire-suppression activities to avoid effects to T&E and Candidate species and habitat, any T&E and Candidate species or habitat affected, and the estimated extent of effects.
- Results of post-fire reviews and monitoring.

Fire and Non-Fire Vegetation Treatment Restrictions

Fire and non-fire vegetation treatment restrictions will be applied to site-specific restoration and hazardous fuels reduction treatment actions for the following disciplines:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation • Air Quality • Cultural Resources and Historic Trails • Hazardous Materials and Abandoned Mine Sites • Livestock Grazing • Placeholder Species | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation • Riparian Areas • Special Designations (WSAs, ACECs) • Visual Resources • Wildlife • Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species |
|---|---|

The following fire and non-fire vegetation treatment restrictions will be applied to site-specific restoration and hazardous fuels reduction treatment actions occurring throughout the Planning Area, consistent with NFP policy and LUP direction.

Vegetation Management

- No chemical treatment would conflict with existing or future national vegetative treatment guidance. To reduce potential resource impacts from chemical treatments, herbicide use would conform to application criteria described in the 1991 document, Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States or in subsequent revisions and/or replacements of this document. Use would conform to instructions from BLM Manual 9011 Chemical Pest Control, as well as label restrictions and current policies and state statutes. In addition, the prescription for herbicide application (desired, optimum environmental conditions) would evaluate off-site migration and non-target species by assessing wind speed and direction, temperature, precipitation forecast, soil



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infiltration potential, constraints on overland water transport due to precipitation or flooding, establishment of riparian buffer strips, and risk to special status species. Fishery and/or wildlife biologists would assist project planners in selecting appropriate herbicides for use among or near terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna sensitive to herbicides.

- The economic effects of alternative fuels management practices would be considered. Local involvement and economic benefits from fuels reduction projects would be promoted.
- Collaboration with local partners to assess WUI areas would be continued, and existing mitigation plans would be updated to implement fuels treatments.
- There would be no Healthy Forest Restoration Act treatments in old-growth forests.
- Vegetation treatment activities would continue to exercise Native American Tribal trust responsibilities.
- Fuels treatments would be utilized to reduce the overall threat of the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive plant species.
- The economic effects of alternative fuels management practices would be considered. Local involvement and economic benefits from fuels reduction projects would be promoted.
- Collaboration with local partners to assess WUI areas and to update existing County Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) would continue.

Wildlife

- Seasonal guidelines may be applied if needed to mitigate the impacts to big game species from planned fuels management and vegetation treatments as specified in the LUPs identified in Table 1.2.
- Restrictions may be imposed on fuels management and vegetation treatment projects in areas supporting nesting raptors as per amended LUPs (Table 1.2). Treatment proposals would be coordinated with IDFG.
- Species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, Partners in Flight species, and Birds of Conservation Concern will be protected as specified in their respective plans/agreements.
- Habitat Conservation Assessment and Conservation Strategies have been prepared and are currently being implemented for the following BLM sensitive species: Townsend's big-eared bat, wolverine, spotted bat, white headed woodpecker, trumpeter swan, northern goshawk, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, greater sage grouse (Idaho plan pending), mountain quail, Idaho dunes tiger beetle, Bonneville cutthroat trout, bull trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, red band trout and leather sided chub.
- Vegetation treatments proposed in areas supporting sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse would be coordinated with IDFG and would be implemented under LUP guidance or restrictions.
- Seasonal guidelines may be applied to mitigate the impacts to big game species from planned vegetation treatments as specified in LUPs.
- During implementation, the Proposed Plan Amendment directs collaboration with the appropriate local, state, and federal agencies to promote public education on species at risk, including their importance to the human and biological community and the rationale behind the protective measures that would be applied to their habitats.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

The following restrictions apply to proposed habitats occupied by T&E and Candidate species and designated critical habitat.

- Treatment activities may occur near or adjacent to T&E and Candidate species habitat and will be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts to habitat occupied by T&E and Candidate species and designated critical habitat so that the species or their habitats will not be adversely affected. All related

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fire and non-fire vegetation treatment activities in areas that may affect T&E and Candidate species would be conducted in consultation with USFWS. Further, all such activities would be designed and implemented in such a manner that potential impacts to T&E and Candidate species from disturbance or habitat modification would be extremely unlikely to occur or would be so small as to not be meaningfully measured, detected, or analyzed.

- T&E and Candidate species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, and conservation strategies will be protected as specified in their respective plans/agreements/strategies. These protections include such measures as adequate habitat and range for a given species, including mitigation measures for multiple land use activities authorized by the BLM.
- Herbicide applicators will obtain a weather forecast for the area prior to initiating a spraying project to ensure no extreme precipitation or wind events could occur during or immediately after spraying. Aerial application of herbicides will not occur during periods of inversion. Spraying will follow label instructions.
- Fuels management and vegetation treatment activities would be conducted according to standards and guidelines in The Pacific Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, 1986. The planning area within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem would conduct fuels management and vegetative treatments according to standards and guidelines in the Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Management Plan (Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Working Group 1996). No vegetation treatment activities would occur within a one-half-mile radius of bald eagle nesting zones from February 1 to July 31. No activities would occur within one half mile (direct line of site) or one quarter mile of winter bald eagle concentration sites from November 1 to March 1.
- Riparian cottonwood forests with willow understories that may be impacted by fuels management and vegetation treatments would be surveyed for yellow-billed cuckoos prior to initiating project activities. When developing vegetation treatment projects, no ground-based application of herbicides would occur from May 1 to August 31 within 200 feet of occupied yellow-billed cuckoo habitat.
- Aerial application of chemicals would not occur from May 1 to August 31 within one-half mile of occupied yellow-billed cuckoo habitat.
- Fuels management and vegetation treatment areas within the BMUs would be coordinated with U.S. Forest Service activities to comply with road density restrictions and number and juxtaposition of management activities with BMUs, as provided for in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (USFWS 1993) or the Final Conservation Strategy for the Grizzly Bear in the Yellowstone Area (USFWS 2003).
- When developing vegetation treatment projects, open and total motorized access routes or trail density within BMUs would not increase. When developing vegetation treatment projects within BMUs, the Bureau will coordinate with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee to develop/implement sanitation guidelines.
- Gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) populations in the area, which includes portions of the Planning Area, have been designated as experimental/nonessential. Presence or absence of gray wolf dens or rendezvous sites in fuels management or vegetation treatment areas would be determined prior to initiating projects. In the event active den or rendezvous sites are established within the planning area, vegetation treatments would be designed and implemented to minimize noise disturbance or habitat modifications within one mile of the den or rendezvous sites from April 15 to June 30.
- Fuels management and vegetation treatments that may occur within the Little Lost River drainage would be conducted according to standards and guidelines developed for bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas on BLM lands within the geographic range of bull trout (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1999a, 2002).



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No aerial application of herbicides would occur within one half mile of all water bodies and springs containing listed snails, Columbia spotted frog, and bull trout. • No ground-based applications of herbicides, surfactants, or adjuvants would occur within 100 feet of perennial streams or their live water tributaries occupied by listed snails, Columbia spotted frog, and bull trout. • Dozer blading would not occur within 300 feet of streams that have habitat occupied by T&E or Candidate Species. • Ground-disturbing activities other than tree and shrub planting will not occur within 300 feet of all water bodies and springs containing listed snails, Columbia spotted frog and bull trout. • No aerial application of herbicides would occur within one-half mile of all water bodies and springs containing listed snail, Columbia spotted frog and bull trout species. • Treatments will follow PACFISH/INFISH guidelines in bull trout habitat. • For those portions of the Snake River drainages where fuels management and vegetation treatments have the potential to effect populations of T&E Snake River mollusks, the Bureau will consult with the Service to ensure mitigation measures are adequate to avoid adverse effects to Snake River mollusks.
Salmon Field Office – Lemhi RMP
<i>Vegetation – General</i>
<p>Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game shall be given at least two years notice prior to any vegetation manipulation project. 2. Brush control projects will be designed to maximize edge effect to the extent possible. Islands of untreated sagebrush will be incorporated into project design as necessary to provide cover for sage grouse and other species. 3. Proposed brush manipulation projects on sage grouse winter and/or nesting range or antelope winter and/or fawning range must have a predicted neutral or beneficial effect on these species. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The sagebrush canopy cover will not be reduced below 10 percent on sage grouse brood rearing areas. b. The sagebrush canopy cover will not be reduced below 20 percent on sage grouse nesting and wintering areas. c. The sagebrush canopy cover will not be reduced below 10 percent on general antelope ranges. Winter ranges and spring fawning areas will not be treated unless overall benefits to antelope will result. 4. Brush control proposals within 2 miles of known strutting grounds will be subject to on-site inspection by BLM and Idaho Department of Fish and Game personnel to determine prohibited areas. 5. As a rule, no brush control will be allowed within 100 yards of streams, meadows, or secondary drainages (dry and intermittent). The desirability of increasing or decreasing the width on specific areas will be determined via on-site evaluation by BLM and Idaho Department of Fish and Game personnel. 6. A mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs (if appropriate) will be used in all range rehabilitation or improvement projects.
<i>Wildlife</i>
<p>Objective: Provide forage for 9,350 deer, 2,194 elk, 2,950 antelope, and 200 bighorn sheep. Improve 4,000 acres of elk winter/spring range; 17,000 acres of deer, antelope, and sage grouse seasonal ranges; and 22,000 acres of non—game habitat from fair to good ecological range condition to good. Improve 7,320 acres of seasonal elk and bighorn sheep ranges. Provide a more consistent water supply on 81,000 acres of antelope, sage grouse, and non-game habitat in the Gilmore and Muddy Creek area. Preserve habitat values of 30 small isolated seeps and wet meadows created by livestock water developments. Enhance big game movement and safety. Protect the future integrity of the elk breeding area in McDevitt Creek and antelope migration corridor near Center Ridge. Enhance the integrity and availability of 69,057 acres of crucial habitat of raptors, waterfowl, elk, and other wildlife. Improve the quality of 10,400 acres of crucial elk and bighorn habitat.</p>

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Action: Crucial habitat will be enhanced through adoption of no surface occupancy restrictions on 69,057 acres available for mineral leasing. The quality of 8,800 acres of big game habitat will be improved through restrictions on livestock use and timber management and harvest.
Action: Seasonal restrictions will continue to be applied where they are needed to mitigate the impacts of human activities on important seasonal wildlife habitat. Approximately 60 percent (226,000 acres) of the resource area lies within areas potentially subject to restriction. During any given year, the authorized officer may waive seasonal restrictions if actual conditions do not warrant them. Seasonal wildlife restrictions related to GRSG: Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds 03/01 — 04/30 Sage Grouse Nesting & Brood-rearing 04/30 — 06/30
<i>Livestock Grazing (Range Management)</i>
Action: All new fence construction will comply with the Lemhi Resource Area fencing policy dated May 20, 1983 which is as follows: It shall be standard policy for the Lemhi Resource Area that: A. All wire fences constructed subsequent to this policy statement shall be 3 wire only. B. Wire spacing shall be as follows: a. Top wire shall be set no higher than 38” from ground level. b. Bottom wire shall be smooth and set at a minimum of 18” from ground level. c. Midwire shall be set at 26” from ground level unless: 1. Bighorn sheep are involved (34”) 2. Fence is adjustable for antelope (29”) C. All new fences shall be flagged (e.g. cloth strips, survey flagging) between every other post.
Shoshone Field Office - Craters of the Moon National Monument RMP
<i>Vegetation - General</i>
Goal: There is no net loss, and preferably a net gain, of sagebrush steppe communities over the life of the plan.
Goal: Continuity of habitat for special status species and general wildlife are emphasized.
Action: VEG-2: Existing sagebrush steppe communities will be protected to prevent loss of shrub cover and managed to promote a diverse, desirable grass and forb understory.
Action: VEG-3: Annual grasslands and highly degraded sagebrush steppe communities will be restored to achieve a mosaic of shrubs, forbs, and grasses capable of sustaining native animal populations
Action: VEG-4: Restoration projects will be prioritized relative to locations of key Greater sage-grouse habitats and population strongholds. Emphasis will be on projects that restore annual grasslands and degraded sagebrush steppe communities, as well as enlarging and connecting habitats in good condition.
Action: VEG-5: National and Idaho state habitat guidelines for Greater sage-grouse and sagebrush steppe obligates developed by interagency working groups regarding composition and structure of sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale will be adopted to guide sagebrush steppe management.
Action: VEG-8: Aggressive protection of existing sagebrush steppe communities and proactive restoration of areas with poor to fair biotic integrity through both active and passive means (see Figure 6) will be emphasized.

