



Bureau of Land Management

Boise District Office
Four Rivers Field Office
3948 Development Ave
Boise, ID 83705
<http://www.id.blm.gov>

Determination of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA) U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management

A. BLM Office: Four Rivers Field Office

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2009-0007-DNA

Lease/Serial Case File No.: IDI-36090, IDI 36103, IDI-36104, IDI-36105

Proposed Action Title/Type: Crane Creek Geothermal Lease Nominations and added adjacent isolated BLM managed parcels.

Location/Legal of Proposed Action: Approximately 12 miles east of Weiser Idaho.
Legal Land Descriptions for:

IDI-36090

T. 11 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian
Sec. 5 – Lots 1-7, S2NE, SENW, E2SW, SE;
Sec. 8 – Lots 1-4, NE, E2W2, N2SE, SWSE;
Sec. 18 – NE, NESW, N2SE, SESE.

1500.85 acres

Washington County, Idaho
Four Rivers Field Office

IDI-36103

T. 11 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian
Sec. 5 – Lots 1-7, S2NE, SENW, E2SW, SE;
Sec. 8 – Lots 1 & 4, N2NE, NENW;
Sec. 17 – Lots 1-4, SENW, E2SW, SE;
Sec. 18 – NE, NESW, N2SE, SESE.

T. 12 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian
Sec. 31 – Lots 1-4, E2, E2W2;
Sec. 32 – All.

T. 11 N., R. 4 W., Boise Meridian
Sec. 2 – Lots 1-2, S2NE, SE;
Sec. 11 – N2NE, SENE, SWSE;
Sec. 13 – N2SW, SWSW, W2SE;

Sec. 14 – SE;
Sec. 23 – E2NE, NWNE;
Sec. 24 – NWNW, NESW, NWSE, SESE;
Sec. 25 – SWNE, SENW, S2.

T. 12 N., R. 4 W., Boise Meridian

Sec. 25 – SESE;
Sec. 26 – SWSE;
Sec. 35 – E2, SENW, NESW.

4815.88 acres

Washington County, Idaho
Four Rivers Field Office

IDI-36104

T. 10 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian

Sec. 3 – Lot 4, SWNE, S2NW, S2;
Sec. 4 – Lots 1-3 & 5-6, S2NE, SENW, S2;
Sec. 5 – Lots 3-7, S2NW, S2;
Sec. 6 – SESW, NESE, S2SE;
Sec. 7 – N2NE, SENE, NENW, NESE;
Sec. 8 – N2, N2S2;
Sec. 9 – NWSW.

T. 11 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian

Sec. 19 – Lot 4, NENE, SESW;
Sec. 20 – N2, SE;
Sec. 28 – Lots 3-4, SESW, SWSE;
Sec. 29 – S2NE, NESE, S2SE;
Sec. 30 – Lots 1-3, E2NW, NESW;
Sec. 31 – Lots 1-4, S2NE;
Sec. 32 – Lots 1-3, N2NE, SW;
Sec. 33 – Lots 1 & 5-8, W2NE, NENW, SE;
Sec. 34 – SWSW, NESE.

4,790.04 acres

Washington County, Idaho
Four Rivers Field Office

IDI-36105

T. 10 N., R. 3 W., Boise Meridian

Sec. 10 – NENE, S2NE, E2NW, NESW, SE;
Sec. 15 – NE, E2SE.

640 acres

Washington County
Four Rivers Field Office

Applicant (if any): The names of nominators for geothermal leases are confidential until the lease is sold. Four nominations were received by the Idaho State Office of the Bureau of Land Management to have selected lands made available for lease.

Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures:

The proposed action is to offer for lease at competitive sale, geothermal leases on the above listed legal land descriptions, as shown in the map labeled Map of Lease Area. The lands are located in the Crane Creek area, east of Weiser, Idaho. The lease sale would be offered in four parcels totaling approximately 11,963 acres, and would take place in February 2010. The added parcels were not nominated by the proponent, but would be included in the nomination for lease sale. These parcels were added to prevent isolated portions of public land that had no lease, but would be surrounded by public lands that were leased. Based on the PEIS and the Idaho Sage-Grouse Management Plan, the following stipulations are recommended in addition to the standard lease terms and conditions:

No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Lease Stipulations

Riparian, Wetland and Floodplain Stipulation:

On water bodies, riparian areas, wetlands, and 100-year floodplains; site specific analysis would be required to determine the 100-year floodplain boundary within this lease.

