

# United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

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Environmental Assessment  
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## Curlew/Deep Creek Travel Management Plan

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## CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION

### Background

The project area for the Curlew/Deep Creek Travel Management Plan (here after is referred as the CDCTMP), includes approximately 371,290 acres of public lands administered in the western portion of the Pocatello Field Office (PFO), Idaho Falls District, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

A comprehensive route inventory was conducted in 2011 for this travel plan which consisted of identifying all potential road and trails (routes), approximately 1,003 miles, available for motorized and non-motorized travel as a baseline to make recommendations for route designations. The inventory identified four different components of the transportation system which included; (1) routes identified as main motorized travel routes; (2) linear features built for specific purposes; (3) routes created by other entities not intended to be part of the transportation system, and (4) trails identified solely for non-motorized use (hiking, bicycle, equestrian), although there were no non-motorized routes detected in the inventory.

Component (1) – are main travel routes that the public use to navigate around the planning area which include BLM roads, county roads, State Highways, etc.

Figure 1 is an example of a maintained county road that is a main route in the transportation system. These types of routes would all be designated in the travel planning area because they are the main traveled routes throughout the transportation system.



**Figure 1. Image of a graveled main county road.**

Figure 2 is an example of a BLM route located throughout the travel planning area. These types of routes are used as main travel routes and are recommended for route designation within the travel plan.



**Figure 2. Image of a BLM road.**

Component (2) – are linear features where authorized surface disturbances have occurred from the construction of communication towers with an access route, fire lines built by dozers to contain the spread of wildland fires, the construction of power lines, construction of pipelines, the construction of range improvements, such as cattle troughs, and the construction of fences to contain cattle within allotments.

Figure 3 is an example of constructed communication tower with access road. Communication sites are an

example of an authorized use under a right-of-way and often the public uses these routes for accessing hunting opportunities. Some right-of-ways have public access and some don't. An authorized travel variance would be required for motorized travel on all non-designated routes.

Figure 4 is an example of a linear feature dozer line built in 2007 Mitchell Fire as a fire break. The dozed line was never intended to be part of the transportation system and rehabilitation efforts to restore the fire break line were not successful because motorized travel occurred on the fire break from over time. These types of linear features are not recommended for route designation in the travel plan.

Figure 5 is an example of a linear feature of a dozer line built in the 2007 Mitchell Fire with successful rehabilitation efforts by putting in water bars. The dozed line rehabilitation efforts were successful because motorized travel did not occur over time.

Figure 6 is an example of a linear feature of a power line access road. This type of linear feature was authorized under a right-of-way. These types of linear features were built for the construction and maintenance of the power lines.

Figure 7 is an example of a linear feature of a pipeline. This type of linear feature was authorized under a right-of-way. These types of linear features were built for the construction of the pipeline. Pipelines routes were generally not intended to be part of the transportation system and are often not recommended for route designation in the travel plan.

Figure 8 is an example of a linear feature of fence line. This type of linear feature is authorized under a cooperative agreement with permittees that graze cattle on BLM. These types of linear features constructed were generally not intended to be part of the transportation system and are often not recommended for route designation in the travel plan.



**Figure 3. Image of a communication tower.**



**Figure 4. Image of the 2007 Mitchell Fire dozer line not successful rehab efforts.**



**Figure 5. Image of the successful rehab efforts of 2007 Mitchell Fire dozer line.**

Component (3) – are other routes that were not intended to be part of the transportation system. Other types of routes within the inventory consisted of user created routes along ridgelines, routes created from game/cow trailing, authorized logging roads which were closed to the general public during and after harvest, and access to private lands that are physically blocked with either locked gates, barriers, or marked with “No Trespassing” signs.

Figure 9 is an example of a user created ridgeline route. These types of other routes were never intended to be part of the transportation system. Ridgeline routes are generally not recommended for route designations within the travel plan.

Figure 10 is an example of routes created by game and/or cow trails. There are numerous game/cow trails located throughout the travel planning area where motorized travel occurs on them. These types of routes were never intended to be part of the transportation system and are not recommended for route designation within the travel plan.

Figure 11 is an example of an authorized logging road built to harvest trees out of a cutting area. These types of routes were often closed to the public during and after harvest and not part of the transportation system. These types of other routes are often not recommended for route designation within the travel plan.

Figure 12 is an example of a route that ends at a private land inholding in the transportation system. Often there are routes located on public lands behind private lands which can only be access through the private land inholding. These routes are not accessible to the public because private land owners have signed “No Trespassing” and/or physically blocked the access. Routes closed behind signed private lands were not recommended for designation.

Component (4) – are non-motorized routes that accommodate hiking, biking, horseback riding, etc. There were no non-motorized routes detected in the inventory.



**Figure 6. Image of a power line access road.**



**Figure 7. Image of a pipeline route.**



**Figure 8. Image of a fence line.**

The route inventory also captured numerous redundant routes leading to the same place. The inventory was conducted using aerial images, Global Position System data loggers and cameras, Geographical Information System software, and topographical maps. The administrative record contains the inventory notes, maps, and photographs.

Until travel management planning/route designation is completed, travel on the public lands in the CDCTMP travel planning area is managed by the following manner: “Prohibit cross-country travel for motorized vehicles and limit motorized travel to existing roads routes in areas where no designated routes have been established” as identified on the 2012 Pocatello Resource Management Plan (RMP).

This travel management planning effort moves the PFO toward a rational network of designated motorized travel routes, which is required to provide reasonable and varied transportation routes for motorized travel on public lands, while reducing user conflicts and limiting impacts to important natural and cultural resources. In the long-term, a travel management plan will provide the foundation to prevent unnecessary closures or restrictions stemming from preventable resource damage. And it will all reduce user conflicts and will, therefore, protect rather than inhibit motorized travel on public lands.

The development and approval of a travel management plan constitutes a federal action subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The travel plan complies with CFR 8342.1, and uses the Designation Criteria found therein as the minimum set of criteria. The travel planning process and decision are consistent with Executive Order 11644, as amended. The EO sets forth direction to protect the resources, promote the safety of all users and minimize conflicts among the various uses of those lands. In the preparation of this Environmental Assessment (EA), the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives have been analyzed. Preparation of the document has been in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 1500 et. seq.),



**Figure 9. Image of a ridgeline route.**



**Figure 10. Image of a logging trail.**



**Figure 11. Image of a livestock trail.**

BLM guidelines for land use planning in BLM Handbook H-1601-1, BLM guidelines for implementing NEPA in BLM Handbook H-1790-1, and the Idaho Falls District Guide for Implementing NEPA (IM-ID-300-09-004).

Travel management planning is not intended to address the validity of any R.S. 2477 assertions. *The Travel and Transportation Management Handbook, BLM Handbook h-8342-1, 2011 states: "A travel management plan is not intended to provide evidence bearing on or addressing the validity of any R.S. 2477 assertions. R.S. 2477 rights are determined through a process that is entirely independent of the BLM's planning process.*

*Consequently, travel management planning should not take into consideration R.S. 2477 assertions or evidence. Travel management planning should be founded on an independently determined purpose and need that is based on resource uses and associated access to public lands and waters. At such time as a decision is made on R.S. 2477 assertions, the BLM will adjust its travel routes accordingly."*



**Figure 12. "No Trespassing" sign on private land.**

### **Purpose and Need for Action**

The purpose of this travel management plan is to create an appropriate system of routes that are logical and sustainable for wheeled motorized travel and the use of Over Snow Vehicles (OSV) and meet increasingly diverse transportation, access and recreational needs of the public. The CDCTMP is needed in order for the BLM to comply with the agency's national direction of travel management in light of increasing motorized use and demand while; (a) protecting wildlife resources such as sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat, and winter habitat, big game winter range; (b) reducing impacts to soils, water, vegetation, or other resource values; (c) satisfying the public need for recreation, access, and safety; and (d) facilitating the multiple-use management of BLM resources and programs.

### **Location**

The eastern boundary line of the travel planning area generally runs along Interstate 15 starting from the intersection of Interstates 15/86 south to the Utah border. The southern boundary line runs along the Utah/Idaho border from Interstate 15 west to the Burley Field Office Boundary near the Black Pine Mountains. The western boundary line runs approximately from Interstate 86 along the Pocatello and Burley Field Office boundaries (Sublette Range) south to the Utah/Idaho border. The northern boundary line runs east/west along the Snake River from the American Falls Reservoir west to the Coldwater Hill area.

### **Conformance with the Applicable Land Use Plan**

The No Action Alternative, the Preliminary Proposed action, and action alternatives are in conformance with the Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management (TM) management

direction in the approved Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012), The current management direction for the travel plan is as follows:

**Goal TM-1: Establish a comprehensive approach to travel planning and management.**

**Objective TM-1.1.** Provide on-the-ground travel management operations and maintenance programs to sustain and enhance recreation opportunities and experiences, visitor access and safety, and resource conservation, pg. ARMP -135.

**Action TM-1.1.5.** Travel management plans will consider the following criteria in designating routes and uses:

- Environmental conditions
- User conflicts
- Administrative purposes
- Public purposes
- Route, vehicle type and size limitations

**Objective TM-1.2.** Designate all public lands in the planning area as Open, Limited, or Closed (Figure 18), pg. ARMP - 135, ARMP - 136, & ARMP - 139.

**Action TM -1.2.5.** Until travel management planning/route designation is completed, travel will be managed in the following manner:

1. Limit motorized/mechanized travel to establish designated routes in the Chinese Peak/Blackrock area.
2. Continue to recognize and implement existing seasonal closures.
3. Continue to recognize and implement site specific closures for WSA's, ACEC's, and RNA's.
4. Prohibit cross-country travel for motorized vehicles.
5. Limit motorized travel to existing routes in areas where no designated routes have been established.
6. Limit mechanized travel to existing routes within SRMAs and WSAs.
7. Recognize existing routes that can be identified on:
  - Most current Digital Ortho Quads (DOQs) as of 2004
  - 2004 National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP) digital color aerial photos.
  - Most current existing US Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps as of January 1, 2005.

**Action TM -1.2.6.** For the development of travel management plans, baseline and/or preliminary road/trail networks will be identified using any one of the following available sources:

- Most current existing DOQs as of 2004,
- 2004 NAIP digital color aerial photos,
- Most current existing USGS topographical maps as of January 1, 2005.

**Action TM -1.2.7.** During travel management planning, provide intensive use areas for valid motorized activities (e.g., rock crawling, motocross riding) by designating appropriate routes for

these activities in front country or rural settings. These areas will not exceed a “footprint” larger than 80 acres.

Routes may be designated during travel management planning only if they are consistent with the following criteria:

- Area is suitable for intensive OHV use,
- No compelling resource issues or protection needs, as identified through the NEPA process,
- No user conflicts or public safety issues to warrant restricting intensive use.

**Action TM -1.2.8.** Cross country travel using motorized vehicles is not allowed. Once travel management plans have been completed, motorized travel will be restricted to designated routes, travel on routes that have not been recognized as a designated route is not allowed.

Authorized/permitted activities may have allowances for travel off designated routes if it is obtained in writing from the authorized officer in the form of a letter or specifically stipulated or identified in the terms and conditions of the permit/authorization.

Activities such as wildland fire suppression and emergency services will not be limited to designated routes. Other activities related to public health and safety or cadastral survey may be exempt with approval of the authorized officer.

**Action TM -1.2.9.** Organized events will be compliant with established OHV designations and will be consistent with other resources and uses.

**Action TM -1.2.10.** Snowmobiling (including OSVs) will be managed with the following area restrictions: (Figure 18):

- WSAs - Not allowed
- ACECs - Not allowed
- RNAs - Not allowed
- Pocatello SRMA - Not allowed
- Soda Springs Hills Management Area - Not allowed
- Big Game Winter Range - Limited to designated routes
- All other areas - Allowed Without Restriction

### **Relationship to Statutes, Regulations or Other Plans**

The travel plan is consistent with CFR 8342.1, and uses the Designation Criteria found therein as the minimum set of criteria. The travel plan is also consistent with section 202(9) of the Federal Land Management and Policy Act (P.L. 94-579), as amended, states that “...to the extent consistent with the laws governing the administration of the public lands,... assure that consideration is given to those State, local, and tribal plans that are germane in the development of land use plans for public lands...” Section 102(8) of the FLPMA, as amended, further states: “It is the policy... that... the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic... ecological, environmental... values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition;... and that will provide for outdoor recreation...”

The selected travel management plan would be consistent with Executive Order (EO)11644 (1972) as amended by EO 11989 (1977), which directs Federal land managers to immediately close areas or trails to off-road vehicles whenever the land manager determines that “the use of the off-road vehicle will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on the soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitats or cultural or historic resources of particular areas or trails until such adverse effects have been eliminated and that measures have been implemented to prevent further recurrence.”

The authority for the Travel Management Plan designations is provided in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Designations of areas and trails open, closed, or limited to motorized use is required and authorized under 43 CFR §8342 - Designation of Areas and Trails. These designations would be effective upon issuance of the Record of Decision. The designation of areas open, closed, or limited for motorized travel or conditions of use, is authorized under 43 CFR§ 8364.1. Closure and restriction orders are described under 43 CFR§ 8365.1-6 Supplementary Rules. Designations under 43 CFR §8364.1 and 43 CFR §8365.1-6 require publication in the Federal Register and local media and are not effective until such publication.

The Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 (15 Stat. 673) specifically reserves the right of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to hunt, fish, and gather natural resources located on unoccupied lands of the United States, including lands managed by the BLM-Pocatello Field Office. The BLM has a Federal trust responsibility to honor treaty rights and to make land management decisions that take treaty rights, treaty resources and other tribal interests into consideration. Part of the Federal trust responsibility entails conducting government-to-government consultation with Indian groups when a project has the potential to impact the exercise of treaty reserved rights. The BLM-Pocatello Field Office met with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe on February 20, 2013 at the Pocatello Field Office and discussions were held about the BLMs travel management planning efforts regarding this EA.

The BLM-Washington Office IM-2012-43 sage-grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures: “provides interim conservation policies and procedures to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) field officials to be applied to ongoing and proposed authorizations and activities that affect the sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) and its habitat. This direction ensures that interim conservation policies and procedures are implemented when field offices authorize or carry out activities on public land while the BLM develops and decides how to best incorporate long-term conservation measures for sage-grouse into applicable land use plans (LUP). This direction promotes sustainable sage-grouse populations and conservation of its habitat while not closing any future options before the planning process can be completed.”

**Policy/Action:** As summarized in the BLM’s National Strategy, emphasis for protecting and managing sage-grouse habitat incorporates the following principles:

1. Protection of unfragmented habitats;
2. Minimization of habitat loss and fragmentation; and
3. Management of habitats to maintain, enhance, or restore conditions that meet a sage-grouse life history needs.

Interim Conservation Policies and Procedures for “Preliminary Priority Habitat” Through these policies and procedures, you should seek to maintain, enhance, or restore conditions for sage-grouse and its habitat. These policies and procedures apply to PPH only. Separate policies and procedures for PGH are provided in Section II of this IM.

## **Travel Management**

### **Ongoing Authorizations/Activities**

- Evaluate authorizations and use and implement seasonal road/primitive road/trail restrictions if continued use would result in habitat alterations or other physical disturbances that impair life history functions of the sage-grouse, such as breeding, brood-rearing, migration patterns, or winter survival, as appropriate.
- Place a high priority on closing and reclaiming unauthorized motor vehicle routes.
- Limit and enforce motorized vehicle use to existing or designated roads, primitive roads, and trails and seasons of use to prevent habitat loss or other physical disturbance that impair life history functions of the sage-grouse, such as breeding, migration patterns, or winter survival.

### **Proposed Authorizations/Activities**

- Route construction should be limited to realignments of existing or designated routes to enhance other resources only if that realignment conserves or enhances sage-grouse habitat. Use existing roads, or realignments as described above, to access valid existing rights that are not yet developed. If valid existing rights cannot be accessed via existing roads, then any new road constructed will be built to the absolute minimum standard necessary. No improvement to existing routes will occur that would change route category (i.e., road, primitive road, or trail) or enhance capacity.

### **Other Laws, Regulations, Policies & Program Guidance**

- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2006-173, *Implementation of Roads and Trails Terminology Report*.
- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2008-174, *Road Maintenance Agreements*.
- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2008-091, *Guidance for Signing When Implementing Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Planning*.
- BLM Instruction memorandum 2007-030, *Clarification of Cultural Resource Considerations for Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Designation and Travel Management*.
- BLM Handbook H-8342-1, 2011, *Travel and Transportation Management Handbook*.
- BLM Manual 1626, 2011, *Travel and Transportation Manual*.

## **Scoping, Issues, and Decision to be Made**

### **Scoping**

The PFO initiated the travel management planning process by issuing a press release on May 21, 2012 to local and regional newspapers inviting the public to participate in the development of the

EA by providing written comments. The Idaho State Journal published an article on May 22, 2012, “BLM to host four public meetings on travel plan” and the Idaho Enterprise published an article on May 24, 2012, “Public input wanted on BLM roads and trails in Oneida County; meeting here on Wednesday, May 30.” Local News 8 reported a televised story on May 31, 2012, “BLM Creating Travel Plan for Deep Creek, Curlew.” The Idaho State Journal published another story on Monday, June 4, 2012, “Hearings start on trail-use proposals” and on August 9, 2012, “BLM studies trail network, Agency seeks public input.”

In conjunction with the press release, a mailing list was developed that included state and federal agencies, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, county commissioners, Mayors, non-governmental organizations, users groups, grazing associations, and organizations that might have a vested interest in the CDCTMP. A scoping letter was sent to 37 different interested parties on May 21, 2012.

The press release and scoping letter offered the public two ways to participate in the scoping process. They could attend one of four public scoping meetings or provide input online at [http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/pocatello/travel\\_management.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/pocatello/travel_management.html). The 90-day scoping period started on May 31, 2012 and ended on August 31, 2012. The website provided an opportunity for the public to comment if they could not attend one of the scheduled scoping meetings identified below.

The four scoping meetings were held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the following locations from: the BLM-PFO conference room, Pocatello Idaho on May 29; the Malad Senior Citizen Center, Malad, Idaho on May 30, 2012; the Snowville Town Hall, Snowville, Utah on May 30, 2012; and the American Falls Public Library, American Falls, Idaho on May 31, 2012.

The Field Manager and staff met with County Commissioners from Bannock, Power, Oneida, and Cassia Counties prior to the scoping meetings to provide a briefing of the project and inform them of the scoping meetings.

At the meetings, the PFO presented large 3’ x 4’ maps of the baseline 2011 inventory and the Preliminary Proposed Action (PPA). The PPA was created to initiate public scoping comments during the travel management planning scoping efforts. The PFO also provided 11” X 17” maps of the PPA and commenting forms for the public.

At the meetings, the PFO asked participants to consider the following criteria when making written comments:

1. Preliminary resource concerns such as impacts to visual resources, vegetation, soils, range, wildlife, etc.
2. Access issues across private lands
3. Redundant roads and trails
4. Areas that require additional protection to help preserve natural resources
5. Areas that could be further developed to increase recreational opportunities
6. Routes that are missing from the data
7. Existing roads where public safety is a concern

The public were given the option of either presenting written comments at the meetings or mailing comments prior to the conclusion of the comment period.

Two additional public scoping meetings were held as requested from the public to address issues and concerns regarding the CDCTMP. The meetings were held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m at the following locations: (1) the Arbon Vally School, Arbon, Idaho on July 25, 2012 and (2) the Rockland City Hall, Rockland, Idaho on August 20, 2012.

### **Scoping Comments**

The PFO received 37 individual comment letters expressing issues and concerns of the travel planning effort throughout the scoping period. Eleven letters were received which were identical and each signed by a different individual. The PFO considered it one comment.

Comments received were reviewed by the Pocatello Field Office Manager and the Idaho Falls District Planning and Environmental Coordinator for Planning. Each was tasked with identifying substantive comments and potential issues and concerns.

Substantive comments were identified by answering the question, does the comment:

- Have a reasonable basis and accuracy of information?
- Have a reasonable basis, adequacy, methodology for, or assumptions for environmental analysis?
- Present information relevant to the analysis?
- Present reasonable alternatives?

Potential issues were identified based upon the following criteria:

- Effects approach or exceed standards or a threshold
- Effects substantially change a resource
- Controversy exists over the effects
- Opportunities for a wide range of effects

Disagreement about environmental effects of the proposed action

Comments, associated data and/or information identified as substantive or identifying a potential issue were entered into an access database for tracking and sorting purposes. Codes were then used to identify specific topic areas for each comment.

The codes are as following:

Code	Description
1	Purpose and Need
2	Issue/Concern
3	Management Action – Alternative Component
4	Specific Route Information

- 5 Affected Environment
- 6 Environmental Analysis – Direct/Indirect/ Cumulative
- 7 Outside of Scope
- 8 Comment Noted
- 9 NEPA Process

After review of the comments, 22 different topic areas became evident as potential issues, coded as #2, to potentially be addressed through the travel management planning effort.

The areas identified were:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. sage-grouse and habitat        | 13. Coordinate route designations w/ USFS       |
| 2. Wildlife migration corridors   | 14. State Trust Lands                           |
| 3. Loop trails                    | 15. User expansion of roads and trails          |
| 4. Wildlife/Big game habitat      | 16. Quiet recreation opportunities              |
| 5. Special Status Species         | 17. Ecological basis for TMP                    |
| 6. Clean water                    | 18. Separate and vehicle specific trail systems |
| 7. Increase in human caused fires | 19. Restricted access across private lands      |
| 8. Invasive species/noxious weeds | 20. Trespass on private lands                   |
| 9. Redundant routes               | 21. Land locked public lands                    |
| 10. Motorized travel              | 22. Pioneer trails                              |
| 11. No more roads                 |   |
| 12. “Access Yes” program          |   |

### Issues

Issues identified by the public were presented to the Pocatello Field Office’s Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) on October 29, 2012. The IDT was directed to review the comment database to gain a better understanding of the comments and the issues identified. On Nov 5, 2012, the IDT met to discuss and identified any additional issues.

The team also identified seven additional internal team issues to consider in this CDCTMP which included:

- 1. Access to existing range improvements/existing authorizations
- 2. Reducing the number of motorized routes
- 3. Roads for fire suppression
- 4. Bannock County’s resolution for public lands access
- 5. Opportunity to acquire access
- 6. Potential routes designated motorized/non-motorized
- 7. Tribal Treaty Rights & Interests /Ceded Lands

Of the 29 issues identified, 22 external and 7 internal, several were found to be similar while others were considered to be opposing with other identified issues. The IDT grouped the issues based upon similarities in how they believed the 29 various issues could be addressed. The IDT

used a variety of ideas in grouping the issues. Examples of how the IDT initially grouped the issues included using relationships such as: natural resources, resource uses, access/access routes, more or less motorized roads, habitat fragmentation, motorized road density, recreational, environmental/social conservation/habitat/wildlife, resource protection, resource damage/affects, access to/from public lands or administrative/exceptions.