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Action: VEG-9: Approximately 80,000 acres of BLM-administered land (11% of the entire Monument) will be restored. About 31,000 acres of annual grassland and 49,000 acres of highly degraded low elevation sagebrush steppe (poor to fair biotic integrity) will be treated to control cheatgrass and restore big sagebrush cover with a perennial understory.
Action: VEG-10: All special status species in the Monument will be inventoried with monitoring plans established, particularly when and where adverse impacts may occur.
Action: VEG-11: Actions and stipulations necessary to protect special status species and their habitats will be made part of land use authorizations (e.g., limiting fragmentation of special status species populations when considering road maintenance) and fire planning.
Action: VEG-12: Use of native plants will be emphasized in rehabilitation and restoration projects, and only native plants will be used for rehabilitation or restoration projects within the Pristine Zone. Integrated weed management principles will be used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detect and eradicate all new infestations of noxious weeds; • control existing infestations; and • prevent the establishment and spread of weeds within and adjacent to the planning area.
Action: Restoration treatments in areas supporting sage-grouse wintering habitats would be limited from December 1 through March 1.
Action: Restoration treatments in areas supporting sage-grouse breeding habitat would be limited from March 1 through April 30, and grouse nesting habitat April 30 through June 15.
Action: Sage-grouse Key and Source habitats would be maintained and enhanced when possible within Low- and Mid-Elevation Shrub types. Restoration treatments would generally be limited in habitats supporting live sagebrush communities. Treatments to enhance and restore habitat would be focused in areas where the sagebrush component is lost or dead and the understory degraded.
<i>Wildlife</i>
Goal: High-quality habitats for sagebrush obligate species are provided.
Action: WLIFE-7: Actions and stipulations necessary to protect special status species and their habitats will be made part of land use authorizations (e.g., limiting fragmentation of special status species populations when considering road maintenance) and fire planning.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Goal: Greater sage-grouse restoration habitat (R1 & R2) will achieve significant progress towards reclassification as Key habitat.
Goal: Species composition in key Greater sage grouse habitat will reflect site potential.
Action: WLIFE-8: Active and historic leks will be protected from disturbance during the Greater sage-grouse breeding season. Some examples of potential protective measures as presented in the Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee's 2006 Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply use restrictions where needed and appropriate on existing roads or trails near occupied leks to minimize nonessential activity between 6:00 PM to 9:00 AM (in general this guideline should be applied from approximately March 15 through May 1). • Avoid human activities such as fence maintenance or construction or any project or related work at or near (1 km or 0.6 mile) occupied leks that results in or will likely result in disturbance to lekking birds, between 6:00 PM to 9:00 AM (in general this guideline should be applied from approximately March 15 through May 1). • Avoid creating unnecessary disturbances related to livestock management activities near occupied leks whenever possible. • Improve the dissemination of information to elementary and high school students, hunters, resource user groups, and others to increase their understanding of Greater sage-grouse and sagebrush steppe conservation issues.

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<p>• Monitor leks in a manner that minimizes disturbance to Greater sage-grouse following established protocol (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee 2006, Sections 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.1.2).</p>
<p>Note: Road closures or restrictions during the Greater sage-grouse breeding season will not apply to agency (BLM and NPS) vehicles, including Idaho Department of Fish and Game vehicles and personnel who conduct necessary Greater sage-grouse inventory.</p>
<p>Action: WLIFE-9: Consistent with Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (USDI BLM 1997) determinations, livestock grazing management will be modified as necessary to ensure that key Greater sage-grouse habitat achieves site potential.</p>
<p><i>Wildland Fire Management</i></p>
<p>Action: VEG-16: Wildland fire will be suppressed to protect life and property, healthy sagebrush steppe communities, recent rehabilitation and restoration projects, cultural sites, and the Little Cottonwood Creek watershed.</p>
<p>Action: VEG-17: Fire will be managed to maximize protection and restoration of sagebrush steppe in the Passage and Primitive Zones.</p>
<p>Action: VEG-20: In the event of wildland fire, burned areas will be rehabilitated when necessary to restore the appropriate mosaic of sagebrush species and subspecies, along with a diverse perennial understory, and to suppress invasive and noxious weeds.</p>
<p><i>Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management</i></p>
<p>Action: The NEPA Analysis which accompanies the Comprehensive TMP will include, at a minimum, cumulative effects assessments of road density and fragmentation of sage-grouse habitat.</p>
<p>Shoshone Field Office - Magic MFP</p>
<p><i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i></p>
<p>Goal: Habitat Improvement</p>
<p>Objective: Establish vegetation...in conjunction with existing brush along Magic Reservoir.</p>
<p>Action: Provide adequate forage for sage grouse broods.</p>
<p>Goal: Habitat Maintenance</p>
<p>Objective: Determine winter use and strutting areas for maintenance of habitat.</p>
<p>Action: Inventory to determine if there is winter sage-grouse use within close proximity to their strutting grounds. If winter use is identified, adequate sagebrush should be maintained within the use areas.</p>
<p>Action: All sagebrush control projects that lie within 2-mile radius of sage-grouse strutting grounds will be designated...to not have any adverse impacts on nesting grouse.</p>
<p>Action: Maintain sagebrush within the 2-mile radius of sage-grouse strutting grounds.</p>
<p>Goal: Habitat Expansion</p>
<p>Objective: Establish a 10-15% density of summer succulent forbs approximately 14,000 acres.</p>
<p>Action: Sage-grouse summer habitat would be expanded.</p>
<p><i>Wildland Fire Management</i></p>
<p>Goal: Control big sagebrush only with chemicals or fire where it will not impair adequate nesting success of Sage grouse.</p>
<p>Objective: Maintain sagebrush within 2-mile radius of known grouse strutting grounds.</p>
<p>Goal: Control big sagebrush using chemicals or fire.</p>
<p>Objective: Maintain sagebrush outside of the 2-mile radius of known grouse strutting grounds.</p>
<p>Action: Strive for about 50% reduction in the amount of big sagebrush.</p>

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<i>Livestock Grazing</i>
Goal: Artificial Treatment (Brush Control)
Objective: Improved forage and range conditions.
Action: Coordination/Planning on brush control within areas inside the identified primary nesting areas for sage grouse.
Action: Brush control designed such that they will not have any adverse impacts on nesting grouse.
Shoshone Field Office - Sun Valley MFP
<i>Vegetation – Rangeland</i>
Goal: (NC, BW, & M) Appendix 1 of MFP Decision Number 6, Habitat Management – Vegetation Manipulation
Objective: Maintain crucial habitat
Action: Every effort should be made to delay sheep bands from utilizing known sage grouse nesting areas until about the first week in June, or until young sage grouse have hatched in the particular locality.
Action: Livestock should not be permitted to heavily use known important sage grouse wintering areas.
Action: No sagebrush should be treated or removed until a comprehensive multiple-use management plan (MFP) has been formulated for the area.
Action: Sagebrush control should include provisions for long-term quantitative and qualitative measurements of vegetation before and after control to acquire data on the effects of wildlife habitat.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife, Sage-grouse</i>
Goal: (NC, BW, & M) Appendix 1 of MFP, Habitat Management – Vegetation Manipulation
Objective: Maintain crucial habitat
Action: No control work should be considered where live sagebrush cover is less than 20%, or on steep upper slopes with skeletal soils where big sagebrush is 12 in. or less in height.
Action: Control of vegetation within the breeding complex should not be undertaken within 2 miles of leks, or on nesting and brood areas.
Action: No control of sagebrush should be considered in any area known to have supported important wintering concentrations of sage grouse within the past 10 years.
Action: When sagebrush control is found to be unavoidable in sage grouse range, all treatment measures should be applied in irregular patterns using topography and other ecological considerations to minimize adverse effects to the sage grouse resource.
<i>Wildland Fire Management</i>
Goal: (NC, BW, & M) Appendix 1 of MFP, Habitat Management – Vegetation Manipulation
Action: No winter burns of sagebrush habitat in identified important wintering sites.
Action: Fire should be avoided during spring/summer when it could destroy ... young sage grouse.
Shoshone Field Office - Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP
<i>Soil & Water - WATERSHED in MFP</i>
Objective: Selectively control heavy stands of brush which are competing with or have replaced herbaceous vegetation desirable for watershed protection in the following delineated areas. (W 1.4.)
Action: Selective brush control may be undertaken within two-mile radius of sage grouse strutting grounds, sage grouse wintering areas, and deer winter range subject to coordinated assessment by the Area Manager and Wildlife Biologist.
<i>Vegetation – General</i>
Action: Forbs composition at the desired level of 20-25% is the accepted Wildlife Recommendations for the entire area. This goal puts additional constraints on spraying of sagebrush with chemicals which also reduce forbs. It may be that some reduction could be accepted for the short term if long term benefits in forb production could be attained. Another possible mitigating measure might be to aerial seed some forbs following sagebrush spray project.