The 100-year floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas, and perennial stream courses would be closed to any new permanent facilities.

This stipulation may be waived, excepted, or modified by the authorized officer if either the resource values change or the lessee/operator demonstrates that adverse impacts can be mitigated.

Slopes

No Surface Occupancy on slopes in excess of 40 percent and/or erosive soils as defined as severe or very severe erosion classes based on Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) mapping.

Wildlife

Southern Idaho Ground Squirrel NSO: No surface occupancy would be allowed on areas inhabited by Southern Idaho ground squirrels. No populations are currently known within the lease area. Surveys for this species would be required before ground disturbing activities could take place. The surveys would have to occur during March 15 to May 1, when the ground squirrels are active above ground.

Mineral Materials

Within the existing Almaden Community Pit, IDI-34448, recommend NSO. This applies to the following land:

SWNE, SENW, Lots 2 and 3, Section 5, T. 10 N., R. 3 W.
SESW, SWSE, Section 32, T. 11 N., R. 3 W.

Protection of recreational areas

No new permanent facilities on that portion of the Weiser River Trail that is within the proposed parcel IDI-36103, adjacent to the Weiser River in Township 11 North, Range 4 West.

Timing Limitations (TL) and Controlled Surface Use (CSU) Lease Stipulations

Water Resources

No Surface Occupancy would occur within 500 feet of water bodies, riparian areas, wetlands, and 100-year floodplains, or perennial streams, and within 100 feet of inner gorge of intermittent/ephemeral streams unless site-specific analysis determines that no adverse impacts would occur.

Riparian and Wetland habitat includes the presence of riparian vegetation even without surface water being present. Additionally, this includes all springs, even when seasonally non-flowing.

Protection of erosive soils and soils on slopes greater than 30 percent

Best management practices would be required on a site by site basis to protect erosive soils defined as severe or very severe erosion classes based on Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) mapping or slopes greater than 30 percent. The best management practices would include, but not be limited to stockpiling, mulching, and seeding with BLM approved seed and monitoring the seeding for successful germination.

Wildlife

Sage Grouse

Prior to authorization of surface disturbing activities, the area would be surveyed for the presence of active sage-grouse leks within key sage-grouse habitat as shown in the attached map of Key Sage Grouse Habitat. Lekking activity starts in mid-late February, depending on seasonal weather. If active leks are present, defined as being used at least once in a five-year period, the following stipulations would be required:

1) Sage-grouse Leks Timing Limitation (TL): No exploration or drilling activities would be allowed from Feb 15 to May 1 from 1800-0900 hrs within 2 miles (3.2 km) of active sage-grouse leks (Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho, 2006). Additionally, during the exploration and development phases, lek surveys would be conducted each year from

Feb 15 to May 1 prior to any ground disturbing activity to determine if new lek sites have been established. These surveys would be conducted in key sagebrush habitat within the lease parcels, and extend two miles from the lease parcels. This stipulation would not apply to operation and maintenance of production facilities.

2) Sage-grouse Nesting Controlled Surface Use (CSU): No wells, geothermal plants, power lines, pipelines, or other such permanent structures that would fragment or degrade nesting habitat would be permitted within 2 miles of an active sage grouse lek within key sagebrush habitat identified on the Idaho Greater Sage-grouse Habitat Planning map. An active lek is defined as used in at least one of the past five years. If an active sage-grouse lek is identified after the beginning of geothermal activities, there would be no increase in ground-disturbing activities or constructed features beyond what existed when the lek was first identified. This portion of the stipulation (active lek found after onset of activities) does not apply to operation and maintenance of production facilities. This stipulation may be waived or modified by the authorized officer if either the resource values change or the lessee/operator demonstrates that adverse impacts can be mitigated.

Big Game

Crucial Winter Habitat for Elk and Deer TL: No surface use would be allowed during November 1 through March 31 on elk and deer winter range shown on Crucial Winter Habitat for Elk and Deer map. This stipulation does not apply to operation and maintenance of production facilities. This stipulation may be waived or modified by the authorized officer if either the resource values change or the lessee/operator demonstrates that adverse impacts can be mitigated.

Other Lease Stipulations

Surface Thermal Springs or Features

As exploration and development activities commence, the lessee may be required to institute a hydrologic monitoring program commensurate with the level of activity.

Endangered Species Act Stipulation

In accordance with BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-174, the BLM would apply the following stipulation on any leases where threatened, endangered, or other special status species or critical habitat is known or strongly suspected.