Each IDT member's grouping was captured on a flip chart resulting initially in the identification of 20 different groups. As each team member described their rationale for combining issues, it became apparent there was agreement among the team in how certain issues were consistently grouped together. After more discussion, the team combined the 20 groupings into 7 groups:

The grouping of the 20 groups to 7 is as follows:

1. Conservation/reduced roads/restrictions
2. Utilization/increase roads
3. Compromise/give-take
4. Environmental
5. Social/recreational opportunities
6. Resources protected
7. Access oriented

Discussing these seven groups, the IDT agreed they could be further refined into two distinct groups. Group C comprised of groups 1, 4, and 6 and Group D comprised of groups 2, 3, 5, and 7. These two final groupings resulted in the identification of two action alternatives to be addressed in the CDCTMP with the No Action – Alternative A and the Preliminary Proposed Action – Alternative B. Each alternative described in this EA will address the issues raised through public scoping while meeting the purpose and need statement for this TMP effort.

### **Decision to be Made**

The Field Manager is the authorized officer responsible for the decisions regarding management of public lands within the CDCTMP. Based on the results of the NEPA analysis, the authorized officer will issue a determination of the significance of the environmental effects and whether an environmental impact statement (EIS) would be required. If the authorized officer determines that it is not necessary to prepare an EIS, the EA will provide information for the authorized officer to make an informed decision regarding what management actions will be needed to protect the resources while accommodating motorized travel for the travel management planning area.

## **CHAPTER 2 –ALTERNATIVES**

In order to develop the alternatives, the IDT compared the distribution of existing routes with various natural resource data layers in GIS created from the baseline comprehensive 2011 inventory.

These resource data layers included, but are not limited to:

1. Fisheries habitat, streams, and riparian areas
2. Cultural Resources/Historic Trails
3. Steep slopes and erodible soils
4. BLM Idaho Special Status Fish
5. BLM Idaho Special Status Plants and Special Status Animals

Areas of overlap between existing routes and natural resource distributions provided the IDT with an idea of which routes were most likely to create adverse environmental impacts.

Environmental impacts associated with the use of individual routes were weighed against the perceived value of the route for transportation and access. By varying the perceived value of routes for transportation against the likelihood of environmental impacts, alternatives were created that designated different combinations of routes as either designated or not for motorized travel throughout the planning area. For example, redundant and user –created routes, dead ends, and short cuts (those having low transportation and access value) in areas of high natural or cultural resource values would likely be proposed for closure under one of the alternative travel management scenarios.

User-defined routes resulting from ad-hoc cross country travel on steep side slopes might be considered for closure due to public safety and soil erosion concerns. On the other hand, routes that provided access to recreational facilities having high transportation and access value would not likely be considered for closure unless the route was redundant or represented a short cut regardless of the type of habitat in which it was located.

Decisions made within the approved Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012) resulted in limiting motorized travel within Pocatello Field Office to “existing vehicle roads, ways and trails. The United States holds some legal access easements within the planning area. These easements allow legal, public access across private lands. There are other areas where roads accessing public lands cross private lands and there is no legal public access easement. The public must seek permission from the private land owner to cross the private land. This presents unique challenges in seeking public access across private lands.

Other considerations influenced the alternative development process as well. Discussions took into consideration routes being proposed as “designated” on adjacent USFS managed lands and applying consistent designations where possible. This process resulted in the development of five alternative travel management scenarios that were brought forward for analysis.

### **Actions and/or Conditions Common to All Alternatives**

The following actions and/or Conditions would be common all alternatives:

- **Roads with Legal Access:** There is legal access for use of roads leading to public lands. Examples of roads with legal access include but are not limited to: highways, county roads, public easements, etc.
- **Roads with Physical Access:** There are existing roads leading to public lands, however there is official no legal access. The BLM cannot guarantee access will be allowed in the future on roads with no legal access. As long as the public is allowed to access public lands, the BLM will consider designating routes beyond these private lands.
- **Roads with No Access:** There is an existing road, however access to BLM is physical blocked by some type of barrier, such as a locked gate or “no trespassing” sign. BLM will generally not designate routes where public access is physically blocked prior to reaching BLM.
- **Cross-Country Travel:** Cross-country travel is prohibited. No motorized travel would be allowed off any route unless written authorization is provided by the authorized officer.
- **Emergency Use:** Motorized emergency use would be available (i.e., in accordance with appropriate federal regulations) throughout the planning area regardless of the area or route designation. When possible, emergency vehicles will attempt to utilize existing routes, however there may be instances where traveling off-route would be necessary (i.e. wildland fire, search and rescue operations, etc.).
- **Route Maintenance:** Motorized route segments could receive periodic maintenance including smoothing of tread, removal of rocks or other obstacles, installation of rolling dips or water bars, cleanout of water bars, and repair of gullies and rills on the route surfaces. Maintenance of motorized routes may require mechanized equipment.
- **Future closures or restrictions:** Future closures or restrictions to designated routes to prevent resource damage or user conflicts would be evaluated and implemented as needed through emergency closure authorities provided under 43 CFR §8340 - Off-Road Vehicles. Road and trail closures involving ground disturbance (e.g. road rehabilitation) proposed under any of the alternatives would be reviewed by the BLM archaeologist on a case-by-case basis prior to implementation to assess potential effects to: cultural resources in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, sage-grouse, Threatened and Endangered Plants, Fish, and Animals.
- **Over Snow Vehicles:** <sup>1</sup>(OSV): OSVs are defined as tracked vehicles solely intended for over-snow travel. OSVs would be limited to designated routes within big game winter range, sage grouse winter range, and are not allowed in ACEC’s. OSV’s are allowed without restriction in areas outside of big game winter range, sage grouse winter range, and ACEC’s.

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<sup>1</sup> Over Snow Vehicles (OSV) is the new terminology to represent motorized over snow track machines which may include, but is not limited to: snowmobiles, snow cats, and tracked UTVs. The new terminology replaces the term snowmobiles as identified in the 2012 Pocatello RMP.

- **Travel Variance:** The Authorized Officer may issue a written travel variance or other written authorization for motorized travel off designated routes. Travel variances for use of existing roads can be issued for extended periods of time, or for specific types of uses (e.g. permittees may receive written authorization to drive on existing roads to access range improvements during their season of operation). Travel variances for cross-country travel will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Alternative A (No Action)**

This alternative represents the current management situation for the approximately 1,003 miles of existing routes (Table 1), including the linear features where motorized travel has occurred over time, located on public lands administered by the Pocatello Field Office (PFO) within the CDCTMP area as identified in the 2011 route inventory. The inventory routes are derived from four different components of the transportation system which included routes identified as main motorized travel routes, linear features such as pipelines, fence lines, dozer lines, etc., other routes such as game/cow trails, user created routes along ridgelines, logging roads, and access roads that ended on private lands closed to the public, and non-detected non-motorized routes. The three components of the transportation system are all categorized as routes because motorized travel occurs on them. Motorized travel would be limited to the inventoried routes as existing which is identified in the Record of Decision and Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012). The existing routes identified in the inventory would remain the network of routes and would continue to be managed until the routes were designated through travel planning (Map-1). In this alternative, current management direction for existing route closures and seasonal closures would remain. Research Natural Areas (RNAs) would remain closed to motorized travel.

### **Alternative B (Preliminary Proposed Action)**

This alternative was developed from the Preliminary Proposed Action (PPA) to initiate public scoping comments during the travel management planning scoping efforts, May – August 2012. It consists of recommending approximately 512 miles of designated routes for motorized travel (Table 1.). The PPA was developed by the BLM which looked at the entire network of routes identified in the 2011 inventory and acknowledged sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) areas (Map-2). The PPA did not recommend routes for designation that were redundant within sage grouse PPH and sage grouse Preliminary General Habitat (PGH). The PPA did not recommend routes to be designated for motorized travel where private lands blocked access to the general public unless permission was granted. This alternative also did not recommend that approximately 300 miles of linear feature routes for designations which comprised of routes along fence lines, ridgelines, etc. This alternative does not limit OSV to designated routes within sage-grouse winter habitat. In this alternative, existing route closures and seasonal closures remained as the current management situation guided in the 2012 Pocatello RMP.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative addressed motorized travel impacts with the public lands' natural and biological resources as they were identified through scoping, by recommending approximately 454 miles of designated routes for motorized travel (Table 1.). This alternative adds seasonal restrictions

approximately to an additional 11 miles of designated routes beyond the current management situation to coincide with resolutions between county government and its citizens. Route locations and recommendations for route designation emphasize reducing conflicts between motorized travel and Special Status Plants and Special Status Species habitat (e.g., sage-grouse PPH, sage-grouse PGH, and sage-grouse winter habitat), wildlife/big game habitat, and wildlife migration corridors. This alternative provides motorized travel through route designation that would result in a level of resource protection that would minimize adverse effects (Map-3). This alternative analyzes motorized travel conflicts involving water quality, soil disturbance (erosion), potential increase in human caused fires, and invasive species/noxious weeds. This alternative limits OSV use to designated routes in sage-grouse winter habitat, which is not limited in Alternatives B, and D.

**Alternative D**

This alternative would maximize opportunities for motorized travel by designating approximately 599 miles of routes and adds an additional 10 miles of designated routes available seasonally (Table 1.). This alternative addresses specific issues/concerns raised during public scoping by allowing for more motorized travel opportunities, providing more designated routes, and connected designated routes (e.g., loop roads/trails, destination roads/trails) to increase various types of recreational experiences. This alternative emphasizes enhancing motorized travel while still considering resource issues and concerns (Map-4). This alternative does not limit OSV to designated routes within sage-grouse winter habitat.

**Alternative E**

This alternative was developed by the BLM to balance natural, biological and cultural resources protection while accommodating for motorized opportunities and experiences by designating approximately 490 miles of routes opened for motorized travel (Table 1.). This alternative strikes a balance for resource protection in identified areas by restricting the size of motorized vehicles to 50 inches in width or less, limits approximately 38 miles of routes to be opened seasonally, and opens up additional temporary roads (with seasonal restrictions) to allow for more public land access (Map-5). This alternative provides additional seasonal; restrictions beyond Alternatives B and C. This alternative connects other routes together to create loop trails to balance the difference between Alternatives C and D. This alternative, like Alternative C, limits OSV to designated routes in sage-grouse winter habitat.

**Table 1.** Miles of non-designated routes and designated routes with seasonal restrictions and size/width restrictions by alternative.

Alternative	Designated Routes Miles (Percent)	Designated Routes with Seasonal Restrictions	Size/Width Restriction 50 inches or less	Size Width Restriction 50 inches or less and Seasonally Restricted	Non-designated Routes
A	1,003 (100)	0	0	0	0
B	512 (51)	0	0	0	491
C	454 (45)	11	0	0	538

Alternative	Designated Routes Miles (Percent)	Designated Routes with Seasonal Restrictions	Size/Width Restriction 50 inches or less	Size Width Restriction 50 inches or less and Seasonally Restricted	Non-designated Routes
D	599 (59)	10	0	0	394
E	490 (48)	20	2	18	473

### Actions Common to Alternatives B, C, D, and E

The following actions would be common to the Preliminary Proposed Action and subsequent alternatives:

- **Routes:** A comprehensive motorized travel is sought in this plan. The route system has been designed to create loop trails, maximize recreation while protecting resources. To meet the purpose and need of this plan, some routes not designated are reserved for administrative or permitted access only. A system of designated routes would be defined with motorized travel restricted to these designated routes.
- **Designated Travel Routes:** A system of designated routes would be defined with motorized travel restricted to these designated routes, with the exception of tracked over-snow machines.
- **Non-motorized Routes:** Non-motorized routes were not detected in the inventory. However, non-motorized use, (bicycles, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc.) is not restricted within the travel plan.
- **Travel Variance:** The Authorized Officer may issue a written travel variance for any motorized vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved. Travel variances on existing routes may be consolidated for several routes or a season of use.
- **Road-Side Use Limitation:** Pulling a motorized vehicle off a designated route (e.g., for parking, camping, and other dispersed recreational activities would be limited to a single perpendicular distance of 200 feet from the edge of the route (no travel parallel to a route).
- **Game Retrieval:** Motorized use off of designated motorized routes (cross-country travel), including game and shed antlers retrieval, would not be permitted.
- **Mapping Errors:** Despite the efforts of personnel to “ground truth” existing routes within the planning area in the 2011 inventory, some errors may still be identified on the maps and they would be corrected as they are found. Correction of mapping errors would not change the effects of any of the alternatives and routes would not be added to the alternatives. Maps would be corrected as necessary to accurately reflect the routes on the landscape.
- **Future Routes:** Future development of new routes would also be evaluated and implemented through separate environmental analysis.

## **Plan Implementation**

### ***Education***

The CDCTMP will be managed for multiple uses, including recreation. Education about accepted uses and rules of use are very important. In particular, information about closures and seasonal restrictions are critically important to the effective communication of the TMP decision. The field office endeavors to use emerging technology and up-to-date communication methods to convey information and obtain public participation and stewardship in on-the-ground management and evaluation of the Plan.

### ***Key messages to communicate***

The CDCTMP is an area for multi recreational opportunities, enjoyed by varied users. The area promotes shared use and has some specific designations. Resource protection land ethics are important in this area. Key message for this travel management plan is to identify a system of designated routes for motorized travel, which will be conveyed on map.

### ***Enforcement***

Currently, law enforcement coverage in the CDCTMP is provided by BLM Idaho Falls District Rangers. Enforcement actions are typically in response to violations complaints, and patrols are conducted on a periodic basis depending on priorities throughout the district.

Implementation of the plan may require installation of gates and barriers to prevent vehicle traffic in areas not designated for motorized travel. The location and design of gates and barriers will depend on site conditions where they are needed. Typically, gates will be made of steel and designed to be vandal resistant. Fencing may be used, including barb wire, post, and cable, or other materials. Barriers or barricades may be temporary or permanent, and may be made of stone, boulders, concrete, steel, or wood.

The CDCTMP restrictions would be enforced by the BLM Law Enforcement Rangers.

### ***Signage***

A signing plan map would be developed upon the designation of the routes through this plan. Various types of signs and markers would be installed according to current BLM policy and guidance for recreation and travel management signing. Signs would be placed along roads, primitive roads and trails, and would include:

- Area and public land identification.
- Entry kiosks and informational kiosks.
- Route numbers and the designation status of a route (open, closed, seasonal restriction, or size restriction).

Signing would be kept to the minimum necessary for visitor management and assistance and as a tool for resource protection, regulatory and informational purposes. Signing would be designed to provide the public with clear and correct information to avoid off-network travel, and to prevent use conflict. Through monitoring and ongoing public group input, strategies would be developed to constantly improve the effectiveness of signing. Signs that are removed or destroyed would be replaced or updated depending on availability of funding.

## **Rehabilitation:**

Rehabilitation of closed primitive roads, trails, and disturbed areas would include the following:

- 1) Install physical barriers blocking motorized vehicles;
- 2) Ripping compacted soil and seeding with an approved mixture;
- 3) Planting high value vegetation such as native trees, sage brush, or other native plants;
- 4) Monitoring of rehabilitation progress; eventual removal of signs and barriers as visual evidence of past linear disturbance is succeeded by vegetation growth.

## **Standard Operating Procedures**

The following Standard operating procedures would be implemented during all phases of plan implementation.

### General

- Any significant future modifications of this plan could only occur through NEPA compliance, public involvement, interagency coordination, and the preparation of a decision document for the amendment.
- Maps of the travel management plan area would be made available for the public.
- Appropriate NEPA analysis would be completed prior to any ground disturbance not discussed in this plan, as well as impacts to cultural resources, or other resource values, that may be discovered which would be mitigated or avoided.

### Routes

- Standards and guidelines would be developed for BLM road and primitive road maintenance, new construction, or reconstruction. The standards and guidelines for primitive roads would be based on the functional requirements of the various types of motorized travel. The PFO would not develop, endorse or publish road or trail ratings. The PFO will simply describe the physical aspects of a route or recreation site such as those for technical vehicles.
- Maintenance of routes may be done to minimize soil erosion and other resource degradation. This maintenance will be done on a case-by-case basis, depending upon annual maintenance funding.
- If funding is available, physical barriers may be installed to block vehicles from accessing closed routes.
- Minor modifications of the road network during plan implementation are allowed without a plan amendment. The FLPMA allows BLM RMPs (such as the RMP/ROD) to be “maintained as necessary to reflect minor changes in data” (Section 1610.5-4). Plan maintenance is limited in that it cannot result in the expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions, or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the RMP/ROD. It

is limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan.

- In view of these limitations, “minor realignments” of the route network would be considered to be Plan Maintenance. The term “minor realignment” refers to a change of no more than one quarter (1/4) mile of one designated route. It could include the opening of an existing, but previously “closed” route that serves the same access need as the “open” route that is to be “realigned”. It does not include the construction of a new route involving new ground disturbance, except where new construction is necessary to avoid a cultural resource site or sensitive species. “Minor realignments” include the following:
  - Minor realignments of a route where necessary to minimize effects on cultural resources.
  - Minor realignments of a route necessary to reduce impact on sensitive species or their habitats.
  - Minor realignments of a route that would substantially increase the quality of a recreational experience, while not affecting sensitive species or their habitat, or any other sensitive resource value.
- Minor realignments must be documented in the official record. The reason for the alignment change shall be recorded and kept on file in the PFO BLM.
- Opening or “limited” opening of a route where valid rights-of-way or easements of record were not accurately identified in the route designation process.
- Any person, organization or governmental body may propose that any current route designations be changed to another designation. Requests to change route designations must be submitted in writing to the field manager. Response to such as request is discretionary.
- Focus on signage of the open route network so that it is highly visible; thus discouraging interest in closed routes. The signing of closed routes/linear disturbance will be minimal and established “as needed” to protect rehabilitation work by the most effective method.

#### Easements, Rights-of-Way, and Permissive access license agreements

- Acquisition of road or trail easements, or issuance of a right-of-way on an existing or historic physical access, would be pursued in areas where those actions would contribute to the protection of natural resources, and/or the enhancement of recreation opportunities. These methods of acquiring public access would only be available from willing landowners.

#### Restoration and Rehabilitation

One or multiple techniques described below will be used to restore routes and areas.

- “Closed” routes on public land would typically be signed as needed and allowed to reclaim naturally. Monitoring would determine the need for heavier forms of restoration.

- “Closed” routes in sensitive areas, or those that are causing unacceptable impacts would receive a higher priority for reclaiming the route to the visual horizon. Some of these routes may be ripped, ditched, re-graded or re-contoured entirely or in part to aid reclamation, if needed.
- Other methods to close routes may include techniques as posting with signs and/or blocking with barriers to prevent vehicle entry as determined reasonable.
- Seeding would be conducted where necessary to aid rehabilitation of “closed” routes. Appropriate seed mixtures would be selected for each site based on individual site conditions.
- Weed treatment and control measures would be implemented as needed to promote re-vegetation with native plants and prevent any new weed establishment and/or control of existing weed sources.

## **CHAPTER 3 - AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

This section provides a description of the general environmental setting and resources within that setting that could be affected by the proposed action and alternative(s). In addition, the section presents an analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts likely to result from the implementation of the various alternatives.

### **General Setting**

The planning area is located in southeast Idaho and encompasses approximately 371,290 acres of public lands. The area encapsulates a mixture of lands managed by the Caribou-Targhee and Sawtooth National Forests, the State of Idaho, private land owners, and public lands managed by the PFO. The landscape is dominated by the Curlew, Pocatello, Arbon, Malad and Rockland valleys and includes the North Hanzel, Samaria, Sublett, Elk Horn, Deep Creek, and Malad Mountain Ranges. The landscape also includes the Pleasantview Hills and the Curlew National Grassland.

As mentioned in the introduction, the route inventory identified four different components of the transportation system. There are the main travel routes which allow the general public to navigate around the travel planning area, linear features where surface disturbance occurred from construction, other types of routes such as game/cow trails, logging roads, user created ridgeline routes, and non-motorized trails that were not detected. The linear features included dozer lines, pipelines, fence lines, powerlines, and access roads leading to private lands. The route inventory also captured numerous redundant routes leading to the same places. The linear features were added to the system of network of routes because motorized travel occurred on them. Hundreds of miles of these routes added to the transportation system identified in the inventory.

The landscape of the CDCTMP planning area consists of two primary settings. First, the high elevation mountain ranges have slopes generally ranging from 30 to 70 percent and elevations up to approximately 9,100 feet (Elkhorn Peak, Oneida Co.). Included are ridges, mountain slopes and canyons formed in sedimentary, intrusive and metamorphic rocks. Second, the valleys are located at low-to-mid elevations with slopes ranging from 5 to 30 percent. Included in this setting are draws and open basins formed in sedimentary rocks. The valleys range from approximately 4,500 to 6,000 feet above sea level.

The existing transportation system within the planning area includes county roads, private routes, state highway, and about 1,003 miles of BLM-administered roads, which are identified as routes. The major roads in the planning area include Interstates 15 and 84, Idaho State Highway 37 & 38, and Hawkins Road. Small Idaho towns are located throughout the travel planning area that include, but not limited to: Holbrook, Nelson, Stone, Juniper, Roy, Black Pine, Buist, Daniels, Ridgedale, Samaria, Malad City, Woodroof, Pleasantview, Gwenford, Cherry Creek, Samaria, Arbon, Pauline, Robin, Crystal, and Rockland.

### **Resources Considered in the Analysis**

The results of the site-specific assessments indicate that not all of the resources considered are present or would be directly or indirectly affected by any of the alternatives described in Chapter

2. Only those resources that are present and affected are discussed in the following narratives (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis.

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Resource Status</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Access	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Air Quality	Present, Not Affected	The implementation of the alternatives would not result in the production of vehicle or equipment emission or particulate matter above incidental levels as required by the Clean Air Act, as amended.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's)	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Cultural Resource	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under Environmental Consequences
Economic and Social Values	Present, Not Affected	The Preliminary Proposed Action and alternatives would have little effect on economic and social values within the CDCTMP. The area would remain predominately rural and agricultural.
Environmental Justice	Present, Not Affected	There are some scattered minorities and low-income populations in the project area however, the projects and actions described in the alternatives would not affect these populations as described under Executive Order 12898 of 2/11/1994. There would be no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects to the minority and low-income populations in the area resulting from the proposed activities.
Existing and Potential Land Uses	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Fisheries	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Floodplains	Present, Not Affected	Floodplains occur within the travel management planning area however none of the alternatives authorize construction of structures in, modification of, or federal occupancy of floodplains. In accordance with Executive Order 11988, there will be no alteration of the floodplain's function, risk of loss of federal facilities due to flooding, or impact human safety from flooding. None of the actions proposed under the alternatives will impact flood plains.
Forest Resources	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Invasive, Non-Native Species	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Mineral Resources	Present, Not Affected	Mineral Resources occur within the travel management planning area. None of the actions proposed under the alternatives will affect Minerals Resources. Any proposals for mineral development would be subject to the mining laws which would address access to the resource.
Migratory Birds	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Native American Religious Concerns	Not Present	There are no known ceremonial sites or resources associated with ceremonial practices in the project area.