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<i>Vegetation – Rangeland</i>
Dempsey Allotment: Action: Coordinate land treatment proposal in the allotment where critical deer winter range sage grouse range and lands potentially valuable for agriculture have not been identified to assure all multiple use conflicts are mitigated prior to project implementation Criteria to be used in mitigating conflicts are found in Appendix I MFP Step II, See Step II Overlay for coordinated control areas.
Indian Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range.
Clover Creek Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range.
Davis Mountain Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range. See Appendix I, MFP Step II.
Black Canyon Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range and strutting grounds. See Appendix 1, MFP Step II.
Rattlesnake Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range and nesting areas. See criteria in Appendix I, MFP Step II.
North Shoshone Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range and nesting grounds. Refer to criteria in Appendix 1, MFP Step II.
Kinzie Butte Allotment: Action: Allow selective brush control within two mile radius of sage grouse strutting grounds.
Marsh Spring Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment within 2 mile radius of sage grouse strutting grounds. See criteria referred to in 2 above.
Macon Flat Allotment: Action: Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range and nesting grounds. Refer to criteria in #2 above.
Picabo Cattle Allotment - Action: Selectively control sagebrush to increase livestock forage, improve watershed conditions, and improve species composition for sage grouse brood rearing within the accepted guidelines (RM Appendix II) for sagebrush control.
Tikura Allotment - Action: Selectively control sagebrush to increase livestock forage, improve watershed conditions, and improve species composition for sage grouse brood rearing within the accepted guidelines (RM Appendix II) for sagebrush control.
Richfield Allotment - Action: Selectively control sagebrush to increase livestock forage, improve watershed conditions, and improve species composition for sage grouse brood rearing within the accepted guidelines (RM Appendix II) for sagebrush control.
Tack Allotment - Action: Selectively control sagebrush to increase livestock forage, improve watershed conditions, and improve species composition for sage grouse brood rearing within the accepted guidelines (RM Appendix II) for sagebrush control.
Timmerman Hills Sheep Allotment - Action: Selectively control sagebrush to increase livestock forage, improve watershed conditions, and improve species composition for sage grouse breed rearing within the accepted guidelines (RM Appendix I) for sagebrush control.
<i>Wildlife – Sensitive Species – Sage-grouse</i>
Goal: Sage grouse are an important wildlife resource within the planning area in which most of the birds live their entire life cycle. The objective is to increase the huntable population of this species within the area. (p. 4)
Objective: The three key habitat requirements of this species are strutting and nesting areas brood rearing areas and winter areas. The strutting grounds should not be disturbed and adequate sagebrush cover should be maintained within the nesting areas to provide for nesting sage grouse. (p. 4)

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Objective: In the brood rearing areas the key factor is wet meadow areas which provide succulent forage during the summer months. These areas should be maintained and improved.(p. 4)
Objective: Since the primary ingredient in the sage grouse winter diet is sagebrush it will be necessary to maintain adequate brush within the winter areas to provide for the anticipated population of sage grouse.(p. 4)
Objective: Improve 283,000 acres of sage grouse brood rearing habitat in the Bennett Hills and Timmerman Hills Planning Units in order to provide adequate food, cover, and water for pre hunting season population of 20,000 sage grouse by 1990. (WL 6.)
Action: Selectively reduce sagebrush throughout those portions of sage grouse brood rearing habitat that does not encompass either critical deer winter range or winter sage grouse habitat. (WL 6.1.)
Objective: Manage the existing sagebrush on 283,000 acres of nesting habitat and 38,000 acres of winter habitat in order to provide the necessary nesting cover and winter forage and cover for pre hunting season population of 20,000 sage grouse in the two planning units. (WL 7.)
Action: Selectively control sagebrush within 2-mile radius of strutting grounds in a manner that will not adversely impact present and future nesting sage grouse populations.
Action: Selective brush control may be under taken on sage grouse wintering areas only after careful consideration that remaining sagebrush habitat will be adequate for projected sage grouse populations. (WL 7.1.)
<i>General wildlife</i>
Objective: Manage the upland game bird habitat throughout the two planning units and provide diversity of vegetative species in order to provide variety of habitats for the five species of upland game birds. (WL 8.)
Action: Establish livestock grazing systems in order to establish diverse vegetative composition 15-20 percent shrubs, 20-25 percent forbs, and 50-65 percent grasses throughout the upland game bird habitat. (WL 8.3.3)
Objective: Upland Game Birds: An important part of their (sic upland game birds) habitat requirements can be provided on the National Resource Land by maintaining sagebrush for escape and winter cover. (pp. 4-5)
Action: Small parcels of National Resource Land identified as having important upland game habitat and situated adjacent to private land will be retained in public ownership and managed for upland game birds.
Objective: Forbs and grasses are also an important component of the life cycle of the upland game bird species. Consideration of this need should be part of the development of the allotment management plans in those areas which lie adjacent to the developed agricultural lands. (p. 5)
Shoshone and Burley Field Offices - Monument RMP
<i>Vegetation - Rangeland</i>
Action: "Sage Grouse Management in Idaho" (Autenrieth 1981) will be used as a reference to assist in the design of proposed projects in sage grouse habitat.
Action: Where wildlife habitat is a major consideration, areas will be burned to create a mosaic of shrubby and herbaceous vegetation. Burned areas will be rested from livestock grazing for two growing seasons following treatment.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife – Sage-grouse</i>
Objective: Protection of brush pockets will be important in maintaining or enhancing habitat for sage grouse, pronghorn, mule deer, and non-game wildlife.
Action: Maintain and enhance sage grouse habitat by maintaining adequate, suitable areas of brush and providing additional forbs for brood rearing.
Action: A Sage Grouse Habitat Management Plan will be prepared to guide management in the sage-grouse winter habitat area covering about 67,000 acres in Laidlaw Park, Little Park, and Paddleford Flat west of Carey.
Action: Suitable forbs will be included in range seedings in this area.
Goal: Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to determine whether the RMP decisions are being implemented, whether the objectives of the RMP are being accomplished, and whether the RMP continues to

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be consistent with related plans. If a variation warranting management concern is found, the reasons for the variation will be examined and corrective actions will be taken as appropriate.
Objective: Variation From RMP Warranting Management Concern - Any decrease below 1982 sage-grouse population levels.
Action: Monitoring lek trends annually.
Objective: Variation From RMP Warranting Management Concern - More acres of brush burned than planned for brush control.
Action: Monitor nesting and winter habitats through analysis of fire reports.
Objective: Variation From RMP Warranting Management Concern - 20 percent decrease in key species.
Action: Monitor nesting and winter habitats by measuring frequency of key forbs.
Action: Priority will be given to habitat for listed candidate, threatened and endangered species and sensitive species.
<i>Wildland Fire Management</i>
Objective: Protection of brush pockets will be important in maintaining or enhancing habitat for sage grouse, pronghorn, mule deer, and non-game wildlife.
Upper Snake Field Office – Upper Snake RMP
<i>Vegetation - General</i>
Action: Use chemical, mechanical, seeding, and prescribed fire treatments as appropriate to achieve DFC. In perennial grass, invasive annual grasses, and juniper-invaded cover types, restore the sagebrush steppe with an aggressive sagebrush seeding effort, using the appropriate sagebrush subspecies for the treatment area.
Action: Conduct fire/non-fire vegetation treatments in non-WUI areas with the following goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify perennial grass to speed reestablishment of sagebrush cover. • Enhance structural and species diversity in degraded low-elevation sagebrush steppe. • Reduce shrub and juniper density in mid-elevation shrub. • Reduce invasive species or noxious weeds in all vegetation types. • In mountain shrub, rejuvenate old, decadent shrubs and increase cover and density of desirable herbaceous species.
Action: Design vegetation treatments in concert with wildlife species and their season of use (e.g., winter, lekking, transitional, nesting, hibernation) while maintaining required habitat characteristics such as but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing cover for wildlife • Maintaining diversity • Treating in a mosaic pattern • Providing travel corridors • Mimicking natural historic disturbances (e.g., fingering, uneven patches).



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Action: As appropriate, to move vegetation cover types towards the DFC, use various methods (e.g., prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical, WFU) to treat on an <i>annual</i> basis the following footprint acres.	
Cover Type	Acres treated
Wyoming/Basin Big Sagebrush	45,010–49,750
Mountain Big Sagebrush	8,165–9,025
Low Sagebrush	95–105
<i>Vegetation - Rangeland</i>	
Objective: Control invasive species/noxious weeds and poisonous plants to decrease the overall number of areas occupied. Minimize the likelihood of introduced new species of invasive species/noxious weeds and prevent weeds from becoming established.	
Action: Priority treatment areas include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilderness study areas/areas of critical environmental concern/research natural areas • Special status species (SSS) habitats 	
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife - Sage-grouse</i>	
Goal: Ensure public lands are managed to conserve species and their habitats, while providing for favorable conditions that support their continued existence.	
Objective: Maintain, improve, or increase habitat for sensitive species to prevent them from becoming listed species (i.e. Federal T&E).	
Action: Maintain existing partnerships and establish new partnerships (e.g., Greater sage-grouse working groups, IDFG, local cave groups) that help manage sensitive species habitat on BLM-administered public lands. Coordinate with state and other federal agencies to support research efforts, develop partnerships, and develop outreach and educational opportunities to inform the public about sensitive species habitats and populations.	
Action: Pursue conservation easements, land acquisitions, cooperative management efforts, and other programs to support conservation of sensitive species and linkage corridors to improve habitat connectivity.	
Action: Reduce impacts to sensitive species habitat by implementing measures such as but not limited to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement distance and timing stipulations. • Consider placement of, rerouting, modifying, or removing infrastructure (e.g., facilities, powerlines, pipelines, fence lines) or project location. • Consider placement of range improvements. 	
Action: Inventory potential habitat and monitor population trends.	
Action: Permitted/authorized activities (mining, recreation, land use authorizations, grazing, etc.) within sensitive species habitat may be modified (e.g., closed, limited or restricted access, season of use) to reduce potential conflicts or impacts (e.g., disturbance, habitat degradation).	
Action: Manage livestock grazing in special status species habitat according to Standard 8 (Special Status Species) under Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health.	
Objective: Maintain, improve, or increase habitat for sensitive species to preclude them from becoming listed species (i.e., federally threatened or endangered).	
Action: Manage Greater sage-grouse habitat consistent with appropriate conservation plans (e.g., Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho [ISAC 2006]), local working group (e.g., Upper	

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Snake, Challis, Eastern Idaho Uplands, Big Desert, and Magic Valley) and IDFG conservation strategies (e.g., Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy [IDFG 2005a]), including future revisions or amendments, and current BLM guidance, by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing/controlling invasive species/noxious weeds • Reducing/limiting disturbance during breeding, nesting, and early brood rearing • Establishing setbacks or buffers • Maintaining/improving habitats through proactive vegetation treatments • Maintaining nesting habitat • Applying livestock management techniques (e.g., sheep-bedding, herding, salting, water hauling, varying season of use, adjusting livestock numbers, developing alternative sources of water, and converting spring developments to a closed system).
Action: Limit physical, mechanical, and audible disturbance within 0.5 miles of active leks from March through June (Sharp-tailed Grouse)
<i>Wildland Fire Management</i>
Action: In designing vegetation treatments in Low- and Mid-elevation Shrub and Mountain Shrub that could potentially affect Greater Sage-grouse, conservation measures would be implemented.
Objective: Maintain, protect, and expand Greater sage-grouse stronghold/source habitats.
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in areas that pose a wildland fire risk to Greater sage-grouse Key habitat.
Action: Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to prevent wildland fire from spreading into intact sagebrush steppe habitat (e.g., leks, breeding or brood rearing area) or WUI.
Action: WFU may be allowed in historically frequent fire regimes to restore fire's natural role and in Greater sage-grouse habitat for the benefit of the habitat only after site-specific project-level coordination with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.
Action: Suppress wildland fires in stronghold/source habitats, except where WFU would benefit habitat.
Goal: Protect and enhance sage grouse source habitats as well as enhance key ecological components in plant and animal communities.
Objective: Make progress towards DFC in the low-elevation shrub, perennial grass, invasive annual grass, mid-elevation shrub, mountain shrub, and juniper vegetation types.
Action: In perennial grass, invasive grass, and juniper invaded cover types, restore sagebrush steppe with an aggressive sagebrush seeding effort, using the appropriate sagebrush subspecies for the treatment area.
Objective: Maintain, protect, and expand sage grouse source habitats.
Action: Allow WFU in sage grouse habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site-specific project level coordination with IDFG.
Objective: Treat sage grouse key and restoration habitats to expand source habitats. Improve and maintain sage grouse Restoration (R1-3) and key habitats.
Action: Use AMR to wildland fire in all sage grouse restoration and key habitats and healthy wildlife habitats.
Action: WFU may be allowed in historically frequent fire regimes to restore fire's natural role and in sage grouse restoration and key habitats for the benefit of the habitat only after site-specific project level consultation/collaboration with IDFG.
Action: Conduct vegetation treatments in restoration and key habitats to reduce risk of wildland fire and reconnect restoration and key habitats.
Objective: Apply Greater sage-grouse conservation measures and management restrictions for fire suppression and fire and non-fire vegetation treatments.