The lease area may now or hereafter contain plants, animals, or their habitats determined to be threatened, endangered, or other special status species. BLM may recommend modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that would contribute to a need to list such a species or their habitat. BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat.

BLM would not approve any ground-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act as amended, 16 USC 1531 et seq., including completion of any required procedure for conference or consultation.”

Cultural Resources Stipulation

In accordance with BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2005-003, the BLM would apply the following stipulation to protect cultural resources:

This lease may be found to contain historic properties and/or resources protected under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, E.O. 13007, or other statutes and executive orders. The BLM would not approve any ground disturbing activities that may affect any such properties or resources until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the NHPA and other authorities. The BLM may require modification to exploration or development proposals to protect such properties, or disapprove any activity that is likely to result in adverse effects that cannot be successfully avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Split Estate Stipulation

On split estate lands, lessee is responsible for making a good faith effort to reach access arrangements with the surface owner of such lands prior to entry upon the lands. Lessee must certify to the BLM that a good faith effort was made to reach a surface use agreement with the surface owner. If good faith efforts to obtain a surface use agreement fail, lessee must submit a Damages Bond (minimum \$1,000) to the BLM for the benefit of the surface owner to cover loss or damages to crops or tangible improvements.

Recommended Lease Notices

Sensitive species

The proposed parcels occur within the range of the Southern Idaho Ground Squirrel (SIDGS), a candidate species, and the Greater Sage Grouse, a sensitive species. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service are currently reviewing the status of the sage grouse for listing as threatened or endangered. If sage grouse are later listed as threatened or endangered, consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service would be required before any ground disturbing activity can be allowed.

Sensitive animal species that may exist within the proposed lease area include, but are not limited to: sage and sharp-tailed grouse, northern leopard frog, mountain quail, prairie falcon, ferruginous hawk, loggerhead shrike, sage sparrow, Brewer’s sparrows, long-nosed snake, and the common garter snake. Suitable habitat exists or may exist for the above sensitive species. Additional site specific surveys may be required prior to any ground disturbing activity.

The lease may, in part or in total, contain important greater sage-grouse habitat as identified by the BLM, either currently or prospectively. The operator may be required to implement specific measures to reduce impacts of geothermal operations on the greater sage-grouse populations and habitat quality. Such measures shall be developed during the Geothermal Drilling Permit (GDP) environmental review process and would be consistent with the lease rights granted.

Three sensitive plant species are known to exist in the area. They are packers desert parsley, *Lomatium packardiae* (Type 2), squaw apple, *Pyrrocoma radiata* (Type 3), and Snake River goldenweed, *Perraphyllum ramossimum* (Type 3). Suitable habitat exists or may exist for the three sensitive plant species, therefore additional site specific surveys would be required prior to any ground disturbing activity.

Paleontological and Cultural Resources

Before any specific permits are issued under leases, treatment of cultural resources would follow the procedures established by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A pedestrian inventory would be undertaken of all portions that have not been previously surveyed or are identified by BLM as requiring inventory to identify properties that are eligible for the NRHP. Those sites not already evaluated for NRHP eligibility would be evaluated based on surface remains, subsurface testing, archival, and/or ethnographic sources. Subsurface testing would be kept to a minimum whenever possible if sufficient information is available to evaluate the site or if avoidance is an expected mitigation outcome. Recommendations regarding the eligibility of sites would be submitted to the BLM, and a treatment plan would be prepared to detail methods for avoidance of impacts or mitigation of effects. The BLM would make determinations of eligibility and effect and consult with SHPO as necessary based on each proposed lease application and project plans. The BLM may require modification to exploration or development proposals to protect such properties, or disapprove any activity that is likely to result in adverse effects that cannot be successfully avoided, minimized or mitigated. Avoidance of impacts through project design would be given priority over data recovery as the preferred mitigation measure. Avoidance measures include moving project elements away from site locations or to areas of previous impacts, restricting travel to existing roads, and maintaining barriers and signs in areas of cultural sensitivity. Any data recovery would be preceded by approval of a detailed research design, Native American Consultation, and other requirements for BLM issuance of a permit under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (BLM 2007a).

If cultural resources are present at the site, or if areas with a high potential to contain cultural material have been identified, a cultural resources management plan (CRMP) would be developed. This plan would address mitigation activities to be taken for cultural resources found at the site. Avoidance of the area is always the preferred mitigation option. Other mitigation options include archaeological survey and excavation (as warranted) and monitoring. If an area exhibits a high potential, but no artifacts were observed during an archaeological survey, monitoring by a qualified archaeologist could be required during all excavation and earthmoving in the high potential area. A report would be prepared documenting these activities. The CRMP also would (1) establish a monitoring program, (2) identify measures to prevent potential

looting/vandalism or erosion impacts, and (3) address the education of workers and the public to make them aware of the consequences of unauthorized collection of artifacts and destruction of property on public land (BLM 2005).