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Resource Status</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Paleontological Resources	Present, Not Affected	Paleontological Resources occur within the travel management planning area, however, none of the actions proposed under the alternatives will impact the resource as there will be no new disturbance.
Prime and Unique Farmlands	Not Present	There are no prime or unique farmlands located within or near the proposed project area.
Recreational Use	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Range Resources (Livestock Management)	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Soil Resources	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animals	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Fish	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plants	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Tribal Treaty Rights and Interests	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Vegetation	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Visual Resources	Present, Not Affected	Design features of the proposed alternatives produce negligible adverse and beneficial impacts
Wastes, Hazardous and Solid	Not Present	There are no solid or hazardous wastes in the project area and none would be created during the implementation of the any of the alternatives.
Water Quality (Surface and Ground)	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Wetland and Riparian Zones	Present Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Not Present	There are not wild and scenic rivers near the project area.
Wild Horse and Burro HMAs	Not Present	There are no wild horse and burro HMAs in the travel management planning area..
Wilderness	Not Present	There are no wilderness areas or WSAs within or near the proposed project area.
Wildlife Resources	Present, Affected	Impacts are disclosed under <u>Environmental Consequences</u>
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	Not Present	There are no lands with wilderness characteristics in or near the project area.

## **Access**

### **Affected Environment:**

Within the approximately 371,290 acres of public land in the CDCTMP area, Rights-of-Way (ROW) have been authorized by the BLM (e.g., roads, pipelines, power lines, fiber optic, communication towers, etc.). Additionally, within this area the State of Idaho, counties and municipalities have established roads which are maintained by them. Finally, the public at large utilizes these access routes for a variety of recreational and outdoor uses, both motorized and quiet opportunities.

Legal access is provided by improved or unimproved routes and the underlying land owner is the Federal Government, State Government, or County Governments. Physical access is usually defined to mean that access exists (e.g., roads and trails) however, the general public cannot use this access absent consent from the underlying property owner. Easements and licenses (i.e., License: A personal privilege to do some particular act or series of acts on land without possessing and estate or interest therein, and is ordinarily revocable at the will of the licensor and is not assignable. The permission by competent authority to do an act which, without such permission, would be illegal, a trespass, a tort, or otherwise not allowable. Certificate or the document itself which gives permission) are the final way the public can access much of the CDCTMP area. Easements and licenses can be granted by the land owner to a specific person or entity for a specific term over a specific area of land.

Many of the access points within the CDCTMP are controlled by private landowners. These private land owners have legal standing to exclude travel on and over their land, even to access public lands. The BLM and other agencies are continually pursuing access over these lands in order to benefit the public at large.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, the authorized BLM transportation system would be unaltered. Access by the public on their lands would be unaltered from the current access status. Use and travel by motorized and non-motorized vehicles would be allowed on all the routes except where not currently permitted. Decisions in the current Resource Management Plan for the Pocatello Field Office restrict motorized travel in certain parts of the planning area, and seasonally in other areas. A high potential exists for new user-created routes to be developed through use by visitors and others.

The “Limited to Existing Routes” designations would also continue. The current policies allowing motorized vehicles to drive off routes to park, camp, or retrieve game would be unchanged.

Currently, approximately 1,003 miles of motorized routes are located in the area that is recognized as existing, legal routes. All of the existing routes are currently managed for motorized travel.

Table 1 provides a complete summary of the miles of designate routes for each alternative.

Under the No Action Alternative, the environmental impacts from the increased use of ad hoc motorized travel routes would steadily grow over time. Existing routes that currently have low levels of motorized use could steadily experience growing levels of activity, resulting in greater impacts to the resources and an increase in user created routes will continue to increase over time.

Under the No Action Alternative, impacts to the management of the transportation system would also steadily grow over time. A need for route maintenance would result from this alternative. However, as recreation uses on public lands increase with frequency, the number of miles of routes that would require regular maintenance would also gradually increase. Increased reconstruction and maintenance efforts would be needed to mitigate the deterioration of routes that were not designed for sustained or high levels of use, but experience increased amounts of traffic. The closure and rehabilitation of some routes would also be required where severe resource impacts or conflicts with other uses occur.

Right-of-Ways and Communication Use Leases would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager, under the statutory authority of FLPMA. Existing routes identified within the CDCTMP for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution would be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing under this alternative.

If there is no legal or physical public access allowed across private land, no opportunities then exist to designate motorized travel routes beyond these private lands. In situations where land owners have private lands adjoining BLM-administered public lands, and the public cannot legally cross the private land using existing routes, these particular routes continuing onto public lands from private lands are not accessible to motorized travel.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

The implementation of the Preliminary Proposed Action would establish a travel management plan with a system of routes with designated motorized travel uses and seasons of use that would generally benefit the overall management of the transportation system for planning construction and maintenance needs. The existing BLM transportation system would be modified with additional routes and closures. The use of motorized and mechanized modes of travel would be limited to designated routes.

Under the Preliminary Proposed Action, approximately 512 miles of motorized routes would be designated, available, and managed for public use. Table 1 provides a complete summary of the mileages by the individual travel use categories for each alternative.

Under the Preliminary Proposed Action, the existing routes that are causing or have the potential to cause environmental impacts because they are ad hoc routes, would either be closed, reconstructed, or designated for travel uses that are less impacting to the environment. Many existing routes that are experiencing or would potentially experience environmental impacts from increasing recreation use would be designated for the appropriate uses. Under the Preliminary Proposed Action, approximately 491 fewer miles of routes would be managed for motorized use than under the No Action Alternative.

An outcome of a designated travel management system is that user groups are generally willing to adopt routes that identify with their own interests. Thus, as various user groups develop a sense of ownership for their favorite routes and volunteer to adopt and maintain them, the need to utilize BLM funds for maintaining many of these routes could decline over time. Right-of-Ways and Communication Use Leases would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager, under the statutory authority of FLPMA.

Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways. New rights-of-ways applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

If there is no legal or physical public access allowed across private land, no opportunities exist to designate motorized travel routes beyond these private lands. In situations where land owners have private lands adjoining BLM-administered public lands, and the public cannot legally cross the private land using existing routes, these particular routes continuing onto public lands from private lands are not accessible to motorized travel.

### **Alternative C**

The implementation of Alternative C would address motorized travel impacts and look to natural and biological resources protection as paramount in the establishment of a travel management plan. Further Alternative C would look to reduce conflicts between motorized travel and Special Status Species habitat. This would be accomplished by an overall reduction in routes and miles available to the public.

Alternative C designated routes would generally deteriorate the overall transportation system supplying access to the public lands considered in this plan. The existing BLM transportation system would be modified by additional routes and closures. The use of motor vehicles would be limited to the remaining designated routes, with possible seasonal restrictions.

Under Alternative C, approximately 454 miles of motorized routes would be designated, available, and managed for public use. Approximately 11 miles would be designated for motorized use on a seasonal basis. Under Alternative C, approximately 538 fewer miles of routes would be managed for motorized use than under the No Action Alternative. Table 1 provides a complete summary of the mileages by the individual travel use categories for each alternative.

Under Alternative C most of the existing routes that are causing or have the potential to cause environmental impacts to natural and biological resources would be closed and thus result in fewer impacts to those natural and biological resources.

Right-of-Ways and Communication Use Leases would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager, under the statutory authority of FLPMA.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial

and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-ways, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Land Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

If there is no legal or physical public access allowed across private land, no opportunities then exist to designate motorized travel routes beyond these private lands. In situations where land owners have private lands adjoining BLM-administered public lands, and the public cannot legally cross the private land using existing routes, these particular routes continuing onto public lands from private lands are not accessible to motorized travel.

### **Alternative D**

By implementing Alternative D, the travel management plan would then have a system of routes with designated travel uses. The alternative would generally benefit the overall management of travel within the CDCTMP. Under this alternative motorized travel would be maximized. Further, opportunities for the public and those unable to see and enjoy the public lands without the aid of motorized travel would be benefited. In our ever aging population segment of commonly referred to as “Baby Boomers” a more rewarding motorized travel opportunity would be provided. Under Alternative D more suitable routes, connected routes, loop trails/roads and destination trails would exist. This alternative would provide more opportunities for families of all ages to enjoy OHV activities on their public lands.

Under Alternative D, approximately 599 miles of motorized routes would be designated, available, and managed for public use. Approximately an additional 10 miles would be designated for motorized use but only on a seasonal basis. Under Alternative D, approximately 395 fewer miles of routes would be managed for motorized use than under the No Action Alternative.

Table 1 provides a complete summary of the mileages by the individual travel use categories for each alternative.

Under Alternative D, all of the existing routes causing or have the potential to cause environmental impacts to resources because they are ad hoc routes located and designed, would be redesigned and maintained, reconstructed for foreseeable travel uses of the public. Many existing routes would be enhanced to increase the “Outdoor Experience” of the public on their lands. The new trails would be constructed in a way as to not negatively impact the resources when possible.

Of the five action alternatives the impacts to transportation management would increase the least under Alternative D. Management would be enhanced by the use of additional signage to

designate the allowable travel uses on most designated routes. The use of signage would also help protect the personal safety of the public as they use their lands. The need to install gates, barricades, and other closure devices would be eliminated, thus reducing costs.

Right-of-Ways and Communication Use Leases would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager, under the statutory authority of FLPMA.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

If there is no legal or physical public access allowed across private land, no opportunities then exist to designate motorized travel routes beyond these private lands. In situations where land owners have private lands adjoining BLM-administered public lands, and the public cannot legally cross the private land using existing routes, these particular routes continuing onto public lands from private lands are not accessible to motorized travel.

### **Alternative E**

The implementation of Alternative E, would establish a travel management plan with a balanced approach. This alternative would continue to offer access to members of the public seeking to enjoy their public lands while, looking to protect the natural and biological resources within the CDCTMP. The existing BLM transportation system would be modified with additional routes and closures. The use of motorized and mechanized modes of travel would be limited to designated routes.

Under Alternative E, approximately 490 miles of motorized routes would be designated, available, and managed for public use. Additionally, approximately 38 miles would be designated for motorized use but only on a seasonal basis. Under Alternative E, approximately 473 fewer miles of routes would be managed for motorized use than under the No Action Alternative.

Table 1 provides a complete summary of the mileages by the individual travel use categories for each alternative.

Under Alternative E, the existing routes causing or have the potential to cause environmental impacts because they are ad hock routes located and designed, would either be closed, reconstructed, or designated for travel uses that are less impacting to the environment.

Most of the existing routes with user conflicts or the potential for user conflicts would also be closed or be designated for the appropriate uses. Many existing routes that are experiencing or that would potentially experience environmental impacts from increasing recreation use would be designated for the appropriate uses. New trails would be constructed as to not negatively impact the resources in the affected areas.

The impacts to the management of the transportation system could increase somewhat. Under this alternative action the need for additional maintenance, construction, closure and improvements to support the designated travel management system, might be needed. Additional signage would be needed to designate the allowable travel uses on most designated routes. The installation of gates, barricades, and other closure devices would be needed to reinforce the travel restrictions. The construction of user facilities, such as parking areas and trailhead facilities might need to be made in order to accommodate increased recreation usage.

An outcome of a designated travel management system is that user groups are generally willing to adopt routes that identify with their own interests. Thus, as various user groups develop a sense of ownership for their favorite routes and volunteer to adopt and maintain them, the need to utilize BLM funds for maintaining many of these routes could decline over time.

Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits and Communication Use Leases would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager, under the statutory authority of FLPMA.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

If there is no legal or physical public access allowed across private land, no opportunities then exist to designate motorized travel routes beyond these private lands. In situations where land owners have private lands adjoining BLM-administered public lands, and the public cannot legally cross the private land using existing routes, these particular routes continuing onto public lands from private lands are not accessible to motorized travel, and will not be designated. However if in the future BLM is able to secure a public access easement, the route would be designated.

## Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

### Affected Environment:

Section 103(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act defines an ACEC as an area “within public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.” The BLM regulations for implementing an ACEC state that management of areas having potential for ACEC designation and protection shall be identified and considered throughout the resource management planning process (43 CFR 1610.7-2 (b)). In accordance with the preceding regulations, the PFO RMP dictates to travel management within ACEC designations; OSVs will not be allowed and OHV designation will be limited for resource protection (PFO RMP, p136/139). Three ACECs exist within the travel management planning area, the 2,308 acre Bowen Canyon Bald Eagle Sanctuary ACEC designated in 1981, the 3,105 acre Indian Rocks ACEC designated in 1999, and the 3 acre Juniper Townsite ACEC designated in 1981.

National bird of the United States, the bald eagle, is the key species of Bowen Canyon’s ACEC designation. Bowen Canyon provides crucial habitat suited to a large number of Idaho’s wintering bald eagle population. Douglas fir snags in this area are favored by the bald eagle, providing them roosting opportunity at night and daytime feeding along both the Snake River and American Falls reservoir. The bald eagle only inhabits the area about five months out of a year (November 15th – April 15th) allowing for non-habitat altering multiple use activities the remaining seven months. Special management of the area is needed to ensure continuance of suitable habitat for present and future eagle populations.

Petroglyphs 2,000 to 3,000 years old and several additional prehistoric and historic sites are protected by the Indian Rocks ACEC designation. Prehistoric sites encompass about 200 acres of seasonal campsites, stone tool-making areas, petroglyph boulders, and isolated projectile points. Petroglyph sites on public lands are unique cultural resource sites in Southeastern Idaho. The historic sites are related to relatively recent (150 years) Euro–American settlement and use of the area. Several of the prehistoric sites were found to be potentially eligible for National Register of Historic Places listing under Criteria D of the guidelines for National Register quality properties. Special management of the area is needed to protect the loss of irreplaceable archaeological site information about the prehistory of the Marsh Creek/Portneuf River Valley.

Return of the Kelfoyle homestead (Juniper Townsite) to the federal government under the Bankhead-Jones Act captures one of the last major homesteading ventures in the country and thereby was designated the Juniper Townsite ACEC. The homestead lasted from 1915 to 1937, making it the earliest surviving structure on public land in the Juniper Valley. It is a single structure with a root cellar and is considered culturally significant by groups like the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. Special management of the area is needed to protect the cultural/historical resource from future impacts.

Certain restrictions on mining, grazing, OHV, and OSV use are in place to protect the values for which these three ACEC designations were made. Restriction specifics may found within the Pocatello RMP or in each ACEC’s Management Plan.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative would continue to keep all inventoried routes available to motorized travel without regard to possible conflicts with wildlife habitat needs associated with the Bowen Canyon Eagle Sanctuary ACEC (4.7 miles). This alternative could lead to negative impacts to this resource value by allowing for the continued use of motorized travel in the area. Bald eagle productivity declines with road proximity (Trombulak & Frissell, 2000; Anthony & Isaacs, 1989) and eagles prefer dense forest stands for nesting in areas with limited human activity (Anthony & Isaacs, 1989). The No Action Alternative is unlikely to cause new direct or indirect effects to prehistoric/historic properties within the Indian Rocks ACEC (approximately 15.7 miles), as allowing continued use of existing routes would not appreciably change current motorized vehicle use and associated impacts. Juniper Townsite ACEC does not have existing routes within the designated boundary. Human activity in these areas increases the probability of wildfire. A wildfire may reduce bald eagle winter roost habitat or damage irreplaceable prehistoric /historic sites.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

This alternative recommends less designated OHV routes within the Bowen Canyon Eagle Sanctuary ACEC to reduce road proximity to bald eagle roosting sites while retaining limited (approximately 1.4 miles) access. Alternative B also recommends less designated routes for human safety and cultural resource protection within the Indian Rocks ACEC retaining limited (approximately 10.6 miles) access. Reduced motorized travel use within these ACECs would provide additional protection for the natural and cultural resources for which they were designated. Juniper Townsite ACEC does not have existing routes within the designated boundary.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative does not recommend route designation for motorized travel routes within the Bowen Canyon Eagle Sanctuary ACEC which would remove the occurrence of motorized activity from the vicinity of the ACEC. Alternative C recommends less designated routes for human safety and cultural resource protection within the Indian Rocks ACEC retaining limited (approximately 10.6 miles) access. Juniper Townsite ACEC does not have existing roads or trails within the designated boundary.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative does not recommend route designation for motorized travel routes within the Bowen Canyon Eagle Sanctuary ACEC to reduce road proximity to bald eagle roosting sites while retaining limited (approximately 1.4 miles) access. Alternative D also recommends less designated routes for motorized travel for human safety and cultural resource protection within the Indian Rocks ACEC retaining limited (approximately 10.6 miles) access. Reduced motorized travel use within these ACECs would provide additional protection for the natural and cultural resources for which they were designated. Juniper Townsite ACEC does not have existing roads or trails within the designated boundary.

## **Alternative E**

This alternative does not recommend designated routes within the Bowen Canyon Eagle Sanctuary ACEC removing the occurrence of motorized activity from the vicinity of the ACEC. Alternative E recommends less designated routes for motorized travel for human safety and cultural resource protection within the Indian Rocks ACEC retaining limited (10.6 miles) access. Juniper Townsite ACEC does not have existing routes within the designated boundary.

## **Cultural Resources**

### **Affected Environment:**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) establishes the federal government's policy and programs on historic preservation, including the creation of the National Register of Historic Places. Under NHPA, cultural resources that meet specific eligibility criteria (36 CFR Part 60) may be listed on or found eligible for listing on the National Register. Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places is called a historic property. Historic properties may reflect several kinds of significance; architectural, historic, archaeological (scientific), engineering, or cultural/traditional. Section 106 of the NHPA (36 CFR Part 800) requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of undertakings on all historic properties. The Idaho state Historic preservation Office (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) are the state and federal agencies responsible for reviewing and assisting in matters of federal cultural resource management and preservation under the NHPA.

A Class I Cultural Resource Inventory was completed and submitted to SHPO (Report # 2013-PFO-3). The CDCTMP project boundary includes approximately 371,290 surface acres managed by the BLM. Approximately 16,700 acres (5.5%) of those lands have been intensively examined for the presence of cultural resources. These inventories, although representing a small percentage of the project area managed by the PFO, have identified approximately 420 cultural resource sites located on public lands within the project area, many of which meet the criteria for eligibility as historic properties eligible for listing on the National Register.

The approximately 420 known, recorded cultural resource sites on public lands within the CDCTMP project area represent a variety of types and chronological periods. These known cultural resources represent a wide variety of prehistoric and historic land uses, including travel, camping, hunting, ranching, settlement, and mining. Prehistoric site types include open camps, artifacts and features. Historic site types include homesteads and cabins, historic roads and trails, and mining sites. Of the 420 known sites, approximately 231 are prehistoric sites, 73 historic sites, 8 multicomponent sites (historic and prehistoric components), 101 prehistoric isolated artifacts/features, and 6 historic isolated artifacts/features.

Hudspeth's Cutoff, part of the Oregon and California National Historic Trail System, also crosses through the project area. Hudspeth's Cutoff was first used in July of 1849 by emigrants looking for a more direct route to the gold rush areas of California. It departed the main Oregon Trail near Soda Springs, Idaho, and proceeded due west to the City of Rocks before joining the main California Trail. BLM manages several segments that add up to a total of 8.31 miles within

the TMP boundary. None of these trail segments remain unaltered. Some segments have been used as 2-track road for motor vehicles. Others have become well-established bladed or graveled roads. Other impacts to some of the trail segments include erosion and cattle trailing.

Approximately 80 acres of BLM managed lands within the CDCTMP boundary are within the American Falls Archaeological District. That is less than 2% of the total Archaeological District. There are also two ACEC's in the project area that were designated for their cultural values: Juniper Townsite ACEC and Indian Rocks ACEC. These are discussed further in the ACEC section.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

Under the No Action alternative, no changes to current management of the routes within the project boundary would take place. Under this alternative approximately 8.31 miles of the Hudspeth's Cutoff would remain open to motorized travel. The No Action Alternative is unlikely to cause new direct or indirect effects to historic properties, as allowing continued use of existing routes would not appreciably change current motorized vehicle use and associated impacts.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Out of the original 1,003 miles, approximately 512 are recommended for route designation for motorized travel under this alternative. Approximately 2.1 miles of the Hudspeth's Cutoff would remain open to motorized travel. Designating fewer routes for motorized travel would reduce negative direct and indirect effects to cultural resources.

### **Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, approximately 454 miles are recommended for route designation for motorized travel out of the original 1,003. Approximately 3.07 miles of the Hudspeth's Cutoff would remain open to motorized travel. This Alternative has the largest reduction to motorized routes. Negative direct and indirect effects to cultural resources would be reduced the most under this alternative.

### **Alternative D**

Out of the original 1,003 miles, 599 miles are recommended for route designation for motorized travel under this alternative. Approximately 3.07 miles of the Hudspeth's Cutoff would remain open to motorized travel. Designating fewer routes for motorized travel would reduce direct and indirect effects to cultural resources.

### **Alternative E**

Under Alternative E, 490 miles are recommended for route designation for motorized travel out of the original 1,003. Approximately 5.21 miles of the Hudspeth's Cutoff would remain open to motorized travel. Designating fewer routes for motorized travel would reduce negative direct and indirect effects to cultural resources.

## **Existing and Potential Land Uses**

### **Affected Environment:**

Currently, the primary land uses within CDCTMP area are diverse. The land is scattered with various ownerships. Grazing (by permit) is clearly the most dominant land Federal land use. Secondary to grazing is recreational land uses within the CDCTMP area. Typically the National Forest lands offer campgrounds in a forested setting, numerous trail opportunities. The Grasslands also offer developed camping locations. The lands within the CDCTMP are also very popular during hunting season and experiences heavy volume of traffic and use during these times.

OHV use occurs on established roads and motorized trails within the CDCTMP area. Additionally OSMs are popular during the winter months. While agriculture and grazing has been historically the dominant uses within the CDCTMP tourist-oriented uses are expanding. Seasonally oriented residential development is increasing within the area and is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

Commercial development of the lands with the CDCTMP is increasing each year as the population continues to increase and the need for power, natural gas, wind power and wireless communication increases. It is expected and foreseeable that many of the lands within the CDCTMP will see applications filed with the BLM to have many of these commercial uses granted in, upon, and over these lands in the future.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits, Communication Use Leases, and grazing permits would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways and grazing permits. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

#### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Under the Preliminary Proposed Action Alternative, Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits, Communication Use Leases, and grazing permits would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property,

County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways and grazing permits. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

### **Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits, Communication Use Leases, and grazing permits would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways and grazing permits. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

### **Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits, Communication Use Leases, and grazing permits would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways and grazing permits. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use

Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

### **Alternative E**

Under Alternative E, Right-of-Ways, Land Use Permits, Communication Use Leases, and grazing permits would continue to be authorized within the CDCTMP area by the authorizing manager.