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Action: Implement the following suppression restrictions:

Fire Management

- In the event a wildland fire escapes initial attack, a BLM resource advisor will be assigned to ensure that resource management concerns are adequately addressed and that necessary mitigation occurs. If one of the following is being threatened or has the potential to be threatened, the appropriate manager will be notified with the following information and a resource advisor will be dispatched: 1) Public health and safety, 2) WUI, 3) Sage grouse habitat and, 4) Any ACEC, Resource Natural Area (RNA), congressionally delegated watershed or any other area of significant concern.

Noxious Weeds

- To minimize spread of noxious weeds, equipment used for extended attack or Type I/II incidents should be cleaned before arriving on-site and prior to leaving the incident. Staging areas and fire camps should avoid sites with noxious weed infestations.

Special Designations (WSAs, ACECs)

- Fire camps and staging areas should be placed outside of special management areas.
- Use of natural firebreaks and existing roads and trails to contain a wildland fire would be encouraged.
- The resource values, hazards present, and management prescriptions within specific areas would be evaluated when applying guidelines to ACECs.

Vegetation

- Blading should occur on existing roads where possible. Blading through undisturbed areas, especially those supporting native cover types, should be avoided unless necessary to protect life, property, or resource values.

Wildlife

- When conducting fire suppression actions, species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, Partners in Flight species, and Birds of Conservation Concern will be protected as specified in their respective plans and or agreements.
- Establishment of control lines, base camps, and support facilities in known SSS habitat will be avoided unless life and property are threatened.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

The following restrictions apply to Proposed, Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species and to “designated” critical habitat.

- The BLM will coordinate annually with the USFWS to update species status in the planning area.
- Field Managers will ensure resource staff initiates emergency consultation with the USFWS whenever suppression activities may impact listed species habitat and, more specifically, during emergency suppression actions to protect life and property.
- Minimum Impact Suppression Techniques (MIST) guidelines will be followed in occupied T&E and Candidate species habitat where appropriate (Appendix T in Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, 2005). MIST guidelines direct suppression techniques, procedures, tools, and equipment that least impact the environment. Wet-lining (using water to soak/saturate fuels) is the preferred fireline construction tactic.
- Field Managers will assign a Resource Advisor or other designated representative as per the current Red Book guidance.
 - BLM will notify USFWS when appropriate to discuss T&E species mitigation within the suppression area to assure conservation practices are being followed to avoid adverse effects.
 - When Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are required, the Resource Advisor will brief the IC about conservation measures needed to avoid adverse effects.
- To minimize spread of noxious weeds, equipment used for extended attack or Type I/II incidents should

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<p>be cleaned before arriving on-site and prior to leaving the incident. Staging areas and fire camps will avoid sites with noxious weed infestations.</p>
<p>Action: Implement the following fire and non-fire vegetation restrictions:</p> <p><u>Vegetation Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No chemical treatment would conflict with existing or future national vegetative treatment guidance. To reduce potential resource impacts from chemical treatments, herbicide use would conform to application criteria described in the 1991 document, Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States or in subsequent revisions and/or replacements of this document. Use would conform to instructions from BLM Manual 9011 Chemical Pest Control, as well as label restrictions and current policies and state statutes. In addition, the prescription for herbicide application (desired, optimum environmental conditions) would evaluate off-site migration and non-target species by assessing wind speed and direction, temperature, precipitation forecast, soil infiltration potential, constraints on overland water transport due to precipitation or flooding, establishment of riparian buffer strips, and risk to special status species. Fishery and/or wildlife biologists would assist project planners in selecting appropriate herbicides for use among or near terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna sensitive to herbicides.• Fuels treatments would be utilized to reduce the overall threat of the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive plant species. <p><u>Livestock Grazing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All treatment areas would be rested from livestock grazing until project-specific monitoring identified in site-specific project plans and/or NEPA documents show that resource objectives have been met. Resumption of grazing would be determined on a case-by-case basis. <p><u>Placeholder Species</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plant materials used in re-vegetation actions would be native when appropriate and practical. However, desirable non-native species may be used in re-vegetation actions on harsh or degraded sites, when native seed is not available, or where they would structurally mimic the natural plant community and prevent soil loss and invasion by exotic annual grasses and noxious weeds. The species used would be those that have the highest probability of establishment on these sites. These "placeholders" would maintain the area for potential future native restoration. Native seed would be used more frequently and at larger scales as species adapted to local areas become more available. <p><u>Wildlife</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, Partners in Flight species, and Birds of Conservation Concern will be protected as specified in their respective plans/agreements.• Habitat Conservation Assessment and Conservation Strategies have been prepared and are currently being implemented for the following BLM sensitive species: Townsend's big-eared bat, wolverine, spotted bat, white headed woodpecker, trumpeter swan, northern goshawk, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, greater sage grouse (Idaho plan pending), mountain quail, Idaho dunes tiger beetle, Bonneville cutthroat trout, bull trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, red band trout and leather sided chub.• Vegetation treatments proposed in areas supporting sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse would be coordinated with IDFG and would be implemented under LUP guidance or restrictions. <p><u>Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species</u></p> <p>The following restrictions apply to proposed habitats occupied by T&E and Candidate species and designated critical habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment activities may occur near or adjacent to T&E and Candidate species habitat and will be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts to habitat occupied by T&E and Candidate species and

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<p>designated critical habitat so that the species or their habitats will not be adversely affected. All related fire and non-fire vegetation treatment activities in areas that may affect T&E and Candidate species would be conducted in consultation with USFWS. Further, all such activities would be designed and implemented in such a manner that potential impacts to T&E and Candidate species from disturbance or habitat modification would be extremely unlikely to occur or would be so small as to not be meaningfully measured, detected, or analyzed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• T&E and Candidate species with recovery plans, conservation agreements, and conservation strategies will be protected as specified in their respective plans/agreements/strategies. These protections include such measures as adequate habitat and range for a given species, including mitigation measures for multiple land use activities authorized by the BLM.• Herbicide applicators will obtain a weather forecast for the area prior to initiating a spraying project to ensure no extreme precipitation or wind events could occur during or immediately after spraying. Aerial application of herbicides will not occur during periods of inversion. Spraying will follow label instructions.
<p>Action: Implement the following Greater sage-grouse conservation measures:</p> <p>Prescribed Fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior to planning prescribed burns or other vegetation management treatments in sagebrush communities, ensure that sage-grouse seasonal habitats have been mapped (see 5.3.2 for additional discussion of mapping).• Once seasonal habitats have been mapped, ensure that proposed project areas have been evaluated on the ground in the context of the appropriate seasonal habitat characteristics (see 5.3.2).• Avoid the use of prescribed fire and other sagebrush-reduction projects in areas where sagebrush is limiting on the landscape or in habitats that currently meet, or are trending toward meeting, breeding or winter habitat characteristics.• If the analysis shows that a vegetation treatment may still be advisable, design habitat-manipulation projects to achieve the desired objectives, considering the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Where prescribed burning, or other treatments, in sage-grouse habitats may be warranted (e.g., sagebrush cover exceeds desired breeding or winter habitat characteristics; understory does not meet seasonal habitat characteristics and restoration is desired; there is a need to restore ecological processes; or a proposed treatment site is in an exotic seeding being managed for overall sage-grouse benefits on the surrounding landscape).○ Project design should be done with interdisciplinary input and in cooperation with IDFG.○ Ensure that any proposed sagebrush treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding seasonal habitats and landscape.○ Where appropriate, ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse (see Connelly 2000 for additional discussion).○ Leave adequate untreated sagebrush areas for loafing/hiding cover near leks for sage-grouse.• Evaluate and monitor prescribed burns, and other treatments, as soon as possible after treatment and periodically thereafter to determine whether the project was successful and is meeting or trending toward desired objectives.• Avoid the use of prescribed fire or other sagebrush treatments in habitats prone to the expansion or invasion of cheatgrass or other invasive species unless adequate measures are taken to control the invasive species and ensure subsequent dominance by desirable perennial species. In many—if not most—cases, this will likely require chemical treatments and reseeding.• Plan, execute, and monitor prescribed fires in a manner that provides for adequate control and provision for contingency resources.• Ensure that burn plans address the importance of preventing escaped fires when prescription fires are

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planned in the vicinity of stronghold and key habitat.