Operators would determine whether paleontological resources exist in a project area on the basis of the sedimentary context of the area, a records search for past paleontological finds in the area, and/or, depending on the extent of existing information, a paleontological survey.

If paleontological resources are present at the site, or if areas with a high potential to contain paleontological material have been identified, a paleontological resources management plan would be developed. This plan would include a mitigation plan for avoidance, removal of fossils, or monitoring. If an area exhibits a high potential but no fossils were observed during survey, monitoring by a qualified paleontologist may be required during excavation and earthmoving in the sensitive area. The operator would submit a report to the agency documenting these activities. The paleontological resources management plan also would (1) establish a monitoring program, (2) identify measures to prevent potential looting/vandalism or erosion impacts, and (3) address the education of workers and the public to make them aware of the consequences of unauthorized collection of fossils on public land.

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans

LUP/Document¹	Sections/Pages	Date Approved
Cascade Resource Management Plan (RMP), as amended	Section 2, pg. 2-50	July 1, 1988

¹List applicable LUPs (e.g., Resource Management Plans, Management Framework Plans, or applicable amendments) and activity, project, management, water quality restoration, or program plans.

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions: Cascade Resource Management Plan (RMP), signed July 1, 1988. Page 2-50, under the heading Geothermal, the LUP states:

“Make 456,281 acres (94% of area) available for locatable exploration and development and 456,289 acres (94% of area) for leasable mineral exploration and development.”

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action. List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

NEPA/Other Related Documents	Sections/Pages	Date Approved
Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States	Entire document	December 17, 2008

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

- 1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

Yes. The proposed action is the same as that analyzed in the PEIS Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States, pages 2-1 through 2-32 of Volume I. The PEIS amended the Cascade RMP, and provides a more current analysis than that of the Cascade RMP EIS.

- 2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances?**

Yes. The PEIS for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States analyzed three alternatives (Alternative A - No Action, Alternative B - Proposed Action, and Alternative C - Leasing Near Transmission Lines), of which Alternative B was the preferred alternative that was selected for the PEIS. A description of Alternative B is given starting on page 2-1 of Volume I of the PEIS. Because no ground disturbing activity is authorized, the range of alternatives analyzed is appropriate.

- 3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (e.g., riparian proper functioning condition reports; rangeland health standards assessments; inventory and monitoring data; most recent USFWS lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

Yes. There have been no new issues have been identified since the PEIS was signed in December, 2008, for the area identified. Clearance reports submitted by resource staff identified several issues that bear discussion in this document. These issues include key sage-grouse habitat, crucial winter range for deer and elk, the Southern Idaho ground squirrel, as well as several sensitive species that are known to inhabit the area. Specific stipulations have been added in Section A above to address these issues.

- 4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes, results of the lease sale would not result in any direct or indirect effects that were not analyzed in the PEIS. While no ground disturbing activity would be authorized by the lease

sale, it is anticipated that activities associated with geothermal energy could occur as a result of the lease sale. Any activity associated with the lease would be analyzed separately as the activities are proposed.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current Proposed Action?

Yes. The PEIS was made available for public scoping and comment. The PEIS for Geothermal Leasing was announced in the Federal Register June 13, 2007. Public input was solicited through several avenues, including public meetings in the 11 affected western states and Alaska. These meetings were advertised through newspaper notices, a website devoted to the PEIS, project newsletter with a mailing list of approximately 1,600 recipients, electronic mail as well as newspaper articles and trade publications. There were approximately 175 attendees at the scoping meetings who provided 101 verbal comments at these meetings. Written comments were also received, 79 in various forms were received and cataloged. Table 6-1, which starts on page 6-13, provides a list of entities sent a consultation invitation letter.