Various land use authorizations are present within the CDCTMP. Types of right-of-way facilities include the following: power lines including transmission and distribution lines (aerial and buried), telephone and fiber optic cables, a water pipelines, and access roads to private property, County roads, State of Idaho roadways, Federal highways, and public access trails/routes/roadways and grazing permits. New rights-of-way applications, or amendments to existing authorizations, would be considered on a case-by-case basis within the planning area and would require specific environmental analysis in processing the application.

Routes identified within the CDCTMP designated for public use would avoid rights-of-way, to the extent possible. If they cannot be avoided, caution will be taken to ensure no impacts to facilities or disruption of use occurs for the holders of currently authorized grants, Lands Use Permits, and Communication Use Leases. No impacts would occur to existing land use authorizations under this alternative.

### **Fisheries**

#### **Affected Environment:**

There are several fish bearing streams in the project area. They include the Malad River, Marsh Creek, Deep Creek, Bannock Creek, Rock Creek, and the East Fork of Rock Creek. The upper portion of the East Fork of Rock Creek is managed as a put-and-take rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) fishery. Most of the other streams may have some rainbow trout present as escapees from reservoirs. Other introduced fish in the streams include channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), and common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*). Native fish in the streams include; Utah chub (*Catostomus ardens*), mottled sculpin (*Cottus bairdi*), redbelt shiner (*Richardsonius balteatus*), and long-nosed dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*).

Reservoirs in the project area include Hawkins, Daniels, Stone, Wiregrass, Pleasantview and Crowthers. The reservoirs are managed to provide irrigation water for local cropland. Rainbow trout are regularly stocked in the reservoirs, and some have a population of largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), white crappies (*Pomoxis anularis*) and bluegills (*Lepomis macrochirus*).

Fish populations are limited primarily by water management and livestock grazing in the project area. Most streams and reservoirs are managed for irrigation purposes. Irrigation practices that impact fish populations include diversions and reduced flows in streams. Unscreened diversions allow fish to enter canals and ultimately be delivered into agricultural fields. Diversions also remove water from the stream, reducing the amount of habitat for fish.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

Only Marsh Creek and the Portneuf River are fish bearing streams, noted in the affected environment section, that have public land adjacent to them. Two miles of open routes are located within 300 feet of these two streams and Wiregrass Reservoir. Wiregrass Reservoir is accessed by a BLM managed road. Hawkins Reservoir has a road adjacent to it that is on public land but it is a county right-of-way and will remain as an existing route. This alternative also has 13 stream crossings.

Under this alternative sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would continue to reduce the quality and quantity of fish habitat in these streams and reservoirs. The amount of sediment accruing to the waters would vary based on intensity of precipitation events, the amount and type of vegetation adjacent to the streams and reservoirs, and the soil type the road passes over.

Water quality may be adversely affected by vehicle raised dust that settles into aquatic systems (Ouren et al 2007). Chemicals from emissions and spills, associated with vehicles may also be transported into aquatic systems and lower water quality (Ouren et al 2007). Lowering of water quality would reduce the quality of fish habitat.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts would be similar to Alternative A. With fewer miles of designated routes next to water bodies and fewer stream crossing decreasing the intensity of impacts. Only one mile of designated routes is within 300 feet of fish bearing waters. This alternative has 7 stream crossings of fish bearing streams.

### **Alternatives C, D, and E**

Alternatives C, D, and E have the same number of miles of streams within 300 feet of fish bearing water bodies and the same number of stream crossing as alternative B. The impacts of these alternatives would be the same as alternative B.

## **Forestry**

### **Affected Environment:**

Within the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Boundary the BLM administers approximately 371,290 acres. Of this there are approximately 17,700 acres identified as commercial timber. Elevation and aspect are a driving factor with regards to tree species and composition. Elevation ranges from 8,748 feet on top of Deep Creek Peak to 4,200 feet in the northwest corner of the field office on the Snake River and 4,440 feet in the southern part of the field office at the point the Malad River enters Utah.

The conifer forest is made up of Dry Conifer, Wet/Cold Conifer and Aspen/Aspen Conifer Mix forest Types. The Dry Conifer forest type is the most predominate, and is mostly composed of Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menzeisii*), situated mostly on north aspects at elevations of 6,000 to

8,500 feet. As you gain elevation the forest changes to a Wet/Cold Conifer type, composed of Douglas fir, Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and Sub Alpine fir (*Abies lasioscarpa*) and occasional aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) on the north and east facing slopes. The forest type occupies less than 1000 acres within the CDCTMP.

Aspen groves are scattered throughout the project area and are generally made up of mature trees, with some seedlings and saplings. In Many aspen stands, conifer encroachment is a natural pattern, resulting in an increase in dominance by conifer and reducing the extent of aspen-dominated stands. Due to fire suppression, conifer encroachment into aspen stands is happening at unnatural levels in the CDCTMP area. There has been a net loss of aspen with remaining stands being either reduced in size or having a loss of aspen stems per acre.

Douglas fir is the dominant commercial species within the CDCTMP, with minor amounts lodgepole pine. The commercial timber program is largely based on the commercial acreage that is available for harvest. Wood products would be provided by using timber harvesting as a method to protect and sustain live mature fore structure though the management of densities, species composition and natural fuel loading. Legal access and economics often dictate where timber harvests would occur. This travel plan would have no effect on the commercial aspect of the forestry program due to the ability to get an administrative variance for travel.

The Special Forest Products (SFP) program is defined as permitted collection of small quantities of firewood, post and polls, cones, seeds, flowers, transplants, etc. Because of the broad definition of Special Forest Products, items can be collected on almost every acre of public land within the travel planning area. While there are approximately 371,290 acres available for SFP collection, with firewood and post and poles, most people rarely leave a road by more than 200 feet and are typically in forested areas. With this rationale there are approximately 18,724 acres currently available with 200 feet of existing roads.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative represents the current management situation for existing routes located on public lands administered by the Pocatello Field Office (PFO) within the CDCTMP area. Motorized travel would be limited to existing routes as identified in the Record of Decision and Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012). The existing routes were identified in the 2011 inventory and would remain as the network of existing routes which would continue to be managed until designated routes have been established. This process identified approximately 1,003 miles of routes for motorized use. In this alternative there would be no change in the accessibility for people to gather special forest products. There would continue to be approximately 18,724 acres (forest land within 200 feet of an open road) and approximately 371,290 acres for collection of other SFP.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Access to the SFP under Alternative B would be reduced from access associated with existing management (Alternative A). Under Alternative B, there would be 512 miles of motorized routes designated. This less number of recommended miles of routes for designation in adjacent

areas to timber stands would result in approximately 9,498 acres (within 200 feet of designated routes) available for collection of firewood and post and poles. The approximation of 491 fewer miles of available routes (compared to the existing condition) would also reduce access to the remaining 371,290 acres for collection of other smaller SFP.

### **Alternative C**

Under Alternative C, there would be approximately 454 miles of recommended motorized routes for designation. The less number of recommended miles of routes for designation in adjacent areas to timber stands would result in approximately 8,219 acres (within 200 feet of designated routes) available for collection of firewood and post and poles. The approximation of 538 fewer miles of available routes (compared to the existing condition) would also reduce access to the remaining 371,290 acres for collection of other smaller SFP.

### **Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, there would be approximately 599 miles of motorized routes recommended for designation. This less number of recommended miles of routes designated in adjacent areas to timber stands would result in approximately 11,648 acres (within 200 feet of designated routes) available for collection of firewood and post and poles. The 394 fewer miles of available routes (compared to the existing condition) would also reduce access to the remaining 371,290 acres for collection of other smaller SFP.

### **Alternative E**

Under Alternative E, there would be approximately 490 miles of motorized routes recommended for designation. The less number of recommended miles of routes for designation in adjacent areas to timber stands would result in approximately 8,976 (within 200 feet of designated routes) available for collection of firewood and post and poles. The 473 fewer miles of available routes (compared to the existing condition) would also reduce access to the remaining 371,290 acres for collection of other smaller SFP.

## **Invasive, Non Native Species**

### **Affected Environment:**

Invasive and noxious weeds are non-native plant species with the potential to displace native vegetation at the watershed and local scale. A noxious weed is any plant designated by a federal, state, or county government to be injurious to public health, agriculture, recreation, wildlife, or any public or private property.

Invasive and noxious weeds that are known to occur in the CDCTMP planning area are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Noxious and invasive weeds known in the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

Noxious Weeds *	Invasive Weeds
Black henbane ( <i>Hyoscyamus niger</i> )*	Bull thistle ( <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> )
Canada thistle ( <i>Cirsium arvense</i> )*	Curly-cup gumweed ( <i>Grindelia squarrosa</i> )
Diffuse knapweed ( <i>Centaurea diffusa</i> )*	Knotweed ( <i>Polygonum</i> spp.)
Dyer’s woad ( <i>Isatis tinctoria</i> )*	Pepperweed ( <i>Lepidium perfoliatum</i> )
Field bindweed ( <i>Convolvulus</i> spp.)*	Poverty-weed ( <i>Monolepis</i> spp.)
Hound’s tongue ( <i>Cynoglossum officinale</i> )*	Prickly lettuce ( <i>Lactuca serriola</i> )
Leafy spurge ( <i>Euphorbia esula</i> )*	Salsify ( <i>Tragopogon dubius</i> )
Musk thistle ( <i>Carduus nutans</i> )*	Shepherd’s purse ( <i>Capsella Bursa-pastoris</i> )
Puncturevine ( <i>Tribulus terrestris</i> )*	Sunflower ( <i>Helianthus annuus</i> )
Russian knapweed ( <i>Acroptilon repens</i> )*	Tumble mustard ( <i>Sisymbrium altissimum</i> )
Scotch thistle ( <i>Onopordum acanthium</i> )*	Whitetop ( <i>Cardaria draba</i> )
Spotted knapweed ( <i>Centaurea stoebe</i> )*	

\* Noxious weeds that are listed by the State of Idaho (Prather et al. 2010)

In addition to the invasive species identified on Idaho’s designated noxious weed list, other non-native invasive species of concern are exotic annual grasses, primarily cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), Japanese brome (*Bromus japonicus*), and medusahead wildrye (*Taeniatherm caput-medusae*), dames rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*), Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*), Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) and halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*). These species have not been designated as “noxious” in Idaho, but can also pose a serious threat to native vegetation.

Weed infestations on public lands are commonly associated with proximity to waterways, roads, and trails. Roads and trails act as corridors for the dispersal and invasion of weedy species when motorized and non-motorized modes of transport carry weedy seeds into new areas, sometimes over long distances. Vehicles, wind, water, humans, livestock, and wildlife can spread weeds from infested areas to public lands and vice versa. Weed infestations compete with native vegetation for soil nutrients, water, and sunlight and can seriously affect the ecological health of public lands.

Weed control in the CDCTMP planning area is a collaborative effort between the PFO Weed Program and the Weed Programs managed by Bannock, Cassia, Oneida, and Power Counties. Through this collaborative effort, noxious weeds are monitored and controlled on public lands throughout the planning area, with emphases on roadsides, and infestation break-out areas when they are identified. These efforts are expected to keep the spread of noxious weeds under control; however, it is not expected to completely eradicate noxious weeds. Annual weed inventories and control treatments would continue as long as funds are available.

**Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

**Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative represents the current management situation with the most miles (1,003 miles) of public access to routes on public lands; i.e. all existing routes located on the public lands and

administered by the Pocatello Field Office (PFO) are available to public access. Motorized travel would be on existing routes as identified in the Record of Decision and Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012).

Under this alternative, public access to all routes identified in the Pocatello RMP (2012) would permit the continued dispersal of weed species throughout the planning area. In order to control the spread of weeds, the PFO, in conjunction with its partners, would continue to participate in cooperative weeds control actions to prevent the widespread proliferation of weed species in the planning area.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

This alternative would recommend approximately 512 miles of designated routes as identified in the 2011 inventory, including sage-grouse preliminary priority areas, redundant routes within sage grouse priority areas, private lands that block public access to routes on public lands, and seasonal closures as currently directed under the 2012 Pocatello RMP.

Since Alternative B would only recommend approximately 51 percent of currently existing routes through route designation, the potential for the spread of weeds would be proportionally reduced compared to Alternative A. The effects of closing public access on the spread of weeds would vary depending on location and method of closure. In order to prevent the spread of weeds in these cases, all non-designated routes would be monitored and treated as necessary.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative recommends approximately 454 miles of designated routes for motorized travel, with an additional 11 miles of seasonal designated routes, on public land identified in the 2011 inventory, including sage-grouse preliminary priority areas, redundant routes within sage grouse priority areas, private lands that block public access to routes on public lands. This alternative would result in a level of resource protection greater than any of the other alternatives with approximately 45% of potential routes designated for public access.

This alternative would reduce conflicts and minimize impacts to sage-grouse and sharp tailed-grouse, other sagebrush obligates, and wildlife/big game. This alternative would further limit seasonal use in sage-grouse preliminary priority areas and seasonal habitats, and wildlife migration corridors.

Under Alternative C, reductions on the spread of weeds would be greater than any of the other alternatives because more miles of routes would be non-designated. Fewer miles of routes would limit the areas where weeds could be introduced or spread by motorized traffic. Monitoring and treatment would be required to ensure that weeds do not spread as a consequence of road closures.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative would recommend approximately 599 miles of designated routes for motorized travel with an approximate additional 10 miles of seasonal designated routes, on public lands identified in the 2011 inventory. This alternative would maximize opportunities for motorized travel by providing more routes and a number of connected routes (i.e. loop roads/trails,

destination roads/trails) to increase rewarding recreational experiences, while still offering some resource protection. This alternative also adds more miles of seasonal route designation than the current management situation.

Approximately 59% of routes would be designated for public access under this alternative. Therefore this alternative would reduce the spread of weeds more than under Alternative A, but less than under Alternatives B, C, or E. The effects of non-designating routes on the spread of weeds would depend on locations. Monitoring and treatment would be required to ensure that weeds do not spread as a consequence of road closures.

### **Alternative E**

This alternative would recommend approximately 490 miles of designated routes for motorized travel for public access with an approximate additional 38 miles of seasonal route designation, on public land identified in the 2011 inventory, including sage-grouse preliminary priority areas, redundant routes within sage grouse priority areas, and private lands that block public access to routes on public lands. This alternative is a compromise between Alternatives C and D.

Under this alternative, approximately 48% of routes would be designated for public access, which is nominally greater than Alternative C (45%), but less than Alternatives A (100%), B (51%), or D (59%). Therefore Alternative E would have an effect on the spread of weeds that is nominally intermediate between Alternatives C and B and greater than Alternatives A and D. This alternative would result in a level of resource protection greater than alternatives A, B, or D but not as much as Alternative C. Monitoring and treatment would be required to ensure that weeds do not spread as a consequence of road closures.

### **Migratory Birds**

#### **Affected Environment:**

There are approximately 240 species of migratory birds in the PFO. Waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, gulls, and neo-tropical migrant are included in the migratory bird category. The Idaho Bird Conservation Plan included both riparian areas and sagebrush as priority bird habitats in Idaho. Sagebrush obligates that inhabit the project area include the sage-sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow and the sage thrasher.

Through the years, migratory bird habitat in the study area has been substantially altered by agricultural and residential developments which have removed the structural component of the habitat provided by sagebrush. Large amounts of nesting and brood rearing habitat have also been eliminated. The type of insects and seed, providing food for migratory birds, has either been altered or reduced as a consequence of these developments.

#### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

##### **Alternative A – No Action**

Under this alternative approximately 1,003 miles of routes traverse migratory bird habitat. Collisions between birds and vehicles occur on these routes leads to direct mortality of migratory birds. In some locations increased run-off from routes produces lush vegetation which attracts

birds for breeding, nesting or foraging activities (Clark and Karr, 1979). This attraction can lead to greater risk of mortality due to being hit with vehicles (Mumme et al, 2000). Routes also can potentially increase the incidence of wildland fires which remove shrubs that provide nesting habitat for migratory birds. Soil compaction along routes increases the potential for establishment of invasive, non-native annuals and other early successional plants. (Adams et al, 1982, Prose et al, 1987). Vehicle use also can spread noxious weed seeds along routes. This proliferation of weeds decreases the quality of migratory bird habitat.

Vehicular traffic is also a source of noise that has the potential for disturbing wildlife along any type of road or trail (Singer, 1978, Bowles, 1995). Traffic noise has been documented to lead to significant reductions in breeding bird densities (Reijnen et al, 1995, 1997).

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts would be the similar to Alternative A, but the miles of designated routes would be reduced from approximately 1,003 miles to approximately 512 miles (51% reduction). The decrease in miles of designated routes would be expected to decrease collisions between birds and vehicles, reduce the incidence of accidental wildland fires, and slow the spread of noxious weeds along routes. Survival of migratory birds and habitat for migratory birds would be improved under this alternative.

### **Alternative C**

Impacts would be the similar to Alternative A, but the miles of designated routes would be reduced from approximately 1,003 miles to approximately 454 miles (45% reduction), the largest reduction of designated route miles of the five alternatives. Eleven miles of the routes would only be designated seasonally reducing impacts to migratory birds by traffic.

### **Alternative D**

Impacts would be the similar to Alternative A, but the miles of designated routes would be reduced from approximately, 1,003 miles to approximately 599 miles (59% reduction). Under this alternative 10 miles of routes would be designated seasonally, but the seasonal route designation period would be during the summer when impacts could impact migratory bird reproduction.

### **Alternative E**

Impacts would be the similar to Alternative A, but the miles of designated routes would be reduced from approximately 1,003 miles to approximately 490 miles (48% reduction). Under this alternative approximately 38 miles of routes would be designated seasonally, but the seasonal route designation period would be during the summer when impacts could impact migratory bird reproduction.

## **Range Resources (Livestock Management)**

### **Affected Environment:**

Livestock grazing is permitted on the BLM-administered public lands within the planning area. There are 70 grazing allotments ranging in size from 40 to 140,000 acres. Grazing is permitted to 97 permittees for a total of 59,105 AUMs. The season of use for livestock grazing varies between allotments and permits, however the majority occur between April and October. When livestock are utilizing an allotment, grazing permittees travel throughout the allotment to check on livestock, place mineral supplements (salt), and check on range improvements (fences, pipelines, troughs, springs, etc.).

Range improvements used to control or provide water for livestock are located throughout the travel planning area. There are approximately 367 improvements used for livestock management. The vast majority of these projects are maintained by the grazing permittee as required by range improvement cooperative agreements. Recorded improvements include: 111 fence lines totaling 272 miles, 76 water pipelines totaling 69 miles, 51 spring developments, 14 wells, 62 water catchments (reservoirs, guzzlers, water hauls), and 53 cattle guards. In order to access and maintain these range improvements, routes have been created and/or utilized. Some range improvements may be accessed regularly throughout the grazing season where as others may only be inspected often. Vehicular cross country travel to inspect or fix range improvements such as fence lines or pipelines that do not have a road/trail along them is common.

Bureau of Land Management administration of grazing use within the 70 allotments requires traveling throughout the allotments to perform utilization monitoring, authorization compliance, range improvement inspections and assessment of resource conditions. Most travel is conducted using ATV's and full size vehicles due to the distances needing to be traveled.

Existing public use of routes within the planning area can temporarily disturb livestock. Vehicles can push cattle off routes that they are using to trail along and sometime drive and/or drive cattle away from their herd. Vehicles and the presence of people can drive cattle away from watering sites. Disturbance of livestock is usually temporary in nature and livestock use resumes within a short time

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

There would be minor impacts to current livestock management. Grazing permittees would be able to check on cattle and access all routes within their allotments. Livestock operators would be able to access all of their range improvements that have a route to them without requesting a travel variance. Cross country travel to fix range improvements that do not have a route would require a travel variance from the BLM. The highest potential for livestock to be disturbed while gathering at water, salting or walking down routes is under this alternative.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Some routes that access range improvements or travel along improvements (pipelines, fence lines) would not be designated. Inspection of these improvements would need to be done by non-motorized means, or could be traveled by vehicle if included in a travel variance. A travel variance would likely be given to a permittee to access, check and fix range improvements, however the variance would specify routes that could be traveled. The ability to check the allotments by vehicle would be reduced within the majority of allotments unless there is a valid reason to travel the route, associated with livestock management, in which case a variance could be applied for. There would be a reduction in livestock disturbance by vehicles, however the amount is hard to quantify and the disturbance (when it occurs) is usually only temporary in nature.

### **Alternative C**

The impacts would be the same as under alternative B, however this alternative would further restrict route access by approximately 58 miles of non-designated routes within the planning area.

### **Alternative D**

The impacts would be the same as under alternative B, however this alternative would designate approximately 87 miles of routes, with an approximate additional 10 miles designated seasonally within the planning area.

### **Alternative E**

The impacts would be the same as under alternative B, however this alternative would not designate approximately 20 miles and designate approximately 38 miles seasonally of routes within the planning area.

### **Recreational Use**

#### **Affected Environment:**

Public lands managed by the BLM within the CDCTMP provide for dispersed recreation opportunities. Typically, the type of dispersed recreation opportunities include, but are not limited to, hunting, camping, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, photography, OSV, and motorized travel on existing routes. According to the Idaho Department of Recreation 2012 – 2016 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP), these types of recreational activities are on the rise either due to population growth and/or popularity.

Hawkins Reservoir Campground is located adjacent to Hawkins Reservoir and managed by the PFO. This semi-developed campground has 10 sites, 2 vaulted restrooms, a large parking area for vehicles with boat trailers, and a boat ramp with docks for water access. Recreational activities associated with the site include camping, sail boating, ice fishing, and OHV use. The recreation site stays busy from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend with occasional hunters in the late fall and early winter. Fishing and boating activities also occur on Daniels Reservoir.

OHV use in the area is projected to always increase due to the growing popularity of all-terrain vehicles, mountain bikes, and OSV according to the Curlew National Grassland Final Environment Impact Decision and Resource Management Plan (2002). The SCORTP suggests that the outdoor recreation demand for participation in motorized activities will also increase due to the continued population growth in the country. State Route 37 from Rockland, Idaho to Snowville, Utah, provides north-south access. State Route 38 from Malad to Holbrooke provides east-west access. Low standard gravel roads provide additional access to recreation areas, range improvements; private lands, State of Idaho lands, and Forest Service lands. Routes were often pioneered or constructed in the most direct manner possible to a specific location and for a specific need. Over time, the use of many of these routes has become recreational in nature as OHVs have become an increasingly popular form of recreation and transportation.