Annual Grasslands

- Local working groups (LWG), land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize annual grassland areas for restoration. Work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for specific projects.
- In general, the priority for implementation of specific sage-grouse habitat restoration projects in annual grasslands should be given first to:
 - Sites adjacent to or surrounded by sage-grouse stronghold habitats, then
 - Sites outside stronghold habitats but adjacent to or within approximately two miles of key habitat, and
 - Sites beyond two miles of key habitat. The intent here is to focus restoration outward from existing, intact habitat.
- All seeding project designs should include measures for noxious weed control and monitoring for at least 3 years following implementation.
- Seed used in sage-grouse habitat restoration seedings, burned area rehabilitation projects, and hazardous fuels/wildland urban interface projects will be tested and certified as weed-free, based on prevailing agency policy and protocol. Private landowners are encouraged to use only certified seed, as well.
- In designing rehabilitation and restoration projects, use the best available science relative to seeding technology and plant materials. Use of NRCS's "VegSpec" website may be helpful. VegSpec is a web-based decision support system that assists land managers in the planning and design of vegetation establishment practices. VegSpec uses soil, plant, and climate data to select plant species that are site-specifically adapted, suitable for the selected practice, and appropriate for the purposes and objectives for which the planting is intended. (See <http://plants.usda.gov>).
- Design vegetation treatments in areas of high fire frequency to facilitate firefighter safety; reduce the risk of extreme fire behavior; reduce the risk and rate of fire spread to stronghold, key, and restoration habitats; reduce fire frequencies; and shorten the fire season.
- Where rangelands are dominated by annuals (such as cheatgrass) or where they border farmlands or railroad right-of-ways, convert cheatgrass areas to perennials, or establish buffers of perennial species to reduce the risk of fire spread from railroad or agriculture-related activities (e.g., sparks from trains, field burns, burn barrels), where appropriate and feasible.
- To discourage the spread of invasive annuals and noxious weed seed, require the washing of fire vehicles (including undercarriage) prior to deployments and prior to demobilization from wildfire incidents.
- Human activities such as fence and pipeline maintenance or construction, facility maintenance, utility maintenance, or any project or related work at or within 1 km (0.6 miles) of occupied leks that results in or will likely result in disturbance to lekking birds should be avoided from approximately 6:00 PM to 9:00 AM. In general, this guideline should be applied from March 15 through May 1 in lower elevation habitats and March 25 through May 15 in higher elevation habitats.

Perennial Grasslands

- LWGs, land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize perennial grasslands (exotic versus native) where plant species diversity or sagebrush is limiting on the landscape. Further, they should work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for reestablishing sagebrush in higher priority areas.
- When seeding sagebrush, source-identified, tested seed adapted to local conditions should be used.
- One or more of the following approaches for restoring sagebrush should be considered to improve



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likelihood of success (see Dalzell 2004 and Monsen et al. 2004):

- Use of the "Oyer" compact row seeder, which compacts soil and presses seed into the surface.
- Use of the Brillion cultipacker seeder, where seed is broadcast over the surface followed by cultipacking.
- Transplant bare-root or containerized stock in small critical areas to establish a seed source.
- Use the "mother plant" technique, and transplant bare-root or containerized stock in select locations throughout the area to establish a seed source.
- For large areas (e.g., large wildland fires), aerial seed onto a rough seedbed (Monsen et al. 2004) coupled with one or more of the above options.
- In established stands of introduced perennial grasses, transplant sagebrush into strategic patches or strips in critical sites or throughout the area. Scalp spots or strips to reduce grass competition prior to planting. Or, as an alternative to scalps, consider the use of herbicides (see Monsen et al. 2004, Volume 3).
- Where the diversification of crested wheatgrass or similar seedings with native species of grasses, forbs, and/or shrubs is desired, Pellant and Lysne (2005) recommend a three-step process:
- Reduce competition of crested wheatgrass to facilitate the establishment and persistence of the desired species. Possibilities include use of livestock, capitalizing on drought episodes that reduce grass vigor, herbicides such as glyphosate, and mechanical treatments.
 - Introduce desired, site-adapted species through drill seeding; aerial seeding followed by harrow, cultipacker or chaining; livestock trampling; or transplanting container stock, bareroot stock, or individual plants from native sources ("wildings"). Lambert (2005) provides descriptions, recommended seeding rates, and other useful information for nearly 250 species of native and non-native grasses, forbs, and shrubs.
 - As part of post-treatment management, ensure that livestock grazing and rest intervals are matched with the phenology and life history characteristics of the desired/seeded/transplanted species. Implement monitoring to clearly document how, what, when, and where treatments were implemented. Follow up with suitable effectiveness monitoring to document success of the treatments relative to project objectives.

Conifer Encroachment

- LWGs, land management agencies, IDFG, and other partners should work closely together to identify and prioritize conifer encroachment areas for further management action. Work cooperatively to identify options, schedules, and funding opportunities for specific projects. For western juniper, Miller et al. (2005) provide *Guidelines for Selecting the Most Appropriate Management Actions*, pages 54–57.
- IDFG, land management agencies, LWGs, and other partners should work closely together to identify leks where conifer encroachment may be affecting lek attendance or nearby habitat quality.
- Remove Douglas fir or other conifers where they are encroaching on wet meadows, riparian areas, or sagebrush stands that provide potential sage-grouse habitat.
- Remove juniper, Douglas fir, pinyon pine, or other trees within at least 100 m (330 ft) or an 8-acre area of occupied sage-grouse leks. The purpose of this procedure is to reduce perching opportunity for raptors or other avian predators within view of leks. Techniques could include chainsaw, chipper, or other suitable mechanical means. Ensure cutting and slash disposal is completed between approximately July 15 and January 30 to minimize disturbance to grouse that may be in the vicinity (e.g., males at leks, nesting females, and young broods). This practice serves to reduce raptor predation on sage-grouse by eliminating potential perches, thereby improving survival, recruitment, and productivity. It may be particularly valuable where avian predation may be of greater concern such as in areas with fragmented habitat, nearby infrastructure features, and/or in the case of small, isolated sage-grouse populations.
- Where juniper or other conifer species have encroached upon sagebrush communities at larger scales, employ prescribed fire, chemical, mechanical (e.g., chaining, chipper, chainsaw, or commercial sale), or

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<p>other suitable methods to reduce or eliminate juniper. Priority should be given to areas where there is a strong likelihood for recovery of perennial herbaceous vegetation or where preparatory and follow-up actions (e.g., control of invasive species and seeding) are likely to be successful. Whenever possible, but especially if sagebrush habitat is limited locally, use juniper-control techniques that are least disruptive to the affected stand of sagebrush. For example, if junipers are only scattered, and the associated sagebrush community is otherwise relatively healthy, cutting junipers with chainsaws will remove the encroachment threat while allowing for immediate use of the sagebrush by sage-grouse. In all cases, control efforts should be planned using interdisciplinary expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where juniper control around leks is planned, monitor leks for at least three consecutive years post-treatment to document effects on lek attendance. Ideally, two to three years of pre-treatment monitoring is also recommended, but this may not always be feasible.
<p><i>Livestock Grazing</i></p> <p>Action: Manage livestock grazing consistent with the Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (ISAC 2006) and local working group plans (e.g., Big Desert Plan), implementing conservation measures such as, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing grazing management systems (e.g., herding, rest rotation, deferred rotation) to ensure adequate nesting habitat within the breeding landscape • Adjusting grazing use distribution to benefit occupied Greater sage-grouse breeding habitat, through herding, salting, and water source management (e.g., turning troughs/pipelines on/off, extending pipelines/moving troughs) • Identifying and/or developing strategically located forage reserves • Moving sheep bedding grounds away from Greater sage-grouse leks • Placing salt/mineral supplements in existing disturbed sites, areas with reduced sagebrush cover, seedings, or cheatgrass sites • Considering the impact of range improvement placement on Greater sage-grouse • Modifying fences when impacts to Greater sage-grouse are identified.
<p><i>Fluid Minerals (Oil and Gas, Tar Sands, and Geothermal Resources)</i></p> <p>Action: Identify the following lands as open to leasing, subject to seasonal and controlled surface use restrictions (≈560,560 acres). These restrictions would be changed only by waiver, exception, or modification as outlined by the criteria listed in Appendix Process for Fluid Mineral Leasing.</p> <p>Seasonal wildlife guidelines (Approximately 456,560 acres):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sage-grouse strutting and nesting areas—activity allowed 6/16 to 1/30 (lands in the Big Lost MFP [BLM 1983]) • Sharp-tailed grouse and Greater sage-grouse strutting grounds—activity allowed 5/1 to 3/1 (lands in the Medicine Lodge RMP) • Sharp-tailed grouse and Greater sage-grouse nesting and brood rearing areas—activity allowed 7/1 to 5/1 (lands in the Medicine Lodge RMP) • Sharp-tailed grouse and Greater sage-grouse winter range—activity allowed 4/1 to 12/1 (lands in the Medicine Lodge RMP) • Sharp-tailed and Greater sage-grouse nesting and brood rearing areas within the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area—activity allowed 7/1 to 3/31

**Table U-1
GRSG and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance in Land Use Plans**

<i>Mineral Materials</i>	
Action: Develop conditions of approval that require operators to comply with mineral material regulations to protect the following surface resource values:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp-tailed grouse and Greater sage-grouse strutting, nesting, and brood rearing areas • Sharp-tailed grouse and Greater sage-grouse winter range • Special status species habitats. 	
Forest Service	
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest – Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Plan	
<i>Vegetation – Forest & Woodlands</i>	
Objective: Grassland/Shrubland/Riparian: Reduce conifer encroachment on 74,000 acres of riparian areas, shrublands, and grasslands.	
<i>Wildlife</i>	
Goal: Sage Grouse: Sagebrush habitat supports sage grouse and pygmy rabbit populations by providing suitable sage grouse brood-rearing habitat on at least 40% of the sagebrush habitat within 18 kilometers of documented active or inactive sage grouse leks and the area mapped as potential pygmy rabbit habitat.	
Objective: Sage Grouse: Maintain or improve sagebrush height, and canopy and grass-forb canopy of sagebrush habitat, emphasizing habitat within 18 kilometers of documented active or inactive sage grouse leks and the area mapped as potential pygmy rabbit habitat.	
Sensitive and Federally Listed Species: Information in the following sources should be considered when designing projects that may affect sensitive species or federally listed species.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage Grouse in Montana 	
Standard 8: Within 18 kilometers of documented active or inactive sage grouse leks, do not remove sagebrush within 300 meters of riparian zones, meadows, lakebeds or farmland, unless site specific analysis indicates such removal promotes achievement of the sagebrush habitat goal. Springs developed for livestock water in these areas must be designed to maintain free water and wet meadows.	
Boise National Forest – Boise National Forest Plan	
<i>Vegetation – General</i>	
Desired Condition - Grassland and Shrubland Vegetation: Chapter 3, p. III-29 (Vol. 1, FLRMP) Grasslands and shrublands exhibit variable patterns of multiple-aged shrubs, grasses, and forbs. Shrublands are found in mosaics of canopy closures across the landscape, reflecting a combination of successional development, disturbance regimes and management activities. Some mid- to high-elevation grasslands are primarily meadow complexes that are dominated by sedges, rushes, grasses, and forbs.	
Appendix A - Vegetation, p. 17 (Vol. 2, FLRMP)	
Shrublands: Shrublands occur on areas not classified as forestland and where shrub cover has the potential to be >10 percent. Desired conditions have been developed for some shrubland communities that occur on the Forest. The shrubland groups reflect the LANDFIRE Environmental Site Potentials (ESPs) (refer to the Vegetation Classification section for descriptions of shrubland types). Like the forested vegetation, these groupings reflect similar environmental characteristics, site productivity, and disturbance regimes. Table A-9 displays the fire regimes for the shrubland communities.	
Table A-9. Shrubland environmental site potential groups by fire regime	
Fire Regime	Shrubland Environmental Site Potential Group
Mixed1	Low Sagebrush
Mixed1-Mixed2	Mountain and Wyoming Big Sagebrush
	Montane Shrub

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GRSG and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance in Land Use Plans