E. Persons/Agencies /BLM Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Resource/Agency Represented
Matthew McCoy	NEPA Specialist	Boise District BLM
Karen Porter	Leasable Minerals Geologist	Idaho State Office BLM
Rebecca Lange	Geologist, Fluid Minerals	Idaho State Office BLM
Michael O'Donnell	Field Office Manager	Four Rivers Field Office
Mark Steiger	Botanist	Four Rivers Field Office
Dean Shaw	Archaeologist	Four Rivers Field Office
Michael Borkoski	Realty Specialist	Four Rivers Field Office
Larry Ridenhour	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Four Rivers Field Office
Helen Ulmschneider	Wildlife Biologist	Four Rivers Field Office
Forrest Griggs	Geologist	Four Rivers Field Office
Brandon Knapton	Resource Coordinator	Boise District BLM

Note: Refer to the PEIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

F. Mitigation Measures: List any applicable mitigation measures that were identified, analyzed, and approved in relevant LUPs and existing NEPA document(s). List the specific mitigation measures or identify an attachment that includes those specific mitigation measures. Document that these applicable mitigation measures have been incorporated and implemented.

No mitigation measures beyond the stipulations and recommended lease notices were identified.

G. Conclusion (If you found that one or more of these criteria is not met, you will not be able to check this box.)

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/s/ Forrest Griggs

12/23/09

Preparer

Date

/s/ Matthew McCoy

12/23/09

NEPA Specialist

Date

/s/ David Wolf ADM

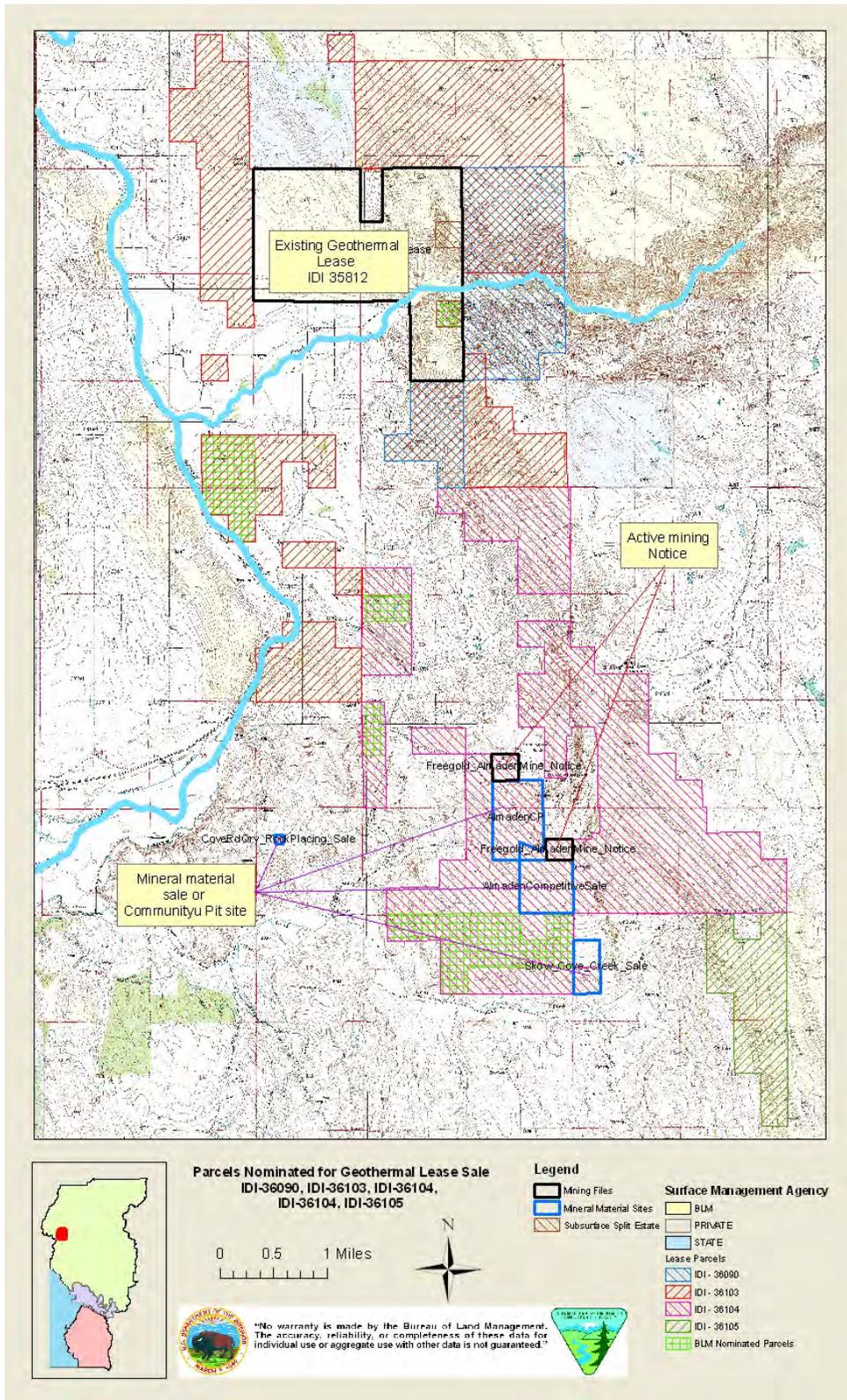
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Acting
Four Rivers Field Manager