Private land owners often allow motorized access across private lands to access public lands, but not all private lands are available. There are an ample amount of Private lands within the CDCTMP that are physically blocked and marked “No trespassing”, limiting OHV use in specific areas. Overall, demands for outdoor recreational pursuits will continue to increase with population growth and/or popularity. OHV use as an outdoor recreational activity will also increase through time and opportunities will continue to be sought out.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

Alternative A provides the maximum opportunity for motorized access and recreational activities, allowing continued use of the all existing routes as guided by the 2012 Pocatello RMP and identified in the 2011 inventory. Approximately, 1,003 miles (Table 1.) of existing routes would be available for motorized travel to gain access for the various dispersed recreation occurring in the travel planning area. Under Alternative A, there would be neither impact to motorized recreation nor impact to the dispersed recreational activities taking place. It is anticipated that recreational activities are likely to increase over time.

#### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Under this alternative, recreational opportunities would remain viable but diminish greatly because approximately 512 miles (Table 1.) of routes would be recommended for designation when compared to Alternative A. This alternative would eliminate almost half of the routes identified in the 2011 inventory. The reduction of routes would impact dispersed recreation, especially hunting due to loss of access. Also, the lesser number of miles of designated routes would negatively impact individuals looking for dispersed camping sites or driving the existing routes for pleasure when compared to Alternative A. By reducing the number of routes available for motorized travel, the potential exists for conflicts between user groups due to increased traffic on designated routes.

#### **Alternative C**

Under this alternative, approximately 454 miles (Table 1.) of routes would be recommended for motorized travel through route designation. The availability of routes for motorized

opportunities and experiences would be diminished more than Alternative B because fewer miles of designated routes are unavailable compared to the approximately 512 miles available in Alternative B. However, certain routes that were not considered to be open under Alternative B, because of access issues, would be recommended to be open seasonally. Since Alternative C focuses on resource protection rather than motorized recreational experiences, most ridgeline roads would not be designated for scouting wildlife or hunting from them. OSV users would be impacted because they would be limited to designated routes within sage grouse winter habitat, which is not the case in Alternatives A, B, and D.

Impacts to campers and hunters using motorized vehicles would be substantial because competition for open areas may begin to emerge as a result in the loss of routes. There would also be a greater potential for conflicts between users groups given the relatively less number of routes open for motorized travel, especially in the hunting season.

### **Alternative D**

Under this alternative, opportunities for motorized recreation would be increased a bit more because the focus of the alternative is based on enhancing recreational experiences by providing approximately 599 miles (Table 1.) of designated routes compared to Alternative B, C, and E. This alternative has more designated routes that include dead end routes, spur routes, and ridgeline routes. There would be less potential for conflicts between users groups given the relatively more number of designated routes for motorized travel, especially in the hunting season. There would be more areas available for other types of dispersed recreational activities as well. OSVs would not be limited to designated routes within sage grouse winter habitat.

### **Alternative E**

Under this alternative, approximately 490 miles (Table 1.) of routes would be recommended for designation and there would be approximately fewer designated routes compared to Alternative D. Also, this alternative would designate approximately 2 miles of routes to the size of vehicles to 50 inches or less which would affect recreation users using full size vehicles in those areas. There would also be approximately 38 miles of designated routes seasonally. This alternative would impact OSV users the same as Alternative C because OSVs would be limited to designated routes within the sage-grouse winter habitat.

## **Soil Resources**

### **Affected Environment:**

Geology and soils have a major influence on topography, vegetation, watersheds and land use. Many of the management activities in the planning area are influenced by factors controlled by the geology and soils of an area.

### **Geologic Setting**

The Basin and Range physiographic province makes up the CDCTMP planning area. East-west extension beginning about 17 million years ago has created north-south mountain ranges characterized by the Bannock, Deep Creek, North Hansels, Pleasantview Hills, and Sublette

mountain ranges that lie within the CDCTMP planning area. The ranges are bounded by normal faults and generally create a “horst and graben” structural fabric. The valleys or grabens may contain thousands of feet of late Tertiary and Quaternary gravels that may contain Quaternary basalt flows. Valleys in the planning area include the Arbon, Curlew, Juniper, Malad, Marsh, and Rockland valleys.

### **Topography**

The topography of the CDCTMP planning area consists of two primary settings. First, the high elevation mountain ranges have slopes generally ranging from 30 to 70 percent and elevations up to approximately 9,100 feet (Elkhorn Peak, Oneida Co.). Included are ridges, mountain slopes and canyons formed in sedimentary, intrusive and metamorphic rocks. Second, the valleys are located at low-to-mid elevations with slopes ranging from 5 to 30 percent. Included in this setting are draws and open basins formed in sedimentary rocks. The valleys range from approximately 4,500 to 6,000 feet above sea level.

### **Soil Types**

Soils of the CDCTMP planning area have developed from bedrock, rocks/minerals deposited by rivers and glacial activity, and windblown silt and sand. They were derived primarily from the sedimentary, metamorphic, and volcanic rocks of the mountain ranges and highlands of the CDCTMP planning area.

The soils of Bannock, Cassia, Oneida, and Power counties have been mapped by the Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database for Bannock Co., East Cassia Co., Oneida Co., and Power Co., Idaho; available online at <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov>.

Major soils of the CDCTMP planning area include: loams and its variants, e.g. gravelly loam, mountain loam, shallow loamy, silt loam, or stony loam, (56%); steep-stony (38%); mountain-meadow (4%); alkali (2%); and sandy-juniper breaks (<1). Soil depths vary from shallow (zero to twenty inches to bedrock) to deep (forty to eighty inches to bedrock) and tend to be well drained. The soils in the valleys are moderately deep (twenty to forty inches to bedrock) to very deep (greater than sixty inches to bedrock) and well to somewhat poorly drained.

Principle ecological concerns affecting soil quality are conifers expanding into aspen, sagebrush-grassland and riparian communities, the loss of tall forb communities and replacement with annual tarweed, spread of noxious weeds and increased susceptibility to fires. The principle management activities affecting soil quality are roads, livestock grazing, logging, fire and recreation.

### **Erosion and Run-off**

Factors determining soil erosion potential include slope, soil type, and vegetative cover. Erosion generally increases when the vegetative cover is disturbed by road blading, intense grazing, fire, as well as motorized travel.

According to soils mapping by the NRCS, there is a relatively moderate potential for soil erosion by wind within the CDCTMP planning area (Appendix EROSION). An acre-weighted average

Wind Erodible Group (WEG) rating for the planning area is approximately 4.8 on a scale between 1 and 8 (Table 4).

Erosion hazard ratings for road and trail development in the CDCTMP Planning area are presented in Appendix EROSION and Table 5. The majority of the soils (~83%) in the CDCTMP planning area have an erosion hazard rating of Severe or Very Severe.

**Table 4.** Wind erodible group.

Wind Erodible Group	BLM Acres
1 (most)	367
2	0
3	332
4	39,083
5	154,177
6	0
7	0
8 (least)	0
	193,959 acres

**Table 5.** Erosion Hazard Ratings for Routes.

Erosion Hazard Rating	BLM Acres (% of BLM only)	CDCTMP Acres (% of total area)
Not Rated	509 ac (<1%)	15,197 (1%)
Slight	35,672 (10%)	194,127 (16%)
Moderate	31,306 (8%)	346,971 (29%)
Severe	303,407 (82%)	637,208 (53%)
Very Severe	10 (<1%)	1,210 (<1%)
	370,904	1,194,713

At present, soils in the CDCTMP planning area are generally stable with relatively few isolated instances of accelerated erosion, limited in area, and associated with steep slopes, roads or blading. Areas where the protective vegetative cover is removed, soils may dry and become powdery, making them susceptible to wind erosion. But generally, soils have sufficient vegetative cover to protect soils and watershed stability in low and high elevation sites. The developments of new routes, however, are likely to induce erosion problems in these areas. Furthermore, suitability's for constructing natural surface roads on these soils range between moderate and poor (NRCS 2013).

### Compaction

Compacted soils generally support reduced vegetation, have lower water infiltration rates and have increased erosion potential. Soil compaction can be exacerbated by moist soil conditions. There is limited information available regarding soil compaction in the planning area. Problem

areas have not been identified; but typically would include roads, high use areas for OHV, and areas with development, such as livestock facilities.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

Under the current management situation approximately 1,003 miles of routes are would be recommended for designation to motorized travel. Possible effects to soils from continued motorized travel on routes within CDCTMP area includes soil compaction, diminished water infiltration, loss of soil stabilizers (vegetation), and acceleration of erosional rates. Compaction of soils has the potential to reduce soil porosity and permeability decreasing the infiltration of surface water as well as inhibiting the growth of root systems. The precipitation runoff rate increases, further accelerating rates of soil erosion leading to the formation of rills, gullies, and other erosional features on road surfaces. Dry powdery soils may be susceptible to wind erosion on routes where vegetation has diminished as a result of vehicle travel.

#### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts to water quality under Alternative B would be reduced from impacts associated with Alternative A. Under Alternative B, there would be approximately 512 recommend for route designation than existing management. Although routes designated under the alternative are susceptible soil erosion, the potential for impacts to soils resources would be decreased as compared to Alternative A. Rehabilitation and restoration of closed routes would allow for revegetation and stabilization of soils decreasing the potential for erosion.

#### **Alternative C**

Alternative C would have the greatest positive impact to soil resources. Under alternative C there would be approximately 454 miles recommended for route designated relative to Alternative A and approximately 12 miles of designated seasonal routes. Designated routes would also be susceptible to soil erosion; however the potential severity of impacts to soil resources would be substantially decreased as compared to Alternative A. Rehabilitation and restoration of non-designated routes would stabilize soils and decrease the potential for erosion. Motorized vehicle travel would not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing soil compaction and rutting. Reduction of route length and seasonal designation would decrease the rate of soil erosion and prevent the formation of erosional features.

#### **Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, there would be approximately 599 miles of routes designated for motorized travel relative to Alternative A and approximately 10 miles of designated seasonal routes. Impacts to soil resources would be slightly reduced from alternative A as it has the smallest reduction in motorized routes. Designated routes within the CDCTMP area would be susceptible to soil erosion. Rehabilitation and restoration of non-designated routes would stabilize soils and decrease the potential for erosion. Motorized vehicle travel would not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing soil compaction and rutting. Reduction of

route length and seasonal designations would decrease the rate of soil erosion and prevent the formation of erosional features.

### **Alternative E**

Under Alternative E, there would be approximately 490 miles of motorized routes designated relative to Alternative A, approximately 18 miles of designated routes with vehicle size restrictions (50 inches or less), and approximately 38 miles of designated routes seasonally. Similar to alternatives A, B, C, and D, designated routes within the CDCTMP area would be susceptible to soil erosion. Rehabilitation and restoration of non-designated routes would stabilize soils and decrease the potential for erosion. Vehicle size restrictions would prevent compaction of soils and rutting caused by heavier full sized motorized vehicles and allow for revegetation within unutilized portions of the route. Motorized vehicle travel would not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing soil compaction and rutting. Reduction of route length, size designations, and seasonal designations would decrease the rate of soil erosion and prevent the formation of erosional features.

### **Threatened and Endangered and Sensitive Animals**

#### **Affected Environment:**

There are no threatened or endangered (T&E) animal species known to inhabit public land in the project area. On March 5, 2010 the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service announced that the sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) was warranted for listing but was precluded by higher listing priorities. The sage-grouse was placed on the list of candidate species. Candidate species do not have statutory protection under the Endangered Species Act, but their status will be reviewed annually by the Service. The sage-grouse inhabit public land in the project area (Map 7) and is a BLM sensitive species. The project area contains Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH), Preliminary General Habitat (PGH), and Key sage-grouse habitat. PPH comprises areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable sage-grouse populations. PGH comprises area of occupied seasonal or year-around habitat outside of priority habitat. The state of Idaho defines Key habitat as: Areas of generally intact sagebrush that provide sage-grouse habitat during some portion of the year including winter, spring, summer, late brood-rearing, fall, transition sites from winter to spring, spring to summer, summer/fall to winter. Key habitat may or may not provide adequate nesting, early brood-rearing, and winter cover due to elevation, snow depth, lack of early season forbs, limited herbaceous cover, or small sagebrush patch size.

Other BLM sensitive bird species that inhabit public land in the project area include: Brewer's sparrow (*Spizella breweri*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and the sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli*). Ferruginous hawks (*Buteo regalis*), Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocapillus*), Columbian Sharp-tailed grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus*), Lewis' Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*), Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) Cliff chipmunks (*Tamias dorsalis*) have also been documented in the project area.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative would have 1,003 miles of inventoried routes available for motorized recreation. Approximately 507 miles of routes traverse PPH for sage-grouse, 186 miles traverse PGH for sage-grouse, and 353 miles traverse key habitat for sage-grouse. In addition to vehicle collisions with sage-grouse, these routes potentially disturb sage-grouse during reproductive and wintering periods, fragment sage-grouse habitat, may lead to spread of noxious weeds and other invasive plants, and increase the possibility of wildland fires. These actions have reduced the quality and quantity of sage-grouse habitat.

A recent large scale research project documented that sage-grouse lek persistence decreased once development (agriculture use, roads etc) of the landscape was greater than three percent (Knick et al. 2013). The same study documented that even secondary roads could decrease the likelihood of leks persisting. Secondary road densities of less than 1.0 km/km<sup>2</sup> indicated a lek was more likely to persist (Knick et al. 2013). If leks are eliminated in an area sage-grouse numbers will diminish. Construction of roads, power lines, fences, reservoirs, ranches, farms, and housing developments has resulted in sage-grouse habitat loss and fragmentation (Braun 1998).

The project area contains important habitat for Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The sharp-tailed grouse habitat is fragmented by 936 miles of routes under this alternative. The use of these routes may disturb grouse on leks, flush hens from nests, and cause accidental fires that reduce the amount of sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

Ferruginous hawks are also affected by roads. Roads provide access to otherwise relatively inaccessible land where even limited access by humans can affect ferruginous hawks (Olendorff, R. R. 1993). There are 320 miles of routes that provide access in the Ferruginous Hawk Important Bird Area within the project area.

Sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of Northern Leopard frog habitat. In this alternative 24 miles of routes are within 300 feet of perennial waterways.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts under this alternative would be similar to alternative A. The intensity of the impacts would decrease as the number of miles of routes would decrease. This alternative has approximately 269 miles (47% less than alternative A) of routes designated to motorized vehicles in PPH for sage-grouse, approximately 95 miles (49% less than alternative A) of routes are located in PGH for sage-grouse and approximately 180 miles (49% less than alternative A) are located in key habitat for sage-grouse. The same suite impacts to sage-grouse and habitat would occur in this alternative, but on a lesser scale.

The sharp-tailed grouse habitat is fragmented by approximately 490 miles (48% less than alternative A) of routes under this alternative. The use of these routes may disturb grouse on leks, flush hens from nests, and cause accidental fires that reduce the amount of sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

There are approximately 165 miles (49% less than alternative A) of routes that provide access in the Ferruginous Hawk Important Bird Area within the project area.

Sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of Northern Leopard frog habitat. In this alternative approximately 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of perennial waterways.

### **Alternative C**

Impacts under this alternative would be similar to alternative A. The intensity of the impacts would decrease as the number of miles of designated routes would decrease. Impacts under this alternative would be similar to alternative A. The intensity of the impacts would be less because of fewer miles of designated routes. This alternative has approximately 232 miles (47% less than alternative A) of routes designated to motorized vehicles in PPH for sage-grouse, approximately 89 miles (52% less than alternative A) of routes in PGH, and 152 miles (57% less than alternative A) of routes in key habitat. The same suite impacts to sage-grouse habitat would occur in this alternative, but on a lesser scale.

The sharp-tailed grouse habitat is fragmented by approximately 439 miles (53% less than alternative A) of routes under this alternative. The use of these routes may disturb grouse on leks, flush hens from nests, and cause accidental fires that reduce the amount of sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

There are approximately 165 miles (48% less than alternative A) of routes that provide access in the Ferruginous Hawk Important Bird Area within the project area.

Sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of Northern Leopard frog habitat. In this alternative approximately 13 miles (46% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of perennial waterways.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative has approximately 254 miles (50% less than alternative A) of routes designated to motorized vehicles in PPH for sage-grouse, approximately 97 miles (48% less than alternative A) of routes in PGH, and 160 miles (55% less than alternative A) of routes in key habitat. The same suite impacts to sage-grouse habitat would occur in this alternative, but on a lesser scale.

The sharp-tailed grouse habitat is fragmented by approximately 472 miles (50% less than alternative A) of routes under this alternative. The use of these routes may disturb grouse on leks, flush hens from nests, and cause accidental fires that reduce the amount of sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

There are approximately 177 miles (45% less than alternative A) of routes that provide access in the Ferruginous Hawk Important Bird Area within the project area.

Sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of Northern Leopard frog habitat. In this alternative approximately 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of perennial waterways.

## **Alternative E**

This alternative has approximately 254 miles (50% less than alternative A) of routes designated to motorized vehicles in PPH for sage-grouse, approximately 97 miles (48% less than alternative A) of routes in PGH, and approximately 160 miles (55% less than alternative A) of routes in key habitat. The same suite impacts to sage-grouse habitat would occur in this alternative, but on a lesser scale.

The sharp-tailed grouse habitat is fragmented by approximately 472 miles (50% less than alternative A) of routes under this alternative. The use of these routes may disturb grouse on leks, flush hens from nests, and cause accidental fires that reduce the amount of sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

There are approximately 177 miles (45% less than alternative A) of routes that provide access in the Ferruginous Hawk Important Bird Area within the project area.

Sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of Northern Leopard frog habitat. In this alternative 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of perennial waterways.

## **Threatened and Endangered and Sensitive Fish**

### **Affected Environment:**

There are no threatened or endangered fish species in the project area. Several streams in the project area support BLM Idaho Sensitive Fish Species. Yellowstone Cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*) are known to occur in Walker Creek, Bell Marsh Creek, Goodenough Creek, Marsh Creek, Midnight Creek, Crystal Creek, and the Portneuf River. (Idaho Department of Fish & Game, 2007a).

Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki Utah*) occur in Dairy Creek in the Malad River drainage (Idaho Department of Fish & Game. 2007b). Dairy Creek originates on public land but does not become a perennial, fish bearing stream until after it exits public land.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

In this alternative approximately 5 miles of routes are within 300 feet of fish bearing streams. This alternative has 23 stream crossings of fish bearing streams.

Under this alternative sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation would reduce the quality and quantity of fish habitat in these streams. The sediment from roads adjacent to streams could occur along the entire reach of stream that is paralleled by the road. The amount of sediment accruing to the stream would vary based on intensity of precipitation events, the amount and type of stream side vegetation, and the soil type the road passes over. Sediment accruing to the stream at crossings would be localized. Chemicals from emissions and spills, associated with vehicles may also be transported into aquatic systems and lower water quality (Ouren et al 2007). When water quality decreases fish habitat quality also decreases.

## Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action

Impacts would be reduced compared to Alternative A. Instead of approximately 5 miles of designated routes delivering sediment into streams, approximately 1 mile of designated routes are within 300 feet of streams (80% reduction in road miles) containing Yellowstone cutthroat trout. This alternative has 2 crossings of fish bearing streams instead of 23. Both the sediment accruing to streams and damage to riparian vegetation would be reduced, improving fish habitat compared to Alternative A

## Alternative C, D, and E

The routes that would remain designated in Alternatives C, D, and E are identical to the routes remaining designated in Alternative B. Improvements in Yellowstone cutthroat trout would be similar to Alternative B.

## Threatened and Endangered and Sensitive Plants

### Affected Environment:

A GIS-based assessment of threatened and endangered (T&E) and sensitive plants was completed using data from the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System (IFWIS) (September 2012). These data are based on information provided by a variety of individuals, including Idaho Department of Fish and Game staff, BLM and other federal agency personnel, state agency personnel, academic researchers, and, in a few cases, the general public.

There are no known occurrences of T&E plant species in the CDCTMP planning area. The results of the assessment indicate, however, that at least four Idaho BLM sensitive plant species occur within the planning area (Table 6.). These include Cooper's bitterweed/rubberweed (*Hymenoxys cooperi* var. *canescens*), iodine bush (*Allenrolfea occidentalis*), red glasswort (*Salicornia occidentalis*), and Simpson's hedgehog cactus/mountain ball cactus (*Pediocactus simpsonii*).

**Table 6.** Sensitive Plants in the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

Sensitive Plant	Mapping Area
Cooper's bitterweed	29 acres
Iodine bush	8 acres
Red glasswort	16 acres
Simpson's hedgehog cactus	31 acres

Cooper's bitterweed occurs on rocky, shallow soils at higher elevations of the planning area. There are four known populations of Cooper's bitterweed that occur on BLM public lands; two populations each in the Deep Creek and Pleasantview mountain ranges. Populations in the Deep Creek range occur at least 1000 feet from any current routes or routes proposed for designation. Routes in the Pleasantview range occur within about 30 feet of one population and go through another population of Cooper's bitterweed.

Iodine bush and red glasswort are low-growing plants that occur on saline soils in alkali flats and saline wet meadows. Known populations of iodine bush and red glasswort in the planning area occur on public lands adjacent to Oneida County roads (i.e. Hay Land road and Samaria road) and on private land near Birch Creek road in Bannock County. There is also one occurrence of red glasswort on the USFS Curlew National Grasslands near Sweeten Reservoir.

Simpson's hedgehog cactus occurs on the rocky soils of exposed ridges in the planning area. Known populations of Simpson's hedgehog cactus occur in five scattered populations on about 31 acres of the BLM Curlew allotment; one population in the Crazy Canyon pasture at the southern end of the Sublett Mountains and four populations in the Trail Canyon pasture. In addition, there is at least one population in an area estimated at approximately 3,091 acres on National Forest lands on Black Pine Mountain in the southwest portion of the planning area.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

There are very few route differences among the five alternatives in relation to sensitive plant species on BLM public lands in the planning area. In some instances, established two-track routes already pass through known populations of sensitive plants. Since there would be no cross-country travel or pioneering of new routes in these sensitive plant areas or across the entire planning area, there would be essentially no difference in impacts to sensitive species among the five alternatives. There are no route differences among the five alternatives in relation to these populations and impacts would not differ among alternatives, except in one restricted instance where Alternative E would eliminate public access through one population of Simpson's hedgehog cactus.

### **Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative represents the current management situation with public access to approximately 1,003 miles of routes on BLM public lands; i.e. all existing routes located on the public lands administered by the Pocatello Field Office (PFO) are available for public access. Under this alternative, public access to all routes identified in the Pocatello RMP (2012) would not impact special status plant species on public lands.