<p>Desired Condition Ranges for Sagebrush Species:</p> <p>Mt. Big Sagebrush: Grass/Forb = <10% Canopy Cover over 13-33% of area. Low = 10-25% Canopy Cover over 27-47% of area. Moderate = 26-35% Canopy Cover over 12-32% of area High = >36% Canopy Cover over 8-28% of total area</p> <p>Wyoming Big Sagebrush: Grass/Forb = <10% Canopy Cover over 25-30% of area. Low = 10-25% Canopy Cover over 20-35% of area. Moderate = 26-35% Canopy Cover over 13-33% of area High = >36% Canopy Cover over 12-32% of total area</p> <p>Low Sagebrush: Grass/Forb = <10% Canopy Cover over 0-20% of area. Low = 10-25% Canopy Cover over 80-100% of area. Moderate = 26-35% Canopy Cover over 0% of area High = >36% Canopy Cover over 0% of total area</p>
<p>Guideline: VEGU06 - When sagebrush cover types are determined to need rest from livestock grazing following a wildfire, areas should be rested for a minimum of two growing seasons. Evaluate whether additional rest is needed after two growing seasons. Base this determination on the following factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The ecological status of the sagebrush community prior to the wildfire, How long the sagebrush community had a density or canopy closure greater than 15 percent prior to the wildfire, The severity and intensity of the fire, The amount, diversity, and recovery of forbs, grasses and palatable shrubs that are present after 2 years of rest in relation to desired conditions. <p>In areas other than sagebrush cover types, an appropriate rest period should be determined. Base this determination on the following factors: soil conditions, the amount, diversity and recovery of forbs, grasses, and palatable shrubs in relation to the desired condition that are present after the 2 years of rest.</p>
<p>Guideline: BTGU03 - When available and not cost-prohibitive, seeds and plants used for seedings and plantings in revegetation projects should originate from genetically local sources of native species. When project objectives justify the use of non-native plant materials, documentation explaining why non-natives are preferred should be part of the project planning process.</p>
<p><i>Special Status Species – Wildlife - Sage-grouse</i></p>
<p>Objective: TEOB07 - During fine-scale analyses, identify practices or facilities that are adversely affecting TEPC species or their habitats, and prioritize opportunities to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB19 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where TEPC species occur, identify opportunities to maintain desired habitat conditions or restore degraded habitat for TEPC species.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB28 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where dispersed and developed recreation practices or facilities are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to adverse effects to TEPC species or degradation of their habitats, evaluate and document where the problems are and prioritize opportunities to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST04 - Management actions that have adverse effects on Proposed or Candidate species or their habitats, shall not be allowed if the effects of those actions would contribute to listing of the species as Threatened or Endangered under the ESA.</p>

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Standard: TEST05 - For management actions that include application of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, or rodenticides, mitigation shall avoid or minimize adverse effects on TEPC species or their habitats.
Standard: TEST06 - Management actions shall be designed to avoid or minimize adverse effects to listed species and their habitats. For listed fish species, use Appendix B for determining compliance with this standard.
Standard: TEST12 - Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known nest or denning sites of TEPC species if those actions would disrupt reproductive success during the nesting or denning period. During project planning, determine sites, periods, and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects.
Standard: TEST13 - Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known winter roosting sites of TEPC species if those actions would adversely affect the survival of wintering or roosting populations. During project planning, determine sites, periods, and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects.
Standard: TEST29 - Avoid or minimize adverse effects from locatable mineral operations to TEPC animal species or their habitats.
Guideline: TEGU03 - Management actions in occupied Proposed or Candidate species habitat should be modified or relocated if the effects of the actions would contribute to a trend toward ESA listing for these species.
Guideline: TEGU05 - The Forest should cooperate with USFWS and NMFS as appropriate by providing information, data, and assistance for the evaluation of species that are petitioned, or proposed, or candidates to be listed under the ESA, and for evaluation of proposed critical habitat.
Guideline: TEGU06 - Coordinate with Forest resource specialists to consider TEPC habitat needs when designing and implementing management activities that may affect TEPC species and their habitats.
Guideline: TEGU08 - Fire Resource advisors should be trained in techniques to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.
Guideline: TEGU10 - Land exchanges that would result in a net loss of quality or quantity of habitat for TEPC species should not be considered unless benefits of the exchange outweigh the benefits to those species in the long term.
Guideline: TEGU12 - Where the authority to do so was retained, proposed or existing special use authorizations should be issued, re-issued, or amended upon expiration, only if adverse effects of the authorizations on TEPC species can be minimized.
<i>Management Area Direction</i>
The Lower South Fork Boise River MA on the Mountain Home Ranger District:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 0133 - Within the 1992 Foothills Fire area, maintain existing and newly established shrub stands in the Mountain Big Sagebrush and Bitterbrush vegetation groups to improve shrub diversity. • Wildlife Resources Guideline 0140 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions. • Rangeland Resources Guideline 0156 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks. • Rangeland Resources Guideline 0157 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat. • Fire Management Objective 0159 - Limit the use of prescribed fire in existing and newly established stands of mountain big sagebrush and bitterbrush within the 1992 Foothills Fire area in order to restore canopy closure, and restore or maintain shrub diversity.

**Table U-1
GRSG and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance in Land Use Plans**

Caribou-Targhee National Forest – Caribou National Forest Revised Forest Plan
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife - Sage-grouse</i>
Objective: Sage Grouse: Within five years of signing the ROD, map functional and degraded sage grouse nesting and winter habitat within 5 miles of known leks. Identify opportunities to increase quality or quantity of that habitat
Action: Standard: In project analyses affecting the habitats listed below, assess impacts to habitat and populations for the following management indicator species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassland and open canopy sagebrush habitats--Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse • Sagebrush habitats--Sage Grouse • Mature and old forest habitats--Northern Goshawk
Action: Standard: Cooperate with other state and federal agencies and private landowners to survey, inventory, and manage habitats for sage grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse
Action: Guideline: Current guidelines for sage and sharp-tailed grouse management, such as Connelly et al. (2000), should be used as a basis to develop site-specific recommendations for proposed sagebrush treatments
Action: Guideline: Management activities should consider proximity to active lek locations during site-specific project planning. Those within 10 miles of an active sage grouse lek and 2 miles of active sharp-tailed grouse leks should be considered further for suitability as grouse habitat
Action: Guideline: If management activities would impact courtship, limit physical, mechanical, and audible disturbances in the breeding complex during the breeding season (March to May) within three hours of sunrise and sunset each day.
Action: Guideline: Where management actions will disturb nesting grouse, avoid manipulation or alteration of vegetation during the nesting period (May to June)
Action: Guideline: In sagebrush habitats, manage herbaceous cover to conceal nests through the first incubation period for ground and low shrub-nesting birds. It is assumed that proper use of rest-rotation or deferred-rotation grazing should meet these conditions, although not every year on every area (Idaho Partners in Flight 2000)
Caribou-Targhee National Forest - Curlew National Grassland Management Plan
<i>Vegetation - Rangeland</i>
Grassland-wide Goal: Sagebrush is managed to maintain current levels of sagebrush in the >15% canopy cover class--about 60% of the Grassland. Emphasis will be on creating and maintaining areas suitable for sage grouse nesting habitat over the long term.
Grassland-wide Standard: Conduct a risk assessment for all sagebrush herbicide treatments, including aerial applications, using the most current Multi-Regional Risk Assessment.
Grassland-wide Standard: Areas where threetip sagebrush (<i>Artemisia tripartita</i>), rabbitbrush, and horsebrush have canopy cover values of greater than 5 percent will be carefully evaluated before treatment due to their ability to sprout after disturbance.
Grassland-wide Guideline: Emphasize native plant species where they would meet the desired resource conditions. Introduced species may be used in project seedings: (1) where native species would not meet the objectives of erosion control, such as in high use or impact areas, and where the effects on local, native flora is minimal; (2) on sites that are currently dominated by introduced species and the use of non-native species has not degraded the adjacent native flora; (3) on sites where the management objective is to use non-native species in one area to prevent degradation of other natural areas; or (4) when native seed is unavailable or cost prohibitive.
Grassland-wide Goal: Manage sagebrush community habitats to reduce fragmentation and maintain or restore connectivity at the Grassland level.

**Table U-1
GRSG and Sagebrush Habitat Guidance in Land Use Plans**

Grassland-wide Objective: Assess the changes to sagebrush habitats in the Greater Curlew Valley, including canopy cover, adjacent land use, understory conditions, every five years. Coordinate this effort with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Greater Curlew Valley Sage Grouse Local Working Group.
Grassland-wide Guideline: Identify and maintain those habitats that have sagebrush with native understory vegetation.
Grassland-wide Guideline: Manage for a mosaic of age and structural sagebrush communities across the Grassland in patches of at least 320 acres.
Guidelines: Prescription 6.5 – Rangeland Vegetation And Upland Bird Habitat Management, Vegetation Consider maintaining dense (>15%) sagebrush cover adjacent to private land that has less sagebrush than is desirable for quality sage grouse habitat.
Grassland-wide Goal: Habitat conditions on the Grassland contribute to sustaining populations of sage and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse in the Greater Curlew Valley.
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife - Sage-grouse</i>
Grassland-wide Goal: Continue coordination with the Greater Curlew Valley Sage Grouse Local Working Group and other interested parties to manage sage grouse populations on the Curlew National Grassland.
Grassland-wide Goal: Maintain and increase, where possible, the distribution and abundance of sage grouse.
Grassland-wide Objective: Develop a map in cooperation with Idaho Department of Fish and Game to identify functional and degraded breeding habitat and winter habitat within two years of signing the Record of Decision.
Grassland-wide Standard: The habitat requirements of management indicator species (MIS) will be considered in all resource development projects. The MIS for sagebrush habitat is sage grouse and for riparian/wetland areas is a breeding bird complex.
Grassland-wide Guidelines: Management activities will consider proximity to active lek locations during site-specific project planning.
Grassland-wide Guidelines: If management actions would impact courtship, limit physical, mechanical and audible disturbances within the breeding complex during the breeding season (March – May) within three hours of sunrise or sunset.
Grassland-wide Guidelines: Where management actions may disturb nesting grouse, avoid manipulation or alteration of vegetation during the nesting period (May-June).
Standard: Prescription 6.5 – Rangeland Vegetation And Upland Bird Habitat Management, Wildlife Do not treat sagebrush within 0.25 miles of an active sage grouse lek.
Guideline: Prescription 6.5 – Rangeland Vegetation And Upland Bird Habitat Management, Wildlife Time treatment practices to provide the least impact to wildlife with emphasis on upland game birds.
Guideline: Prescription 6.5 – Rangeland Vegetation And Upland Bird Habitat Management, Wildlife Current guidelines for sage and sharp-tailed grouse management will be used as a basis to develop site-specific recommendations for proposed sagebrush treatments. Lek buffers as described in the most current guidelines do not apply to the Grassland, because of the highly fragmented nature of the area and the distance that hens are known to move to nest (Biologist Meeting 10/24/01). Rationale for deviation from the other guidelines will be identified in the site-specific project analysis.
Guideline: Prescription 6.5 – Rangeland Vegetation And Upland Bird Habitat Management, Wildlife When implementing vegetation seeding treatments, provide for a seed mix with species that are preferred by native upland birds during the pre-nesting, nesting and brood-rearing periods, where possible. See Appendix C.
<i>Cultural Resources and Tribal Coordination</i>
Goal: Grassland-wide Desired Future Conditions: Functional restoration of the ecosystem provides the capability to support harvestable levels of species of interest to the tribes.