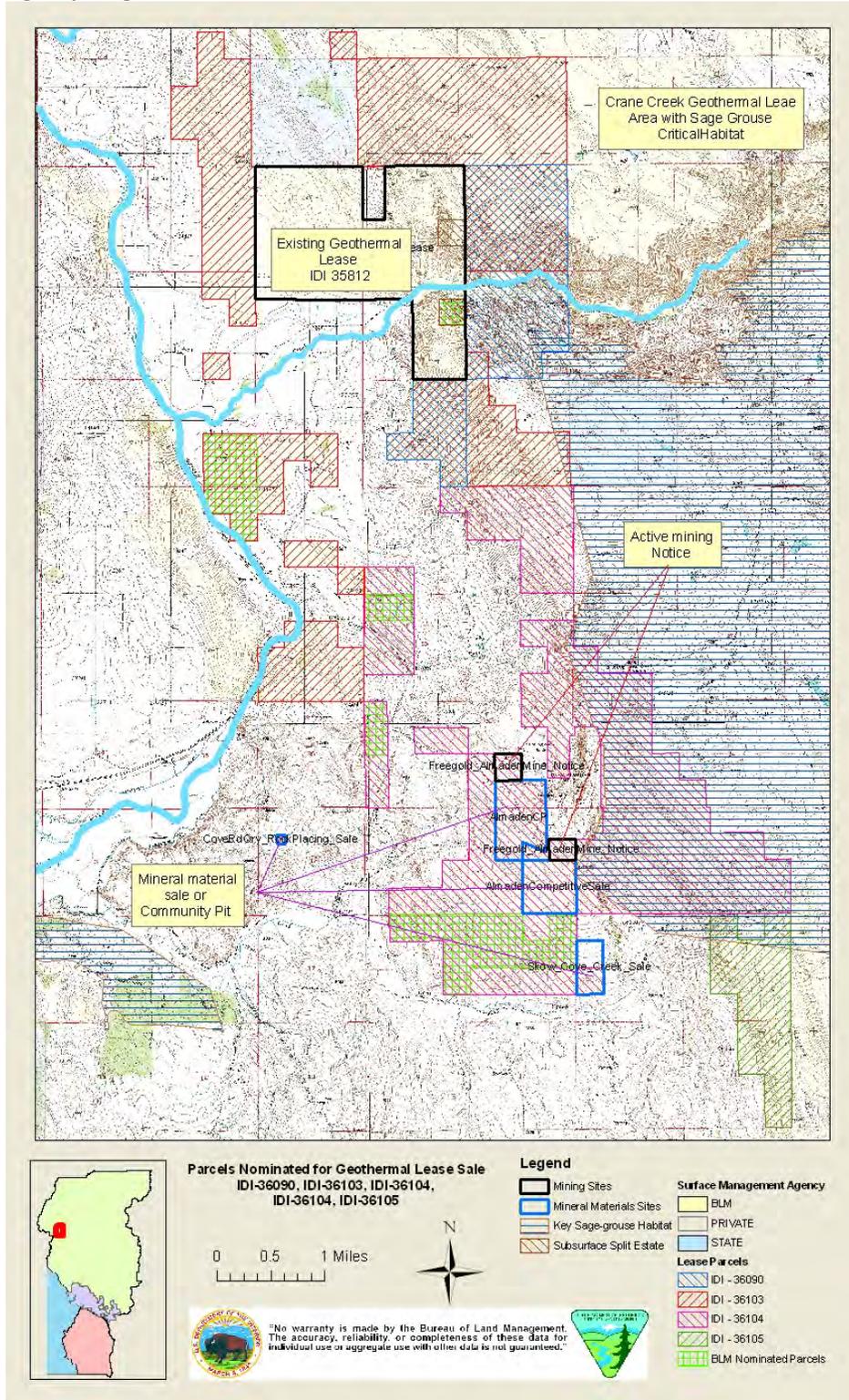
Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.

Map of Lease area.



Map showing key Sage Grouse Habitat.



Map showing crucial and critical Elk and Deer winter habitat.