**Cooper's bitterweed** – Routes in the Deep Creek range are not close to any known populations of Cooper's bitterweed. The closest population lies within about 1000 feet of a route, and would not be affected under Alternative A. Established routes in the Pleasantview range pass through known populations of Cooper's bitterweed and there would be no changes under Alternative A.

**Iodine bush and Red glasswort** – Populations of iodine bush or red glasswort that are known to occur on public lands are immediately adjacent to established county roads east of Samaria Mountain in Oneida County. There are no differences in routes among alternatives; therefore, there would be no difference in impacts to these sensitive plant species among alternatives.

**Simpson's hedgehog cactus** – Two populations of Simpson's hedgehog cactus occur within 200-1200 feet of routes while three populations occur on or immediately adjacent to routes under Alternative A.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

This alternative would recommend approximately 512 miles of designated routes identified in the 2011 inventory, along with seasonal closures as currently directed under the 2012 Pocatello RMP. However, there are no differences between Alternative A and B in the location of routes and no differences in impacts to sensitive plant species.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative would recommend approximately 454 miles of designated routes, with an approximate additional 11 miles of seasonal route designation, on public land identified in the 2011 inventory, including sage-grouse preliminary priority areas, redundant routes within sage grouse priority areas, private lands that block public access to routes on public lands. However, there are no differences among Alternatives A, B, and C in the location of routes and no differences in impacts to sensitive plant species.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative would recommend approximately 599 miles of designated routes with an approximate additional 10 miles of seasonal route designation, on public lands identified in the 2011 inventory. This alternative would maximize opportunities for motorized travel by providing more routes and a number of connected routes (i.e. loop roads/trails, destination roads/trails) to increase rewarding recreational experiences, while still offering some resource protection. This alternative also adds more miles of seasonal designation than the current management situation.

However, there are no differences among Alternative A, B, C, and D in the location of routes and no differences in impacts to sensitive plant species.

### **Alternative E**

This alternative would recommend approximately 490 miles of designated routes with an approximate additional 38 miles of seasonal designation, on public land identified in the 2011 inventory, including sage-grouse preliminary priority areas, redundant routes within sage grouse priority areas, and private lands that block public access to routes on public lands. This alternative is a compromise between Alternatives C and D.

There are no differences among Alternative A, B, C, and D in the location of routes and no differences in impacts to sensitive plant species. Under Alternative E, however, one population of Simpson's hedgehog cactus would be closed to access by motorized travel.

## **Tribal Treaty Rights and Interests**

### **Affected Environment:**

The 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty, between the United States and the Shoshone and Bannock Tribes, reserves the Tribes' right to hunt, fish, gather, and exercise other traditional uses and practices on unoccupied federal lands. In addition to these rights, the Shoshone Bannock Tribes have the right to graze tribal livestock and cut timber for tribal use on those lands of the original Fort Hall

Reservation that were ceded to the Federal government under the Agreement of February 5, 1898, ratified by the Act of June 6, 1900.

The federal government has a unique trust relationship with federally-recognized Native American Tribes including the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. BLM has a responsibility and obligation to consider and consult on potential effects to natural resources related to the Tribes' treaty rights or cultural use. Amongst the resources or issues of interest to the Tribes that could have a bearing on their traditional use and/or treaty rights include access to and availability of traditionally used plant and animal species.

The travel management planning area includes lands within the ceded boundary and outside of the ceded boundary. The planning area also borders a large portion of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Tribal treaty rights, as defined, are applicable within the project area.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternatives A, B, C, D, and E:**

The Tribes would continue to be able to exercise their right to hunt, fish, and gather on public lands under all Alternatives. Non-motorized access to practice these rights is available everywhere there is access to public lands. The travel plan reduces opportunities for motorized travel. Motorized restrictions would reduce motorized access to exercise treaty rights, but would benefit hunting and gathering opportunities by reducing motorized impacts to plants and wildlife.

### **Vegetation**

#### **Affected Environment:**

Vegetation is the most important biotic component of the landscape because it stabilizes watersheds and provides cover, browse, nesting and rearing habitat for a diverse assemblage of wildlife and multiple uses. Vegetation also aids in maintaining healthy watersheds and streams by protecting soils, regulating stream flows, and filtering sediments from water.

The climate of the CDCTMP planning area influences its vegetation. Annual precipitation ranges between about 8 to +20 inches, though some higher elevations receive over 60 inches. Annually, snowfall averages from about 36 inches in the lowest elevations to over 100 inches in the highest elevations. Snow distribution patterns caused by wind, topography, and existing vegetation develop pockets of highly productive sites within the drier, less productive surrounding areas. Winter snow accumulation and runoff provide moisture for spring plant growth.

The growing season is about 125 days. Summers may be hot (average high/low summer temperature: 86/47 °F) and winters marked by extreme cold (average high/low winter temperature: 32/22 °F). With increases in elevation, the mean temperature lowers and the growing season shortens.

In the planning area, basins and hills below 6,500 ft are generally dominated by sagebrush/grass and juniper. Above 6,500 ft, mountain shrub, aspen, and conifer are more abundant. Riparian

areas are vegetated with emergent vegetation types; the transition zone at the edge of the riparian area is often dominated by sagebrush.

Distinct vegetation communities within the PFO area are influenced by characteristics such as soil depth, texture, and chemistry; climate variables, particularly temperature, total and seasonal distribution of precipitation and wind; and topographic features, most importantly elevation, aspect, and slope. Plant communities respond to other environmental influences, such as wildlife and livestock foraging, rodent burrowing, and fire. Plants themselves also influence soil chemistry and soil resistance to wind and water erosion.

An ecological site is distinctive kind of land with specific soil (e.g. soil texture) and physical characteristics that differs from other kinds of land in its ability to produce distinctive kinds and amounts of vegetation, and in its ability to respond similarly to management actions and natural disturbances (Habich 2001). Ecological sites can be characterized by predominate soil texture, precipitation zone, and characteristic vegetation, which relate to the ecological potential of land areas.

Ecological sites in the CDCTMP can be summarized across four precipitation zones (8-12", 12-16", 16-22", and +22", by pooling similar growth forms to form nine broad community types; i.e. shadscale, juniper, big sagebrush, bluegrass-salix-carex, maple, Douglas-fir, aspen, low sagebrush, and black sagebrush communities (Table 7.). For a complete list of 35 ecological sites mapped within the CDCTMP (Appendix A).

**Table 7.** Ecological sites within the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

Characteristic Soil	Characteristic Veg <sup>1</sup>	Acres	%
Alkali flats	ATCO/ELEL5	18,458	2
Juniper breaks	JUOS/PSSP6	933	<1
Loam, and all variants	ARTR SPP/PSSP6	519,988	56
Meadow, dry/wet	PONE/SALIX/CAREX	16,514	2
Mountain	ACGL/PSME/POTR	18,635	2
Sand(y)	ARTR-JUOS/ACHY	5,418	<1
Steep south/stony slope	ARTR-SP/PSSP6-FEID	334,037	36
Shallow stony	ARAR8/PSSP6	14,055	2
Windswept ridge	ARNO4/PSSP6	230	<1
		928,268	

<sup>1</sup> Characteristic Vegetation symbols: ATCO = *Atriplex confertifolia* (shadscale saltbush), ELEL5 = *Elymus elymoides* (squirreltail), JUOS = *Juniperus osteosperma* (little Utah juniper), PSSP6 = *Pseudoroegneria spicata* (bluebunch wheatgrass), ARTR-SP (*Artemisia* species), PONE = *Poa nemoralis* (inland bluegrass), SALIX = *Salix* species (willow), CAREX = *Carex* species (sedge), ACGL = *Acer glabrum* (Rocky Mountain maple), PSMEG = *Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca* (Rocky Mountain Douglas-fir), POTR5 = *Populus tremuloides* (quaking aspen), ACHY = *Achnatherum hymenoides* (Indian ricegrass), FEID = *Festuca idahoensis* (Idaho fescue), ARAR8 = *Artemisia arbuscula* (little/low sagebrush), ARNO4 = *Artemisia nova* (black sagebrush).

The vegetation within the CDCTMP planning area is dominated by sagebrush communities, characterized by various *Artemisia* species, which dominate approximately 93% of public lands

in the CDCTMP planning area (Table 7). Mountain big sagebrush (*A. tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana*) dominates with bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata* = *Agropyron spicatum*), though due to variations in topography, soils, and precipitation zones, basin big sagebrush (*A. tridentata* ssp. *tridentata*) or Wyoming big sagebrush (*A. tridentata* ssp. *wyomingensis*) dominate on some sites. Other native areas are composed of native perennial grasslands or juniper, with small areas of aspen and/or dry conifer, salt desert shrub (*Atriplex*, *Sarcobatus* spp.), and riparian (*Salix* spp., *Carex nebrascensis*) dominant in some areas. North-facing slopes at higher elevations tend to be dominated by Douglas-fir stands with some aspen.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

This alternative represents the current management situation with public access to approximately 1,003 miles of established routes on BLM public lands; i.e. all existing routes located on the public lands administered by the Pocatello Field Office (PFO) are available for public access. Under Alternative A, 1,003 miles of would be for motorized access. The use of these routes would continue and potentially exacerbate erosion and off-site sedimentation, the proliferation of noxious and invasive weeds, and lowering the quality of the vegetation.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

This alternative would designate approximately 512 miles of motorized routes for public access, which is a reduction of approximately 51 percent compared to Alternative A. Reducing the amount of routes used for motorized travel would have long-term positive effects on the vegetation resources by allowing vegetation to encroach and re-establish on the bare soil surfaces and develop a new plant cover. A rehabilitated vegetation cover would promote watershed integrity and reduce water and wind erosion on these previously exposed routes.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative would designate the least number of miles routes for public access, approximately 454 miles, which is a reduction of approximately 45 percent compared to Alternative A, and nominally less than Alternatives B, D, and E. Alternative C would benefit vegetation to the greatest degree of all alternatives because the most miles of bare ground surfaces would be not designated, approximately 538 miles, and allowed to develop a healthy plant cover that would reduce erosion potential and greatly promote watershed health.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative would designate approximately 599 miles of routes for public access, which is a reduction of approximately 59 percent compared to Alternative A, but nominally more than Alternatives B, C, and E. Alternative D would benefit vegetation more than Alternative A, but less than Alternatives B, C, and E because approximately 394 non-designated miles of bare ground surfaces would not be available for motorized travel and allowed to develop a healthy plant cover that would reduce erosion potential and greatly promote watershed health.

## **Alternative E**

This alternative would designate approximately 490 miles of designated routes for public access, which is a reduction of approximately 48 percent compared to Alternative A, and nominally less than Alternatives B, C, and D. Alternative E would benefit vegetation more than Alternative A, B, or D but less than Alternatives C because approximately 473 non-designated miles of bare ground surfaces would be not available for motorized travel and allowed to develop a healthy plant cover that would reduce erosion potential and greatly promote watershed health.

## **Water Quality**

### **Affected Environment:**

The CDCTMP area occurs within the Upper Snake and Bear River Administrative Basins. The Upper Snake Administrative Basin includes the American Falls (HUC 17040206), Portneuf (HUC 17040208), and Lake Walcott (HUC 17040209) sub basins. Streams within the Upper Snake River Basin flow northward into the Snake River drainage. The Bear River Administrative Basin includes the Lower Bear – Malad (HUC 16010204) and Curlew Valley (HUC 16020309) sub basins (IDEQ, 2010). Streams of the Bear River Administrative basin flow southward into the Great Basin Surface water within the CDCTMP area consists of numerous intermittent and perennial streams which are derived from precipitation, snowmelt, and springs emanating from highland areas. Various stream segments within the CDCTMP area have surface water beneficial use designations which are assigned by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) (IDAPA, 2012). Table 8 lists water bodies within the CDCTMP that have beneficial use designations. Regardless of designation status, IDEQ will apply cold water aquatic life and primary or secondary contact recreation criteria to all waters.

As the agency responsible for protecting Idaho's surface water, the IDEQ continually monitors and assesses the quality of the state's rivers, streams, and lakes. This information is used to report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to make decisions regarding water quality management. Information regarding stream segments, pollutants, and water quality status of streams within the CDCTMP area can be found in IDEQ's 2010 Final Integrated Report. The report indicates that several stream segments within the CDCTMP area have impaired water quality as defined by section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Streams on the 303(d) list are impaired water bodies that do not meet applicable water quality standards for one or more beneficial uses by one or more pollutants and require development of an EPA approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). 303(d) streams are listed as Category 5 waters in the 2010 Final Integrated report.

The report also indicates that several impaired stream segments occur within the CDCTMP however are not listed on the 303(d) list. These waters are considered Category 4 waters and are grouped into one of three subcategories: Category 4a waters have TMDLs developed and when implemented, full attainment of water quality standards is expected for the specific impairment, Category 4b waters have pollution control requirements in place other than a TMDL and are expected to meet standards, and Category 4c waters are failing to meet water quality standards due to other types of pollution such as flow alteration or habitat alteration, not a pollutant.

**Table 8.** Surface Water Beneficial Use Designations within the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

<b>Sub Basin Name</b>	<b>Stream Name</b>	<b>Aquatic Life</b>	<b>Recreation</b>	<b>Other</b>
American Falls	Bannock Creek – Source to American Falls Reservoir	COLD	SCR	
Portneuf	Marsh Creek – Source to mouth	COLD	SCR	
	Portneuf River – Chesterfield Dam to Marsh Creek	COLD, SS	PCR	DWS
Lake Walcott	Rock Creek – Confluence of South and East Fork Rock Creeks to mouth	COLD, SS	PCR	
	Snake River – Rock Creek to Raft River	COLD, SS	PCR	DWS
	Snake River – American Falls Reservoir Dam to Rock Creek	COLD	PCR	DWS
Lower Bear-Malad	Malad River – Little Malad River to Idaho/Utah Border	COLD	SCR	
	Little Malad River – Daniels Reservoir Dam to mouth	COLD	PCR	
	Wright Creek – Source to Daniels Reservoir	COLD	PCR	
	Malad River – Source to Daniels Reservoir	COLD	PCR	DWS
Curlew Valley	Deep Creek – Rock Creek to Idaho/Utah Border	COLD	PCR	DWS
	Deep Creek – Source to Rock Creek	COLD	PCR	DWS

Abbreviations: **COLD** – Cold Water Communities; **SS** – Salmonid Spawning; **PCR** – Primary Contact Recreation; **SCR** – Secondary Contract Recreation; **DWS** – Domestic Water Supply

There are no Category 4b waters that occur within the CDCTMP area. Table 9 summarizes the status of impaired stream segments that occur within the CDCTMP area.

Stream impairment and pollutants can be sourced from streambank modification/ destabilization, irrigated crop production, rangeland (livestock grazing), flow regulation/ modification, highway/road/bridge construction, and pastureland treatment. Under the current management situation approximately 1,003 miles of routes are available for motorized travel. The current route system has the potential to contribute limited sediment into the waterways within the planning area, mostly from spring runoff and isolated summer thunderstorm events. Runoff from roadways also has potential to input chemicals produced by vehicle travel to live water and stream habitat.

**Table 9.** Status of impaired water bodies that occur within the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

<b>Sub Basin</b>	<b>Stream Name</b>	<b>Category 4a (TMDL for specific impairment)</b>	<b>Category 4c (Impairment caused by pollution)</b>	<b>Category 5 (303d listed pollutant)</b>
<b>American Falls</b>	Bannock Creek - Source to American Falls Reservoir		Low flow alterations	Sedimentation/Siltation Fecal Coliform Cause Unknown (Nutrients Suspected Impairment)
	Moonshine Creek – Source to mouth			Sedimentation/Siltation
	West Fork Bannock Creek – Source to mouth			Sedimentation/Siltation
	Knox Creek – Source to mouth			Sedimentation/Siltation Combined Biota/Habitat Bio-assessment
	Rattlesnake Creek – Source to mouth			Escherichia Coli Sedimentation/Siltation
	Rattlesnake Creek – Lower		Low flow alterations	Escherichia Coli Sedimentation/Siltation
<b>Portneuf</b>	Gibson Jack Creek – Upper and Middle	Sedimentation/Siltation		
	Mink Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	West Fork Mink Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
	South Fork Mink Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	East Fork Mink Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
	Upper Middle Marsh Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
	Lower Marsh Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous	Physical substrate habitat alterations	Escherichia Coli Oxygen, Dissolved Temperature, Water
	Lower Middle Marsh Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous	Physical substrate habitat alterations	Oxygen, Dissolved Temperature, Water
	Walker Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation		
	Bell Marsh Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
Goodenough Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation			

<b>Sub Basin</b>	<b>Stream Name</b>	<b>Category 4a (TMDL for specific impairment)</b>	<b>Category 4c (Impairment caused by pollution)</b>	<b>Category 5 (303d listed pollutant)</b>
	Upper Garden Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
	Lower Garden Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous	Low flow alterations Physical substrate habitat alterations	
	Upper Garden Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	Yellow Dog Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	Hawkins Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		
	Birch Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation Nitrogen Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	Portneuf River	Oil and Grease Sedimentation/Siltation Fecal Coliform Nitrogen Phosphorous	Low flow alterations	Temperature, Water
<b>Lake Walcott</b>	Rock Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation		
	South Fork Rock Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation		
	East Fork Rock Creek	Sedimentation/Siltation		
	Snake River – American Falls to Rock Creek			Combined Biota/Habitat Bio-assessments
	Malad River	Total Suspended Solids, Phosphorous	Low flow alterations Physical substrate habitat alterations	
	Devil Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous		Escherichia coli
	Elkhorn Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous		
<b>Lower Bear-Malad</b>	Little Malad River	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous	Low flow alterations Physical substrate habitat alterations	
	Indian Mill Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous		
	Upper Wright Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	Middle Wright Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous	Physical substrate habitat alterations	Fecal Coliform

Sub Basin	Stream Name	Category 4a (TMDL for specific impairment)	Category 4c (Impairment caused by pollution)	Category 5 (303d listed pollutant)
	Wright Creek	Total Suspended Solids Phosphorous		Escherichia Coli
	Dairy Creek – Source to mouth		Low flow alterations Physical substrate habitat alterations	Combined Biota/Habitat Bio-assessments Sedimentation/Siltation
Curlew Valley	Deep Creek – Rock Creek to Idaho/Utah Border		Low flow alterations	Sedimentation/Siltation
	Sheep Creek		Physical substrate habitat alterations	Sedimentation/Siltation Fecal Coliform
	Meadow Brook Creek		Physical substrate habitat alterations	Escherichia Coli Sedimentation/Siltation
	Rock Creek		Physical substrate habitat alterations	Sedimentation/Siltation

## Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:

### Alternative A – No Action

Under the current management situation approximately 1,003 miles of existing routes are available for motorized travel. Travel routes within on BLM-administered public lands CDCTMP area have the potential to increase input of sedimentation, turbidity, and pollutants within affected watersheds reducing stream habitat and negatively affecting agricultural and recreational water users downstream on public and private lands. Compaction of soils, disruption of soil crusts, and reduced vegetation cover can lead to acceleration of surface water runoff and soil erosion. Sediment and other debris that are eroded from the routes could be flushed downslope into aquatic systems increasing stream water turbidity. Pollutants associated with deposition of emissions and spills of petroleum products could be absorbed into soils and sediments or dissolved in runoff. Surface water runoff and erosion of contaminated soils could introduce potentially toxic chemicals into aquatic systems

### Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action

Impacts to water quality under Alternative B would be reduced from impacts associated with existing management (Alternative A). Under Alternative B, there would be approximately 512 miles of routes designated than compared to Alternative A. Rehabilitation and restoration of non-designated routes would allow for re-vegetation and stabilization of soils decreasing erosion and surface water runoff. The reduction in motorized route length would decrease the amount of erosion and surface water runoff produced on road surfaces. Thus, lessen the potential for sedimentation and contamination produced by vehicle travel from entering streams and aquatic habitats.

### **Alternative C**

Alternative C would have the greatest positive impact to live water and stream habitats. Under alternative C there would be approximately 454 miles of designated routes relative to Alternative A and approximately 12 miles of designated seasonal routes. Motorized vehicle travel will not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing the amount of soil compaction and disturbance to vegetation produced by motorized vehicles. The reduction of motorized route length and having seasonal designations would decrease the amount of erosion and surface water runoff produced on road surfaces. The potential for migration of sediments and contaminants into aquatic habitats would be decreased.

### **Alternative D**

Under Alternative D, there would be approximately 599 miles of designated routes relative to Alternative A and approximately 10 miles of designated seasonal routes. Impacts to water quality under this alternative would be slightly reduced from impacts associated with Alternative A. Motorized vehicle travel would not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing the amount of soil compaction and disturbance to vegetation produced by motorized vehicles. The reduction of motorized route length and having seasonal route designations would decrease the amount of erosion and surface water runoff produced on road surfaces. Thus, lessen the potential for sedimentation as well as contamination produced by vehicle travel from entering aquatic habitats.

### **Alternative E**

Under Alternative E, there would be approximately 490 miles recommended for route designation relative to Alternative A, approximately 20 miles of routes designated with vehicle size restrictions (50 inches or less), and approximately 38 miles of seasonal route designations. Vehicle size restrictions would prevent compaction of soils and rutting caused by heavier full sized motorized vehicles and allow for revegetation within unutilized portions of the route. Motorized vehicle travel would not be allowed on routes with seasonal designations during specified times reducing the amount of soil compaction and disturbance to vegetation produced by motorized vehicles. Reduction of routes, size restrictions, and seasonal restrictions would decrease the amount of erosion and surface water runoff on road and trail surfaces thus reducing the potential for sediment and chemicals input into streams and waterways.

## **Wetlands and Riparian Zones**

### **Affected Environment:**

The major streams within the project area are the Malad River, Marsh Creek, Deep Creek, Bannock Creek, and Rock Creek and their associated tributaries. Major impacts to riparian areas in Project Area stem from water diversions for irrigation, road establishment and use, and livestock grazing. Diversions remove water from the systems thereby reducing the size of riparian areas.

Livestock grazing on BLM-administered lands generally takes place during the hot season. This intensifies use of the riparian areas because the vegetation remains green and nutritious in the

riparian areas. Grazing removes vegetation, can cause bank shearing, and increase sediment loads in streams.

## **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

### **Alternative A – No Action**

Of the approximately 1,003 miles of routes under this alternative, approximately 24 miles of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 59 stream crossings under this alternative. Under this alternative sediment from routes and vehicle damage to riparian vegetation (stream crossings) would reduce the quality and possibly the amount of riparian habitat present. The amount of sediment accruing to the stream would vary based on intensity of precipitation events, the amount and type of vegetation adjacent to the water bodies, and the soil type the road passes over.