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<i>Recreation and Visitor Services</i>
Grassland-wide Guidelines: Manage dispersed recreation use such that activities do not adversely impact wildlife species such as upland game birds during critical periods of the annual life cycle.
<i>Other Administrative Designations</i>
Standards: Prescription 3.4.1 – Special Wildlife Areas, Vegetation: Native and non-native grass, forb and shrub species will be used in the composition for revegetation after disturbance and reflect those species preferred by native grouse for pre-nesting, nesting and brood rearing.
Salmon-Challis National Forest – Salmon National Forest Plan
<i>Wildlife</i>
Goal: Provide habitat of sufficient quantity and quality to sustain populations of management indicator species (p. IV-1)
Action: Habitat for each vertebrate wildlife species on the Forest will be managed to insure viable or target populations (p. IV-19).
<i>Livestock Grazing</i>
General Direction: Coordinate range improvement and management activities with wildlife habitat needs, especially on key habitat areas such as winter ranges, calving areas, riparian areas, and sage-grouse leks (p. IV-22).
Salmon-Challis National Forest – Challis National Forest Plan
<i>Wildlife and Fish</i>
Goal 1: Provide habitat to ensure viability and recovery of threatened and endangered and Forest Service sensitive plants and animals.
Objective 1 – Implement the T&E Recovery Plans as they are approved
Goal 2 – Maintain or improve the current productivity level of wildlife and fish habitat
Objective 4 – Place priority on improving essential wildlife and fish habitats (e.g., aspen, mahogany, riparian, aquatic) and seasonal ranges.
Objective 5 – Manage Forest vegetation to provide habitat diversity for all species
Emphasize habitat improvement for Threatened and Endangered Species, Forest Service Sensitive, and economically and socially important species
The Elk Habitat Relationships for Central Idaho, Guidelines for Management of Pronghorn Antelope and the Western State Sage Grouse Guidelines will be used as guides.
Management Area Direction – East Fork: Maintain or improve quality of wet meadows, springs, mule deer and elk winter range, elk calving and sage grouse brood-rearing areas.
Inventory wildlife habitat with emphasis on refining winter ranges, key sage grouse seasonal ranges, riparian areas, wet meadows, aspen types and on identifying improvement needs
Within key sage grouse habitat, manage to increase forbs and provide adequate sagebrush cover
Management Area Direction – South Lost River: Cooperate with Idaho Department Of Fish and Game in transplant of Bighorn sheep and sage grouse. Use Sage Grouse Workshop Guidelines in identifying criteria for Habitat evaluation.
Management Area Direction – Sawmill Canyon: Maintain quality and use of MIS big game and grouse summer forage areas, emphasizing complexes comprising moist habitats. Protect moose and elk calving and grouse brood-rearing areas.
Management Area Direction- Antelope Creek: Improve quality and use of big-game winter range and other critical habitat; emphasize complexes comprising moist habitats. Sage-grouse Workshop Guidelines should be used as a guideline.

**Table U-1
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Sawtooth National Forest – Sawtooth National Forest Revised Forest Plan											
<i>Vegetation - General</i>											
Shrubland desired conditions are represented by canopy cover of shrubs based on the following groupings:											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grass/Forb = <10% canopy cover ▪ Low = 10–25% canopy cover ▪ Moderate = 26–35% canopy cover ▪ High = ≥36% canopy cover 											
Table A-11. Desired Condition Ranges for Low Sagebrush Environmental Site Potential Groups											
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Canopy Cover</th> <th>Percent of Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Grass/Forb</td> <td>0–20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td>80–10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moderate</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Canopy Cover	Percent of Area	Grass/Forb	0–20	Low	80–10	Moderate	0	High	0	
Canopy Cover	Percent of Area										
Grass/Forb	0–20										
Low	80–10										
Moderate	0										
High	0										
Table A-12. Desired Condition Ranges for Mountain Big Sagebrush and/or Basin Big Sagebrush ESP Groups											
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Canopy Cover</th> <th>Percent of Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Grass/Forb</td> <td>13–33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td>27–47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moderate</td> <td>12–32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>8–28</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Canopy Cover	Percent of Area	Grass/Forb	13–33	Low	27–47	Moderate	12–32	High	8–28	
Canopy Cover	Percent of Area										
Grass/Forb	13–33										
Low	27–47										
Moderate	12–32										
High	8–28										
Table A-13. Desired Condition Ranges for Wyoming Big Sagebrush											
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Canopy Cover</th> <th>Percent of Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Grass/Forb</td> <td>25–30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td>20–35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moderate</td> <td>13–33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>12–32</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Canopy Cover	Percent of Area	Grass/Forb	25–30	Low	20–35	Moderate	13–33	High	12–32	
Canopy Cover	Percent of Area										
Grass/Forb	25–30										
Low	20–35										
Moderate	13–33										
High	12–32										
Table A-14. Desired Condition Ranges for Montane Shrub Environmental Site Potential Groups											
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Canopy Cover</th> <th>Percent of Area</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Grass/Forb</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td>5–25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moderate</td> <td>5–25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>60–80</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Canopy Cover	Percent of Area	Grass/Forb	0	Low	5–25	Moderate	5–25	High	60–80	
Canopy Cover	Percent of Area										
Grass/Forb	0										
Low	5–25										
Moderate	5–25										
High	60–80										
<i>Special Status Species – Wildlife – Sage-grouse</i>											
<u>Desired Condition:</u> The amount, distribution, and characteristics of source habitat are present at levels necessary to support persistence of native and desired non-native wildlife species within their respective ranges across the planning unit. For Region 4 Sensitive species, management actions retain desired source											

**Table U-1
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<p>habitat conditions, or lead to restoration of those conditions. Habitat conditions contribute to the persistence of species and do not lead to listing under the ESA or as a Region 4 Sensitive Species. Human activities do not affect source environments in a manner that prevents wildlife populations from attaining desired distribution and abundance during critical life stages. Habitat conditions support sustainability of species of socio-economic and tribal interest.</p>
<p>Goal: TEGO02 - Habitat within the respective ranges of Proposed or Candidate species contributes to keeping them from becoming listed under ESA.</p>
<p>Goal: TEGO04 - Environmental conditions and habitat components support reproductive needs important to sustainable populations of Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate (TEPC) species.</p>
<p>Goal: TEGO05 - Well-distributed habitat capable of maintaining self-sustaining, complex interacting groups of TEPC species exists within their respective ranges across the planning unit.</p>
<p>Goal: TEGO06 - Habitat capable of maintaining stable or increasing trends in abundance of TEPC species in all recovery units within the planning unit exists.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB01 - Continue to map and update locations of species occurrence and habitat for TEPC species during fine- or site/project-scale analyses. Incorporate information into a coordinated GIS database and coordinate with the Idaho Conservation Data Center.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB02 - Cooperate with USFWS and NMFS to develop an Information and Education program for special use authorizations within TEPC habitat.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB03 - Identify and reduce road-related effects on TEPC species and their habitats using the Watershed and Aquatic Recovery Strategy (WARS), <i>the Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Restoration Strategy and Source Environment Restoration Strategy</i>, and other appropriate methodologies.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB05 - Coordinate with research for TEPC species to determine basic life history requirements and potential effects from management activities. Coordinate efforts and information with the Idaho Conservation Data Center, universities, Forest Service Research Stations, etc.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB07 - During fine-scale analyses, identify practices or facilities that are adversely affecting TEPC species or their habitats, and prioritize opportunities to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB11 - Update appropriate NRIS database modules for TEPC species and their habitats on a biennially basis to incorporate latest field data.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB14 - During mid- or project-scale analysis, identify and prioritize opportunities for restoration of habitat linkage zones for terrestrial TEPC species to promote genetic integrity and species distribution (refer to Wildlife Source Environment Restoration Strategy Map in Appendix E).</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB18 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where TEPC species occur, identify opportunities to maintain desired habitat conditions or restore degraded habitat for TEPC species.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB21 - Develop Integrated Weed Management plans to maintain or restore habitats for TEPC plants and other native species of concern where they are threatened by noxious weeds or non-native invasive plants.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB22 - Develop operational resources (maps, keys, desk guides, etc.) within 1 year of signing the ROD, to coordinate TEPC species concerns and practical mitigations, and include those resource tools in the Fire Management Plan. Consult with NMFS and USFWS on operational resources on an annual basis. As part of this process consider the following relative to initial attack:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) How these resource tools will be provided to initial attack personnel. b) Locations or identification of occupied TEPC plant habitat, TEPC fish-bearing streams, surface water with direct delivery to TEPC fish bearing streams and associated RCAs. c) Criteria and potential mitigation concerning decisions to place incident bases, camps, helibases, helispots, and other centers for incident activities within occupied TEPC plant habitat or RCAs.

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<p>d) Criteria and potential mitigation concerning decisions to use draft hoses in TEPC fish-bearing streams that do not have appropriate screening.</p> <p>e) Criteria and potential mitigation concerning decisions to use chemical retardant, foam or other additives in RCAs where surface waters have direct delivery to TEPC fish-bearing streams.</p> <p>f) Criteria and potential mitigation concerning decisions to use heavy equipment in RCAs.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB25 - Use land acquisition, exchange, and conservation easements, where appropriate, to meet riparian and aquatic goals and objectives, and to facilitate restoration of TEPC species habitat.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB26 - Where the authority to issue special-use authorizations and agreements was not retained (i.e., FERC, mineral leases), work with permit holders to negotiate changes to meet TEPC species desired habitat conditions.</p>
<p>Objective: TEOB27 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where dispersed and developed recreation practices or facilities are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to adverse affects to TEPC species or degradation of their habitats, evaluate and document where the problems are and prioritize opportunities to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST04 - Management actions that have adverse effects on Proposed or Candidate species or their habitats, shall not be allowed if the effects of those actions would contribute to listing of the species as Threatened or Endangered under the ESA.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST05 - For management actions that include application of insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, or rodenticides, mitigation shall avoid or minimize adverse effects on TEPC species or their habitats.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST12 - Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known nest or denning sites of TEPC species if those actions would disrupt reproductive success during the nesting or denning period. During project planning, determine sites, periods, and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST13 - Mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, management actions within known winter roosting sites of TEPC species if those actions would adversely affect the survival of wintering or roosting populations. During project planning, determine sites, periods, and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or minimize effects.</p>
<p>Standard: TEST29 - Avoid or minimize adverse effects from locatable mineral operations to TEPC animal species or their habitats.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU02 - For proposed actions that may affect potential habitat of TEPC species, identify potential habitat and determine species presence within or near the project area. Document the rationale for not identifying potential habitat and determining species presence for TEPC species in the project record.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU03 - Management actions in occupied Proposed or Candidate species habitat should be modified or relocated if the effects of the actions would contribute to a trend toward ESA listing for these species.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU05 - The Forest should cooperate with USFWS and NMFS as appropriate by providing information, data, and assistance for the evaluation of species that are petitioned, or proposed, or candidates to be listed under the ESA, and for evaluation of proposed critical habitat.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU06 - Coordinate with Forest resource specialists to consider TEPC habitat needs when designing and implementing management activities that may affect TEPC species and their habitats.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU08 - Fire Resource advisors should be trained in techniques to mitigate, through avoidance or minimization, adverse effects to TEPC species.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU10 - Land exchanges that would result in a net loss of quality or quantity of habitat for TEPC species should not be considered unless benefits of the exchange outweigh the benefits to those species in the long term.</p>
<p>Guideline: TEGU12 - Where the authority to do so was retained, proposed or existing special use authorizations should be issued, re-issued, or amended upon expiration, only if adverse effects of the</p>