Water quality may be adversely affected by vehicle raised dust that settles into aquatic systems (Ouren et al 2007). Chemicals from emissions and spills, associated with vehicles may also be transported into aquatic systems and lower water quality (Ouren et al 2007). Lowering of water quality would reduce the quality of riparian habitat.

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts to riparian areas would be similar to Alternative A. Of the approximately 512 miles of designated routes under this alternative, approximately 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 17 stream crossings (71% less than alternative A) under this alternative.

### **Alternative C**

Impacts to riparian areas would be similar to Alternative A. Of the approximately 454 miles of designated routes under this alternative, approximately 13 miles (46% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 22 stream crossings (63% less than alternative A) under this alternative. There would be 4 stream crossings that are on seasonally designated routes under this alternative. These crossings would be expected to contribute slightly less sediment to the streams.

### **Alternative D**

Impacts to riparian areas would be similar to Alternative A. Of the approximately 599 miles of designated routes under this alternative, approximately 15 miles (38% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 22 stream crossings (63% less than alternative A) under this alternative. There would be 2 stream crossings that are on seasonally open routes under this alternative.

### **Alternative E**

Impacts to riparian areas would be similar to Alternative A. Of the approximately 490 miles of designated routes under this alternative, approximately 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 22 stream crossings (63% less than alternative

A) under this alternative. There would be 2 stream crossings that are on seasonally open routes under this alternative.

## **Wildlife Resources**

### **Affected Environment:**

Wildlife in the project area include: big game species such as mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), pronghorn (*Antilocapra Americana*), moose (*Alces alces*), and mountain lions (*Felis concolor*). Upland game birds include: blue grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus*), ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), gray partridge (*Perdix perdix*), ring-necked pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*), and mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*). Small game includes: cottontail rabbits. Other wildlife that inhabits the project area includes fur-bearers, bats, reptiles, and amphibians.

Wildlife habitat in the project area has been reduced, in both quantity and quality since European settlers have inhabited the county. Habitat has been converted for agricultural purposes, establishment of communities, development of transportation infrastructure, and introduction of invasive species. Agricultural crop production involves periodic tillage and removes both shrub and herbaceous vegetation used by wildlife. Livestock grazing can remove herbaceous vegetation at critical periods of the year, when it is required by ground nesting birds. Roads and railroads fragment wildlife habitat, introduce invasive plants decreasing the quality of habitat, and cause direct mortality. Infrastructure associated with communities eliminates most wildlife habitat. BLM managed land in the project area has native vegetation that has been impacted by livestock grazing, roads, and introduction of invasive vegetation.

### **Environmental Consequences – Direct and Indirect Effects:**

#### **Alternative A – No Action**

There are approximately 1,003 miles of inventoried routes on public land in the travel planning area. Approximately three hundred, seventy-one miles of the 1,003 miles of routes in the project area traverse big game winter range. OSV use would be restricted to existing routes in big game winter range, approximately 371 miles. During the winter, vehicle use can disturb wintering big game. They use energy to move away from the disturbance. Depending on the severity of winter and the fitness of the animal entering winter, they are less likely to survive. Yearlong pronghorn habitat is traversed by approximately 123 miles of routes under this alternative.

Routes also can potentially increase the incidence of wildland fires which remove shrubs the deer rely on for winter forage. Vehicle use also can spread noxious weeds which decrease the quality of big game winter range.

Vehicle traffic also affects deer and elk during other seasons. Many ridge tops in the Pleasantview, Deep Creek, North Hansel, Samaira, and Sublette mountain ranges in the project area have roads that make them accessible to both ATVs and full size vehicles. Canfield et al. 1999, found that ORVs traveling in un-roaded landscapes, especially when most main ridges are accessible is comparable to conventional vehicles traveling in unrestricted, high road-density situations.

Radio-collared mule deer disturbed by ATVs alter their patterns of foraging and spatial use of habitat, the harassment of deer resulted in diminished reproductive output in the following fawning season. (Knight et al. 1995).

Elk have been documented responding to vehicles by fleeing when the vehicles were still 0.93 miles away (Rowland et al. 2005). This movement by elk affects energy budgets adversely by loss of foraging opportunities while responding to vehicle activity, both from increased movements and from displacement from foraging habitat (Rowland et al. 2005). An indirect effect of vehicle activity on wildlife mortality is the proliferation of routes that provide greater access to remote places by hunters and poachers (Boyle and Samson, 1985; Andrews, 1990).

Species other than big game are also affected by vehicles. Slow moving wildlife such as snakes can experience high rates of mortality, caused by vehicle traffic, due to their strategy for thermoregulation (lying on warm surfaces, such as roads) (Sullivan. 1981).

### **Alternative B – Preliminary Proposed Action**

Impacts to big game would be similar to Alternative A with fewer miles of routes decreasing the intensity of the impacts. There are 512 miles of designated routes under this alternative. Under this alternative on approximately 198 miles of routes would be in big game winter range. OSV use would be restricted to routes in big game winter range, approximately 198 miles. There would be fewer disturbances to deer and elk during the winter season when big game are already stressed by climatic conditions. Pronghorn habitat has approximately 47 miles of designated routes under this alternative.

### **Alternative C**

Impacts to big game would be similar to Alternative A. There are approximately 454 miles of designated routes under this alternative and approximately 11 miles of routes that are designated seasonally. Under this alternative on approximately 187 miles of routes would be in big game winter range. OSV use would be restricted to routes in big game winter range, approximately 187 miles. In addition to decreased mileage in winter range, this alternative was designed to reduce the mileage of routes on ridgelines in the Pleasantview, Samaria, Deep Creek, and Sublette mountain ranges. This alternative would provide more security cover for both deer and elk during hunting seasons. Pronghorn habitat would have approximately 47 miles of designated routes under this alternative.

### **Alternative D**

Impacts to big game would be similar to Alternative A. There are approximately 599 miles of designated routes under this alternative and approximately 10 miles of routes that are designated seasonally. This alternative was designed to provide “loop routes” for motorized recreation and would provide less security for deer and elk during hunting seasons. Under this alternative approximately 230 miles of routes would be in big game winter range. OSV use would be restricted to routes in big game winter range. Pronghorn habitat would have approximately 52 miles of designated routes under this alternative.

## **Alternative E**

Impacts to riparian areas would be similar to Alternative A. Of the 532 miles of open routes under this alternative, 14 miles (42% less than alternative A) of routes are within 300 feet of streams. There are 22 stream crossings (63% less than alternative A) under this alternative. There would be 2 stream crossings that are on seasonally open routes under this alternative.

## **CHAPTER 4 – CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

This section of the document discloses the incremental impact that the alternatives are likely to have when considered in the context of impacts associated with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area.

The Cumulative Impact Assessment Area for this analysis includes all lands within Curlew/Deep Creeks Travel Management Plan planning area. For all of the resources affected by the alternatives described in this document, the Curlew/Deep Creek Travel Management Plan planning area is the landscape unit that defines the bounds of the cumulative analysis.

### **Past and Present Actions**

On the basis of aerial photographic data, BLM GIS analysis, the following past and present actions, which have impacted the assessment area to varying degrees, have been identified: Agriculture, Forestry, Residential Development, Livestock Grazing, Recreation, Infrastructural Development, Mineral Exploration and Development, Wildfire, and Fuel Reduction and Ecosystem Maintenance/Improvement Projects uses. Past actions that have occurred in the area include the installation of power lines and associated roads.

### **Agriculture**

Agricultural development has played a major role on the development of the landscape and the use of the network of roads for transporting harvest productions. Agriculture development extends back to the earliest times of settlement within the CIAA. Cultivation on private lands within the CIAA has produced crops such as barley, hay, and wheat which are the dominant agricultural activities. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, approximately 38,723 acres of barley, 138,582 acres of hay, and 222,895 acres of wheat were cultivated on agricultural lands within Bannock, Oneida, Power, and Cassia Counties in 2007 (USDA 2013).

### **Forestry**

In the past special forest products have been sold for many years in the CIAA. Within the CIAA each management agency sells its own permits. SFP permits are for personal use only and commercial sales of firewood are not reflected. Only 11% of the land within the CIAA is suitable for collection of SFP. The BLM has approximately 28% percent of all land under management in the CIAA, the Forest Service has approximately 13% and the State has about 2%. The majority of the land within the CDCTMP is privately owned (approximately 56%). However, within the CIAA the BLM manages approximately 60,460 acres of forest and juniper woodland which is about 40% of the total acreage available for SFP collection, while the Forest Service manages approximately 54,021 acres (36%) and the state manages approximately 9016 acres (6%) which is suitable for SFP collection.

With the BLM each firewood permit is good for between 2-6 cords of wood. The Forest Service permits are good for between 4 and 8 cords of wood. Both agencies systems track the number of permits sold, not the number of cords removed.

In the past 10 years the number of permits sold for SFP has gradual increased. As oil and gas process increase the number of permits will also increase. The Caribou Targhee National Forest West Side Ranger District has shown a similar trend. On average the BLM will sell about 350 permits for firewood, post and poles, and 450 Christmas trees permits. The Forest Service sells an average of 226 permits for Firewood. The state sells permits in SE Idaho on a regional basis so an annual number of permits sold in the CIAA are unknown.

### **Residential Development**

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, the total population combined for Bannock, Cassia, Oneida, and Power Counties census was 119,042, a slight increase of 1 percent from 2010 and 2011 (U.S. Bureau of Commerce 2012). The majority of the population resides in Bannock County (pop. 83,800) which encapsulates the Cities of Pocatello, Chubbuck, Inkom, and McCammon. Oneida County has the lowest level of population (pop 4,215) that includes rural towns such as Roy, Malad, Buirst, and Stone with the general population making their homes in rural residential lots often tied to ranching or agricultural pursuits. Residential developments within the counties have been steadily growing with the population increase, except for rural communities which growth remains level.

### **Livestock grazing**

There is a long history of livestock grazing within the travel planning area. Several routes were created ranchers running livestock prior to the BLM regulating livestock use, and numerous trails/roads have been created by grazing permittees and the BLM since grazing has been regulated. The majority of the roads/trails constructed as previously stated are associated with range improvements (fence & pipe lines, watering sites, salting areas, etc.). The use of ATVs by grazing permittees and the BLM to inspect and perform minor maintenance of improvements has increased over the past 10+ years compared to inspections performed horseback, which was more commonly used prior to ATVs. The roads/trails used by permittees are also used by the public and often dead end, potentially leading to off road travel.

### **Realty**

Currently the BLM has an application from Idaho Power and PacifiCorp for a large scale overhead electric transmission line called the Gateway West. The proposed line crosses Wyoming and Idaho. It is foreseeable that this line and other applications for similar lines may get authorized in the near future as the country's energy needs grow. The granting of these right-of-ways will necessitate roads being built to maintain the towers upon which the lines are attached. The proposed routes for Gateway West cut through the CDCTMP area.

### **Recreation**

Curlew Campground and Group Area, Twin Springs Campground, and Sweeten Pond are developed recreation sites on the Curlew National Grassland managed by the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. The Curlew Campground is a semi-developed campground with approximately 16 sites, including 5 vaulted toilets, potable water, and a large group site with pavilion. Recreational visits to the Grassland were projected by the Forest Service to increase an average

of four percent per year and the trend is likely to continue based on the Curlew National Grassland Final Environment Impact Decision and Resource Management Plan (2002). The campground is adjacent to Stone Reservoir which is popular for boating, fishing, and ice fishing. The Twin Springs campground is located near a portion of the Hudspeth Cutoff trail. The Hudspeth Cutoff was an alternate route for a portion of the Oregon-California National Historic Trail. Visitors at Twin Springs are there to see the wagon ruts associated the historic trail. Other visitors at the campground are there for general camping and hunting opportunities in the area. Sweetend Pond is an artificial impoundment recreation site that offers waterfowl and wildlife viewing. Overall, the recreational sites within the Grassland receive steady visitations through the late spring, summer, and early fall.

Travel on the national forests and Grassland are regulated by the Sawtooth and Caribou-Targhee National Forests 2005 Final Travel Management Rule, Federal Register / Vol. 70, No. 216 / Wednesday, November 9, 2005 / Rules and Regulations. The Final Travel Management Rule and subsequent travel plans depicts routes, and the type of travel allowed by motorized vehicles and snowmobiles, are within designated areas or on designated routes.

### ***Infrastructural Development***

Within the CIAA there are 17 active and 7 inactive mineral material sites which are utilized for construction of roads ways. Disturbance associated with the sites totals approximately 338 acres.

### ***Mineral Exploration and Development***

Past and present actions regarding mineral exploration and development of gold, perlite, and peat has occurred within the CIAA. The Black Pine Mine is located approximately 25 miles west of Holbrook, Idaho on lands managed by the USFS. The open pit mine was operated by Pegasus Gold Corporation utilizing cyanide heap leaching methods to recover gold between 1992 and 1999. Mining is no longer active and remediation of the mine is being completed by the USFS. Exploration drilling was completed by Western Pacific Resources within the Black Pine mine from 2011 to 2012 and consisted of 38 drill holes. In June of 2012 Western Pacific Resources received a five year approval from the USFS to conduct exploration drilling on lands within and adjacent to the Blackpine Mine. Perlite is mined by Hess Pumice Products on privately owned lands approximately 20 miles northwest of Malad, Idaho. The perlite is processed in Malad and is sold to be utilized as an industrial mineral. Peat is mined from an operation located in Marsh Valley approximately 3 miles west of Downey, Idaho. Production of peat is inconsistent as the market demand is dependent on the local agricultural industry. Taken together, these mining operations have disturbed approximately 1050 surface acres within the CIAA.

### **Wildfire**

Wildfire is common in Southeast Idaho and varies in intensity depending upon factors such as humidity, slope, fuel type and loads and wind velocity. Because the area has frequent lightning activity during the summer and early fall, fires can occur anywhere. Between 1980 and 2012, there have been 458 recorded wildfires within the CDCTMP CIAA boundary (Map 7). The wildfires burned a total of 260,608 acres (20% of CIAA) across varying landscape portions of both federally-managed public land and private land. Larger wildfires (greater than 300 acres in

grass/shrub fuel type) are generally more common in the Southern portion of the CIAA. Many wildfires occur on upland slopes that are too steep for mechanical rehabilitation, though dozer lines are seeded and weed treatments are conducted as needed. In general, non-sprouting species such as mountain sagebrush and juniper are impacted the most by these fires and their recovery has and will remain slower than for sprouting species such as perennial grasses, bitterbrush, and snow brush. The CIAA Fire History for this analysis is shown on the CIAA Fire History map.

### **Fuel Reduction and Ecosystem Maintenance/Improvement Projects**

Several fuel reduction and ecosystem maintenance/improvement projects occurred within the CIAA. Examples of previous fuel reduction/maintenance/improvement treatment methods used include mechanical, chemical, seeding, and prescribed fire. A total of 1621 acres have been mechanically treated within the area. Treatment areas include sagebrush steppe, juniper, and aspen stands. Open roads are typically used as access and fire lines for these projects.

### **Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions**

#### **Agriculture**

Agriculture will continue to play a major role on the development of the landscape and the use of the network of roads for transporting harvest productions. Some studies have shown that agricultural practices are on a small decline nationwide (USDA 2013), but Idaho is known as an agricultural state and harvest production in the CIAA is estimated to continue at the same level into the foreseeable future.

#### **Forestry**

Within the CIAA it is likely that permits for SFP will remain at or gradually increase in number of permits sold. There is a close correlation of firewood sales and heating costs. If oils and gas prices significantly increase then we can reasonably expect a corresponding increase in SFP sales.

#### **Livestock Grazing**

Livestock grazing is an authorized use of the public lands within this travel planning area. It is expected that grazing will continue within all of the allotments, however stocking levels could change. It is expected that all of the existing range improvement would remain and be utilized into the future. New range improvements (fence, pipelines, troughs, etc.) will likely be installed within the planning area. New improvements could occur anywhere, however it is expected that the majority would occur within allotments that have waters, or need additional structures to manage livestock.

#### **Realty**

Reasonably foreseeable actions include the proposal for a new transmission line to be installed in the area, including associated routes. Idaho Power Company and PacifiCorp (Rocky Mountain Power) applied to the BLM for a Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant to use public lands for portions of the Gateway West Transmission Line Project in 2007. The Companies are proposing to construct and operate a new electric transmission system consisting of 11 segments totaling

about 1,148 miles of new construction of 230 kilovolt (kV), and 500kV transmission line to supplement existing transmission lines. As proposed, a portion of these lines will traverse the CDCTMP at a ROW width up to 250 feet.

### **Recreation**

Given trends of the recent past, recreation activity in the CIAA is likely to increase substantially. A study conducted by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (2012) indicates that recreational activities of various types increased in the 20-30 percent range across the state during the 2012-2060 periods. Given this increase, it is reasonably foreseeable that recreational activities in the assessment area could increase in the 40-60 percent range over the next 48 years.

### **Mineral Exploration and Development**

Mineral exploration and development within the CIAA is likely to remain at existing levels. Although there are no proposals for mining within the Black Pine Mine, exploration drilling conducted by Western Pacific Resources will likely continue until authorization to conduct exploration on USFS lands expires. While increased demand of perlite and pumice could result in the expansion of operations adjacent to their present location, or possibly beyond, there are no known plans to either expand current operations or conduct exploratory operations in the foreseeable future.

### **Wildfire**

Given the area's fire history, it is reasonably foreseeable that wildfire will again burn in parts of the CIAA. However, the occurrence, frequency, and size of these incidences cannot be predicted with any certainty. When wildfires occur, travel routes in the vicinity may be temporarily closed to provide public safety during fire operations. In addition, travel areas impacted by wildfires may be restricted for at least two years post-event to allow for emergency stabilization and rehabilitation efforts to take effect. Through yearly monitoring, post-rehabilitation treatment success will be evaluated and when deemed an appropriate ecological response, restrictions will be lifted. There are future plans to update the current Fire Management Plan to reflect updated Resource Management Plans. Under this future plan, certain natural fire starts may be allowed to progress naturally if certain conditions are met.

Closing roads in the alternatives have both positive and negative consequences from a fire management perspective. Where roads are closed and/or rehabilitated, risk of a vehicle or man caused fire would be reduced; however, loss of access would greatly hinder or reduce suppression responses. Roads that are not rehabilitated and allow for administrative use during fire suppression and prescribed burning efforts would be advantageous. Limiting access would likely change management response of wildfires to less aggressive tactics, which in turn, could cause larger fires.

### **Fuel Reduction and Ecosystem Maintenance/Improvement Projects**

It is reasonable to foresee fuel reduction and ecosystem maintenance/improvement projects occurring within the CIAA to protect sage grouse and big game winter range habitat. Appropriate fuel reduction/maintenance/improvement treatment methods which may be used

include mechanical, chemical, seeding, and prescribed fire. Prescribed fire treatments may encompass several hundred acres. Treatment method and size are budget driven varying year to year. When prescribed fire is chosen as a treatment, OHV travel routes may be temporarily closed to provide for public safety during burning operations. The Field Office Manager may approve travel variance requests to permit vehicles leaving designated routes in support of project implementation on a case by case basis. Closing roads in the alternatives may create minimal adverse effects.

### **Cumulative Impacts associated with Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions**

The results of the cumulative analysis indicate that agricultural development on private lands and livestock grazing are responsible for the majority of the accumulated effects identified within the assessment area since they have been occurring since the turn of the century. Most of the roads in the travel network system were created to support the agricultural and grazing practices. The effects of agricultural and grazing practices include the direct loss or alteration of native plant communities, increasing levels of erosion and sedimentation, direct and indirect losses and fragmentation of sage grouse, big game and other wildlife species habitat.

### **The Contribution of the Alternatives to Cumulative Impacts**

#### **Alternative A**

Alternative A - No Action Alternative would continue to contribute incrementally to the collective impact in the assessment area. Taking no action to designate routes for motorized travel would continue to contribute to increasing erosion and sedimentation, displacement and fragmentation in sage-grouse habitat (preliminary priority and winter) and big game winter range. Relative to the assessment area as a whole, these impacts would occur over a relatively large area and taking no action would contribute incrementally to the collective impact.

#### **Alternative B**

The implementation of Alternative B would have a major countervailing effect on the collective impact, because the effects associated with the unplanned, user-defined motorized routes would be reduced by 51 percent through route designation. Impacts associated with the use of motorized routes would still occur, but the rate at which these impacts would accumulate across the CIAA would be slowed. The effect would be minor, however, given the number of miles of motorized routes designated relative to the impacts that have already occurred within the assessment area.

#### **Alternative C**

Alternative C would also have a countervailing effect on the collective impact because the number of miles of routes that would not be designated is the greatest amongst the alternatives. A route designation of approximately 45 percent of motorized routes would slow the accumulation of environmental impacts on public lands to a substantial degree; correspondingly slowing the accumulation of impacts across the assessment landscape. Reducing the number of designated routes to this degree could, however, result in an acceleration of new pioneered routes

that could result in new cumulative environmental impacts that the implementation of this alternative is designed to reduce.

**Alternative D**

Alternative D would also have a countervailing effect on the collective impact because the number of miles of routes that would be designated is the greatest amongst the alternatives. A route designation of approximately 59 percent of motorized routes would slow the accumulation of environmental impacts on public lands to a substantial degree; correspondingly slowing the accumulation of impacts across the assessment landscape.

**Alternative E**

Alternative E would also have a countervailing effect on the collective impact because the number of miles of routes that would be not designated is almost the greatest amongst the alternatives other than Alternative C. A reduction of approximately 48 percent of motorized routes would slow the accumulation of environmental impacts on public lands to a substantial degree the same as Alternative C; correspondingly slowing the accumulation of impacts across the assessment landscape. Reducing the number of designated routes to this degree, like Alternative C, could result in an acceleration of new pioneered routes that may result in new cumulative environmental impacts that the implementation of this alternative is designed to reduce.

**Table 10.** Cumulative Impacts Associated with Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions by Affected Resource.