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authorizations on TEPC species can be minimized.
<i>Rangeland Resources</i>
Guideline: RAGU05 - Where rangeland facilities or practices have been identified as potentially contributing to the degradation of water quality, aquatic species, wildlife species of concern, or occupied sensitive or watch plant habitat, facilities and practices causing degradation should be considered for relocation, closure, or changes in management strategy, alteration, or discontinuance.
<i>Recreation and Visitor Services</i>
Objective: REOB01 During fine-scale analyses in areas where recreation facilities are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to degradation of water quality, aquatic species, wildlife species of concern or occupied sensitive or Watch plant habitat, evaluate and document the location of the facilities causing degradation and prioritize opportunities to mitigate effects. (REOB01).
Objective: REOB20 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where recreational trails are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to degradation to other resources, evaluate and document the location of the trail degradation and prioritize opportunities to mitigate effects.
Guideline: REGU07 Where recreation facilities or practices have been identified as potentially contributing to degradation of water quality or aquatic species, wildlife species of concern or occupied sensitive and watch plant habitat, facilities and practices causing degradation should be considered for relocation, closure, changes in management strategy, alteration, or discontinuance.
<i>Lands and Realty</i>
Guideline: LSGU01 - Acquisitions of land and interest in lands should be guided by the following criteria: Priority 1 Acquisitions: (not listed in any order of priority) a) Lands and associated riparian ecosystems on water frontage such as lakes and major streams. b) Critical habitat lands needed for protection of TEPC fish, wildlife, or plant species. c) Other environmentally sensitive lands, such as important wetland and riparian areas. d) Lands needed for the protection of significant historical or cultural resources when these resources are threatened or when management may be enhanced by public ownership. e) Lands that enhance recreation opportunities, public access, and protection of aesthetic values. f) Lands needed for protection and management of administrative and Congressionally designated areas. g) Lands needed to reduce expenses of both the Forest Service and the public in administration and utilization. Consolidation of split estates. h) Lands with water rights that can be used to accomplish purposes for which the National Forest was created, or related resource obligations. Priority 2 Acquisitions: (not listed in any order of priority) a) Key tracts of an ecosystem that are not urgently needed, but will promote more effective management of the ecosystem and will meet specific needs for vegetative management, watershed management, research, public recreation, or other defined management objectives. Generally, these tracts will support consolidation objectives. b) Buffer lands needed for protection of lands acquired for purposes listed above. c) Lands needed to protect resource values by eliminating or reducing fire risks, soil erosion and occupancy trespass. Priority 3 Acquisitions: All other lands desirable for inclusion in the National Forest System.
<i>Locatable Minerals</i>
Objective: MIOB08 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where mine facilities are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to degradation of water quality, aquatic species, wildlife species of concern

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<p>or occupied sensitive or Watch plant habitat, evaluate and document where the contributing mine facilities are and prioritize opportunities to mitigate effects.</p>
<p>Guideline: MIGU11 - Where mine facilities or practices have been identified as potentially contributing to degradation of water quality, aquatic species, wildlife species of concern, or occupied sensitive and watch plant habitat, facilities and practices causing degradation should be considered for relocation, closure, changes in management strategy, alteration, or discontinuance.</p>
<p><i>Travel and Transportation</i></p>
<p>Objective: FROB12 - During fine-scale analyses in areas where roads and facilities are identified as a potential concern or problem contributing to degradation of water quality, aquatic species, wildlife species of concern or occupied sensitive or Watch plant habitat, evaluate and document where the contributing facilities are and prioritize opportunities to mitigate effects.</p>
<p><i>Management Area Direction</i></p>
<p>Management Areas on the Minidoka District: MA-11 – Rock Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-228-237)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1116 - Restore and maintain sagebrush and bitterbrush composition, age class, and canopy cover components (as described in Appendix A) in the Low Sage, Basin Big Sage, and Mountain Big sagebrush vegetation groups, with emphasis on improving wildlife winter ranges and sage grouse habitat near the Forest Service boundary. • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1124 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions. • Rangeland Resources Objective 1141 – When possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat. • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1142 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-12 – Cottonwood Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-238-245)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1215 - Restore shrub composition in the Low Sage, Basin Big Sage, and Mountain Big Sagebrush cover types; with emphasis on improving wildlife winter ranges in areas degraded by increasing juniper cover. • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1225 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore cover conditions. • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1233 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-13 – Trapper Creek/Goose Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-246-255)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1321 - Restore canopy covers to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A, within the Basin Big Sagebrush, Low Sage, and Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation groups where these groups have been altered. • Non-native Plants Objective 1327 - Reduce cheatgrass by restoring native perennial grass/forb composition of plant communities in the Low Sage, Basin Big Sage, Pinyon-Juniper, and Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation groups below 6,000 feet elevation. • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1329 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 1342 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage-grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1344 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-14 – Shoshone Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-256-262)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1048 - Restore and maintain sagebrush and bitterbrush composition, age class, and canopy cover components (as described in Appendix A) in the Low Sage, Basin Big Sage, and Mountain Big sagebrush vegetation groups, with emphasis on improving wildlife winter ranges and sage grouse habitat near the Forest Service boundary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1413 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 1418 – Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage-grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1419 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-15 – Albion Mountains (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-264-271)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1513 - Restore mountain big sagebrush canopy cover to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A, in Robinson Creek headwaters, Big Rocky Creek, Summit Creek, North and South Carson Creeks, Myers Canyon, and Fairchild Creek.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1524 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<p>MA-16 – Howell Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-272-281)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1618 - Restore Mountain Big Sagebrush canopy cover to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A, in Broad Hollow, Brim Canyon, and Cooney Hollow.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1631 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 1644 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1645 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks
<p>MA-17 – Independence Lakes (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-282-289)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1712 - Restore and maintain shrubland communities, particularly the Basin Big Sage vegetation group, as described in Appendix A.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1713 - Restore Mountain Big Sagebrush canopy cover and juniper densities to desired conditions, as described in Appendix A, in the Dry Creek area to address fire hazard.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1725 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore cover conditions.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 1736 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1737 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-18 – Raft River (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-290-299)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1818 - Restore and maintain species composition, productivity, vigor, and canopy cover (as described in Appendix A) of the Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation group in the George Peak, The Meadows, and the Rosevere Point areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Objective 1826 - Restore or maintain sage grouse habitat through shrubland vegetation management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1828 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<p>MA-19 – Black Pine (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-300-309)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1917 - Restore canopy cover, as described in Appendix A, within the Mountain Big Sagebrush and Pinyon-Juniper cover types in the southern and western portions of the management area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 1919 - Evaluate the need for sagebrush re-establishment in the northern portion of the management area that burned in 1999 and 2000.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 1929 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 1933 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 1934 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-20 – Sublett (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-310-317)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 2013 - Restore canopy cover to desired levels (described in Appendix A) within the Basin Big Sagebrush and Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation communities. Restore native perennial grass/forbs composition of plant communities in these same areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 2014 - Restore riparian vegetation along Sublett Creek through management of dispersed recreation and livestock grazing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 2017 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Objective 2025 - Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rangeland Resources Guideline 2026 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.
<p>MA-05 – Little Wood River (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-144-163)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 0532 - Restore structure and species composition in the Alpine Meadows, Dry Meadows, and Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation groups in the Little Wood River and Copper Creek drainages where these groups have been altered due to fire exclusion and permitted and recreational livestock grazing.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 0541 - Management actions in sage-grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage-grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<p><u>Management Areas on the Fairfield District:</u> MA-07 – Little Smokey Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-164-173)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 0720 - Restore the herbaceous component of the Mountain Big Sagebrush communities adjacent to riparian areas in narrow drainages.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 0721 - Restore hydric and woody shrub species composition and density in bottom riparian areas within the Grindstone Creek, Carrie Creek, Worswick Creek, Red Rock Creek, Rosetta Creek, Wood Gulch, Camp Creek, Sawmill Creek, and Cannonball Creek drainages, where vegetation has been altered by livestock grazing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 0727 - Management actions in sage-grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage-grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<p>MA-09 – Lime Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-208-217)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation Objective 0917 - Restore the herbaceous plant ground cover component of the Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation group in the South and North Fork Lime Creek drainages.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Resources Guideline 0924 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.
<p>MA-10 – Soldier Creek/Willow Creek (Sawtooth LRMP, Volume 1 pages III-218-227)</p> <p>Vegetation Objective 1016 - Restore and maintain canopy closures (as described in Appendix A), and restore the herbaceous plant ground cover component of low-elevation benches and slopes within the Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation group to reduce the effects of fire exclusion and livestock use in the Soldier Creek and Willow Creek areas.</p>
<p>Vegetation Objective 1016 - Restore and maintain canopy closures (as described in Appendix A), and restore the herbaceous plant ground cover component of low-elevation benches and slopes within the Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation group to reduce the effects of fire exclusion and livestock use in the Soldier Creek and Willow Creek areas.</p>
<p>Wildlife Resources Guideline 1024 - Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.</p>
<p>Rangeland Resources Guideline 1042 - When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.</p>
<p>Targhee National Forest</p>
<p><i>Vegetation – Rangeland (“non-forested”)</i></p>
<p>Goal: Use vegetation management to achieve a broad array of multiple-use and ecosystem management objectives, including maintenance, improvement, and restoration of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forest health, • scenic viewsheds and corridors, • wildlife habitat effectiveness and quality,

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hazardous fuels reduction,• biological diversity of plant and animal communities, riparian and watershed health and function, vegetation structure, composition, and distribution in larger landscapes
<p>Guideline: Sagebrush/grassland habitats. Within big sagebrush (<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> & varieties)/grassland habitats strive for canopy coverage distributions on a subwatershed basis (generally 2,000 to 6,000 acres in size) of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than five percent of a subwatershed in a less than five percent canopy coverage class.• Seventy-five percent of a subwatershed in a well distributed mosaic of canopy coverage. ranging from 5-30 percent.• Twenty percent of a subwatershed in a greater than 30 percent canopy coverage class.

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