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
Access	The need to gain access started with the pioneers and has continued through today. The Pioneers drove their wagons over the land to get to places far away in the west. The driving created roadways. The invention of the automobile added to the amount and frequency that people needed access. Urbanization created the need and desire for people to get out of urban areas and recreate in the “Great Outdoors” this added to the number of people accessing public lands. Growth in population increased the pressure on the lands and created more access points, trails and roadway. The industrial revolution brought powerlines, mining, telephone lines, fiber optics, pavement, and concrete which impacted the lands.	With the growth of the country in population and the ever growing urban areas the need for recreation is flourishing. Hunting is still a very popular as is non-motorized bikes, motorcycles, ATV, UTVs. It is foreseeable that these activities will continue to grow in popularity and impact the use of the public lands. As this growth occurs so will the creation of new roads, trails and access points, absent management the lands. Further, the need to transport power from Idaho’s hydro plants and Wyoming’s natural gas power plants will continue and thus the need for large overhead transmission lines and gas pipelines on public lands.	In addition to growth in recreational travel, reasonably foreseeable actions that may affect transportation over the next 10 years on private and public lands include continued residential growth; fire fuels reduction/habitat projects, county road maintenance and upgrades, utility corridor maintenance and upgrades, and new road rights-of-way. Other future activities near the travel planning area that could potentially impact transportation include local land use planning, soil research, vegetation treatments, county road upgrades, special recreation permits and activities, and utility rights of way and corridors. The cumulative impacts to transportation from all action alternatives would be dispersed long-term and require on-going monitoring and mitigation by BLM and partners.
Existing and Potential Land Uses	Today as in the past the land has been used for multiple purposes. Right of ways (ROW) for powerlines, pipelines, communication towers, roadways, water pipelines, ditches, canals, paved interstates, county roads,	It’s reasonably foreseeable that all the impacts of the past and present will continue in the future. Additionally population growth is also foreseeable which, in turn will create more pressure for the same uses on the public lands.	Population growth and growth in recreational travel, reasonably foreseeable actions that may affect transportation over the next 10 years on private and public lands include continued residential growth; fire fuels reduction/habitat projects, county road maintenance and upgrades, utility corridor

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
	lodging roads, hiking trails, bike paths, hunting, camping, fishing, access to isolated private land, transportation of goods and services.		maintenance and upgrades, and new road rights-of-way. Other future activities near the travel planning area that could potentially impact transportation include local land use planning, soil research, vegetation treatments, county road upgrades, special recreation permits and activities, and utility rights of way and corridors. The cumulative impacts to transportation from all action alternatives would be dispersed long-term and require on-going monitoring and mitigation by BLM and partners.
Forestry	Impacts from past and present impacts have been very small to date. The very nature of SFP collection limits impacts. No ground disturbing impacts are allowed from SFP collections. The main impact from SFP collection arises from people pushing “cherry stem” roads into forested stands. These roads are unauthorized, unmaintained, short term and quickly closed.	The impacts from any reasonably foreseeable impacts are will be much the same as the past and present impacts. There will continue to be “cherry stem” roads into forested stands. These roads will continue to be rehabilitated when they occur.	The cumulative impacts with on the SFP program will result in fewer unauthorized roads as people hunt for SFP. Due to the reduced area available for SFP collection, future stem roads may increase in length.
Fisheries	Impacts of past and present action on fish are the same as those described under Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Fish.	Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions on fish are the same as those described under Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Fish	The cumulative impacts to fish are the same as those described under Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Fish.
Invasive, Non-native Species (Weeds)	Agricultural and residential development has removed vegetation on approximately 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of routes. These disruptions create gaps in the native vegetation, which are susceptible to weed invasion, and exacerbate the spread of weeds. Wildfires and grazing activities have also led to an increase in weed populations on public and private lands.	Disturbances associated with agriculture, urban infrastructure development, wildfires, and grazing will continue to reduce vegetative cover and create sites for weed invasion. In addition, increases in recreational use will increase erosion on motorized routes and trails and have the potential to reduce vegetative cover, increase susceptibility to soil erosion, and provide corridors for spread of weeds.  Weeds would continue to be controlled as practicable by federal, state, and county agencies, including future BLM projects.	Past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions will have relatively little impact on weeds. Control efforts coordinated among federal, state, and county will continue, subject to fluctuations in budgets.  Travel designations will reduce the number of public accessible miles on BLM public lands, and would not contribute to the further spread of weeds. Travel designations would benefit the weed inventory and control programs of federal, state, and county agencies.
Migratory Birds	Agricultural and residential development has removed shrubs used by migratory birds for nesting and foraging across approximately 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of roads in the assessment area.  The herbaceous vegetation in farmed areas also is highly altered. When only one species (wheat or alfalfa) is grown, the species diversity of insects is reduced, decreasing the forage base for some species of migratory birds. These decreases have reduced the nesting habitat and the forage base for some species of migratory birds. These effects have likely reduced local populations.	The reasonably foreseeable increase in housing units is likely to reduce nesting and foraging habitats. The Conservation Reserve Program regulated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture is expected to have a decrease in enrolled acres reducing the amount of grassland habitat available for migratory birds.	Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions are likely to result in the loss of nesting and foraging habitat.. These losses are likely to reduce migratory bird populations across this area
Range Resources	Several existing routes were created by ranchers or BLM to access or maintain range improvements.	New routes may need to be created to access or maintain future range improvements.	Closure to public use of existing routes or new routes that access range improvements will have minor impact to grazing permittees, because a travel variance would be issued to assure continued management of livestock

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
			and maintenance of range improvements.
Recreational Use	<p>Past and present action has had relatively little impact on recreation because the great majority of these actions have occurred on private land to which the general public would not normally have access.</p> <p>Past and present grazing activity has created some conflicts between recreationist and cattle. Road construction have both facilitated and been the product of past and present recreational activity.</p>	<p>Reasonably foreseeable future actions not have a substantial effect on recreation either because most action will occur on private lands where access is limited. However, future residential development will facilitate recreation in the area because, for the most part, these developments will occur to improve access to recreational opportunities.</p>	<p>Past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions will have relatively little impact on recreation. Future residential development will facilitate recreational activity by providing improved access to recreational opportunity.</p> <p>Livestock grazing could create minor conflicts with recreationists.</p>
Soils	<p>Past and present agricultural, urban, infrastructure, and mineral development activity within the CIAA has resulted in the eradication and removal of the native vegetation, thereby exposing soil to wind and water erosion.</p> <p>Recreational use of routes and trails within the CIAA has resulted in disturbance to native vegetation and compaction of soils, thus decreasing infiltration of precipitation runoff and increasing erosion of travel surfaces.</p> <p>Livestock grazing has resulted in a reduction in vegetative cover and increase in compaction exposing soils and reducing the infiltration of water, making soils susceptible to wind and water erosion. These impacts are more common associated around trough locations and salting grounds which comprise relatively few acres within the CIAA.</p> <p>Past wildfires within the CIAA have burned vegetation thereby exposing soils to wind and water erosion. Impacts to soils in burned areas are relatively short term as vegetation regenerates relatively quickly, typically in 2 to 3 years.</p>	<p>Additional disturbance associated with urban and infrastructure development within the CIAA will reduce vegetative cover and compact soils in developed areas.</p> <p>Recreational use on motorized routes and trails within the CIAA will increase compaction of soils, increased precipitation runoff, and erosion of travel surfaces.</p> <p>Future wildfires within the CIAA have the potential to burn vegetation increasing the susceptibility of soil erosion.</p>	<p>Past, Present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions will result in loss and removal of vegetation, compaction of soils, and decreased infiltration rates thus increasing precipitation runoff and soil erosion</p>
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animals	<p>Agricultural and residential development has removed shrubs used by sage-grouse and pygmy rabbits across 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of roads in the assessment area. Alfalfa fields provide foraging areas for sage-grouse and sharp-tailed grouse broods, but roads remove habitat and fragment remaining habitat. These effects have likely reduced local populations.</p>	<p>The reasonably foreseeable increase in housing units is likely to reduce nesting habitat for a sage-grouse and foraging habitats for grouse.</p>	<p>Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions has resulted or is likely to result in the loss of habitat of the assessment area. These losses are likely to reduce sage-grouse and pygmy rabbits population across this area</p>
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Fish	<p>Agricultural and residential development has taken place across 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles</p>	<p>The reasonably foreseeable increase in housing units will increase sediment delivered to streams in the assessment area. The Idaho Department of Fish &amp; Game plans to</p>	<p>Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future action are likely to result in the loss of habitat across approximately of the</p>

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
	of roads in the assessment area. Road derived sediments in stream gravel have been linked to decreased fry emergence, decreased juvenile densities, loss of winter carrying capacities, increased predation of fishes, and reduced benthic organism populations and algal production. Irrigated agriculture also de-waters streams which reduces the amount of habitat and increases water temperature in streams. Rainbow trout have been introduced to provide recreational	stock sterile rainbow trout where populations of cutthroat trout exist. This will reduce the interbreeding between rainbow and cutthroat trout.	assessment area.
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Plants	<p>There are two BLM Sensitive Plant Species that occur within the planning area; no Threatened or Endangered Plant Species occur within the CIAA.</p> <p>At present, agricultural and residential development has removed native vegetation on approximately 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of routes. Wildfires and grazing activities have further reduced the vegetative cover and possibly impacted BLM sensitive plant species on public and private lands in the past.</p> <p>Disruptions to sensitive plant species habitats have probably reduced the frequency and size of sensitive species populations.</p>	<p>Since the BLM sensitive plant species occur on highly saline or remote mountainous sites, the disturbances associated with agriculture, urban infrastructure development, wildfire, and grazing will have only nominal impacts to sensitive species populations.</p> <p>The number of miles accessible by the public under the CDCTMP will be reduced compared to past and present actions, however, any increases in recreational use will proportionally increase erosion and compaction on motorized routes and trails, and have the potential to lower vegetative cover, increase susceptibility to soil erosion, provide corridors for spread of weeds, and damage sensitive plants in those impact areas. Since some routes go through or are immediately adjacent to populations of sensitive species, increased motorized traffic has the potential to further impact these populations.</p> <p>Hazardous fuels reductions, revegetation, invasive species control, and ESR projects would continue to be implemented to mitigate the negative impacts on native plant communities and would avoid or enhance sensitive plant species habitats.</p>	<p>Past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions will have relatively little impact on sensitive plant species at the broad scale of the CDCTMP planning area.</p> <p>Restoration, rehabilitation, and revegetation efforts will focus-on and facilitate the re-establishment of native plant communities in impacted habitats.</p> <p>Travel designations will not appreciably reduce impact on BLM sensitive plant species; however, travel designations would benefit rehabilitation of previously accessible routes by eliminating motorized traffic on non-designated routes and marginally improve the overall ecological health of the planning area.</p>
Tribal Treaty Rights and Interests	Past and present actions have resulted in decreasing access to and decreasing numbers of plants and animals that the Tribes use to exercise their reserved rights under the Ft. Bridger Treaty.	<p>Reasonably foreseeable future urban, infrastructure, and mineral development will further decrease access to and quantity of resources to which they have a right under the Ft. Bridger Treaty.</p> <p>Future wildfires within the CIAA have the potential to burn vegetation, decreasing the number of plants and animals that the Tribes use to exercise their reserved rights under the Ft. Bridger Treaty.</p>	Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions have resulted in a decrease in access to and quantity of resources that the tribes use to exercise their reserved treaty rights
Vegetation	<p>Agricultural and residential development has removed native vegetation on approximately 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of routes.</p> <p>Wildfires and grazing activities have reduced the quality of the vegetative cover on public and private lands. These disruptions to native plant communities have compacted soils, lowered the quality of watersheds and wildlife habitat, and susceptibility to wildfires.</p> <p>Recently, BLM and IDFG have planted or seeded sagebrush on over</p>	<p>Disturbances associated with agriculture, urban infrastructure development, wildfire, and grazing will continue to impact native vegetation and reduce the quality of wildlife habitat.</p> <p>While the number of miles accessible by the public under the CDCTMP will be reduced compared to past and present actions, any increases in recreational use, will proportionally increase erosion on motorized routes and trails, and have the potential to lower vegetative cover, increase susceptibility to soil erosion, and provide corridors for spread of weeds in those impact areas.</p> <p>Hazardous fuels reductions, revegetation, invasive species control, and ESR projects would continue to be</p>	<p>Past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions will have relatively little impact on native plant communities at the broad scale of the CDCTMP planning area.</p> <p>Restoration, rehabilitation, and revegetation efforts will facilitate the re-establishment of sagebrush on areas where habitat quality has been reduced; i.e. on marginal or Restoration 2 or 3 habitats.</p> <p>Travel designations will reduce the number of public accessible miles on BLM public lands, and lessen the impacts on native vegetation. Travel designations would</p>

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
	2,900 acres of the CDCTMP planning area to rehabilitate burned sagebrush steppe habitat.	implemented to mitigate the negative impacts on native plant communities. BLM and IDFG would continue to rehabilitate burned sagebrush steppe habitats.	benefit the rehabilitation of previously accessible routes by eliminating motorized traffic on non-designated routes and marginally improve the overall ecological health of the planning area.
Water Quality	<p>Past and present agricultural, urban, infrastructure, and mineral development has contributed to soil erosion and sedimentation in areas where natural vegetation communities have been removed. Streams and aquatic habitats in close proximity to developed areas are also susceptible to fertilizers and chemicals carried by surface water runoff.</p> <p>Recreational use of routes and trails within the CIAA has resulted in surface water runoff and erosion of travel surfaces. Sediment and pollutants transported in surface water runoff has the potential to enter aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Livestock grazing has resulted in a reduction in vegetative cover and compaction of soils increasing the potential soil erosion, surface water runoff, and sedimentation into aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Past wildfires within the CIAA have burned vegetation thereby increasing the potential for soil erosion and surface water runoff. Sediment transported from burned areas in surface water runoff can enter aquatic habitats contributing to stream turbidity. Impacts to water quality in areas affected by wildfire are relatively short term as vegetation regenerates relatively quickly, typically in 2 to 3 years.</p>	<p>Reasonable foreseeable urban and infrastructure development within the CIAA will disturb soils and remove native vegetation increasing surface water runoff, soil erosion, and input of sediments as well as pollutants into aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Recreational use on motorized trails within the CIAA will increase compaction of soils thus increasing the potential for erosion of travel surfaces as well as surface water runoff which could input sediment and pollutants into aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Future wildfires within the CIAA have the potential to increase surface water runoff and soil erosion in areas where vegetation is burned. Streams and aquatic habitats that occur in close proximity to burned areas would be susceptible to sediment input and increased stream turbidity.</p>	Past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions will result in an increase in soil erosion and surface water runoff which could input sediment and pollutants into aquatic habitats.
Wetlands and Riparian Zones	<p>Agricultural and residential development has taken place across 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of roads in the assessment area. Livestock grazing reduces vegetative cover in riparian areas, adding sediment and increasing water temperature. Irrigation removes water from the stream which exacerbates sediment problems. Roads reduce the amount of riparian vegetation, increase sediment in streams, and increase stream alterations to allow road placement. The health of riparian areas is decreased by these actions.</p>	The reasonably foreseeable increase in housing units will cause additional impacts to riparian areas.	Past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future action are likely to result in the loss or degradation of riparian areas across the assessment area
Wildlife	Agricultural and residential development has taken place across 400,200 acres and 3,205 linear miles of roads in the assessment area.	The reasonably foreseeable increase in housing units will cause additional impacts to big game winter range	Past, present and reasonable foreseeable future action is likely to result in the loss or degradation of big game winter ranges across the assessment area.

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Impacts of Past and Present Actions</i>	<i>Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFAs)</i>	<i>Cumulative Impact</i>
	<p>Most of these areas were once big game winter range. These developments reduce the amount of winter habitat available to big game by removing shrubs and by increasing the disturbances in the areas. The number of animals that these winter ranges can support has been reduced.</p>		

## CHAPTER 5 - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

### Persons and Agencies Consulted

Multiple efforts were made to consult and coordinate with individuals and organizations during the development of the alternatives analyzed in this document. Starting in May 2010, the BLM led multiple public scoping meetings in the project area to discuss issues and objectives and to start forming alternatives to address them. Throughout the planning effort, the BLM met with county commissioners, private land owners, concerned public citizens, grazing permittees, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, U.S. Forest Service, Idaho State governmental agencies, and the Idaho Falls District Resource Advisory Council sub-committee, which were all instrumental in providing recommendations in the development of the proposed project.

### List of Preparers

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Date

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Date

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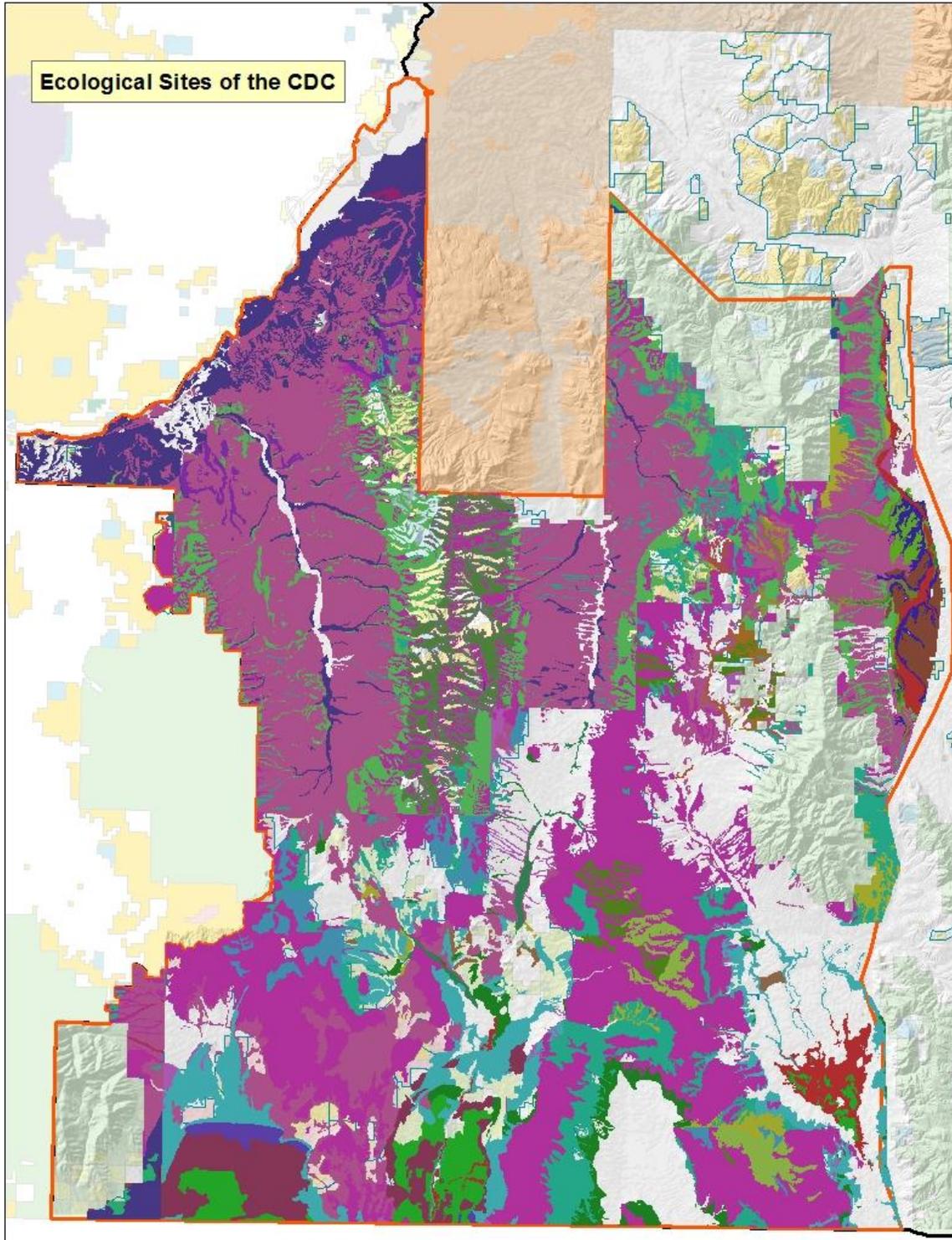
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## **APPENDIX**

**APPENDIX A - Ecological Sites within the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.**



**APPENDIX B** – Legend for 32 ecological sites found with the Curlew Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

Ecological Sites of the CDC	
	ALKALI FLATS 8-12 ATCO/ELEL5
	ALKALI FLATS 8-12 SAVE4/ELEL5
	ASHY LOAM 13-16 ARTRV/PSSP6
	GRAVELLY LOAM 16-22 ARTRV/PSSP6
	JUNIPER BREAKS 13-16 JUOS/PSSP6
	LOAMY 11-13 ARTRT/PSSP6
	LOAMY 11-13 ARTRW8/PSSP6 11-13 inches
	LOAMY 12-16 ARTRT/PSSP6
	LOAMY 12-16 ARTRW8/PSSP6
	LOAMY 13-16 ARTRV/PSSP6
	LOAMY 13-16 ARTRW8/POA
	LOAMY 16-22 ARTRV/PSSP6 16-22
	LOAMY 8-11 ARTRT/PSSP6
	LOAMY 8-12 ARTRW8/PSSP6
	LOAMY BOTTOM 12-16 ARTRT/LECI4
	LOAMY BOTTOM 12-16 ARTRT/LECI4-AGROP
	LOAMY MOUNTAIN SLOPES 16-22 ACGL/BRCA5
	MOIST MOUNTAIN LOAM 20+ POTR5
	MOUNTAIN LOAMY 22+ PSMEG/SYOR2
	RIPARIAN WET MEADOW SALIX/CAREX
	SAND 12-16 PUTR2/ACHY
	SANDY 8-12 JUOS/ARTRT/ACHY
	SANDY 8-16 ARTRT/PSSP6
	SEMIWET MEADOW
	SHALLOW LOAMY 13-16 ARTRV/PSSP6
	SHALLOW STONY 12-16 ARAR8/PSSP6
	SOUTH SLOPE LOAMY 11-13 ARTRW8/PSSP6
	STEEP SLOPE 16-22 ARTRV/PSSP6
	STEEP SLOPES 12-16 ARTRV/PSSP6
	STEEP STONY 16-22 CELE3-ARTRV/PSSP6
	STEEP STONY SLOPES 16-22 ARTRV/FEID
	STONY LOAM 13-16 ARTRV/PSSP6 13-16
	STONY LOAM 16-22 ARTRV/PSSP6
	WET MEADOW
	WINDSWEPT RIDGE 12-16 ARNO4/PSSP6

**Maps**

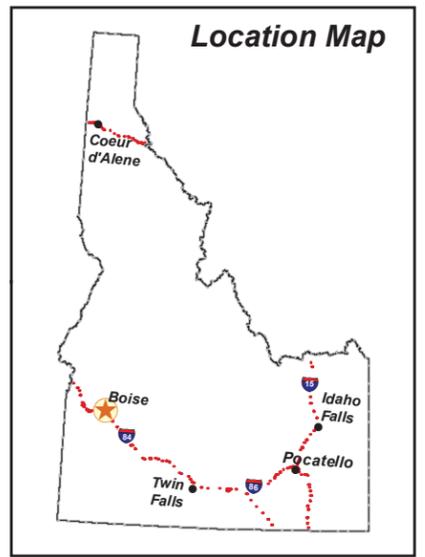
# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

## Map 1 - Alternative A

**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
4350 Cliffs Drive  
Pocatello, Idaho 83204



Date: 10 May 2013



- Alternative A Routes
- Additional Private Access Restrictions
- County Boundary

**Surface Management Agency**

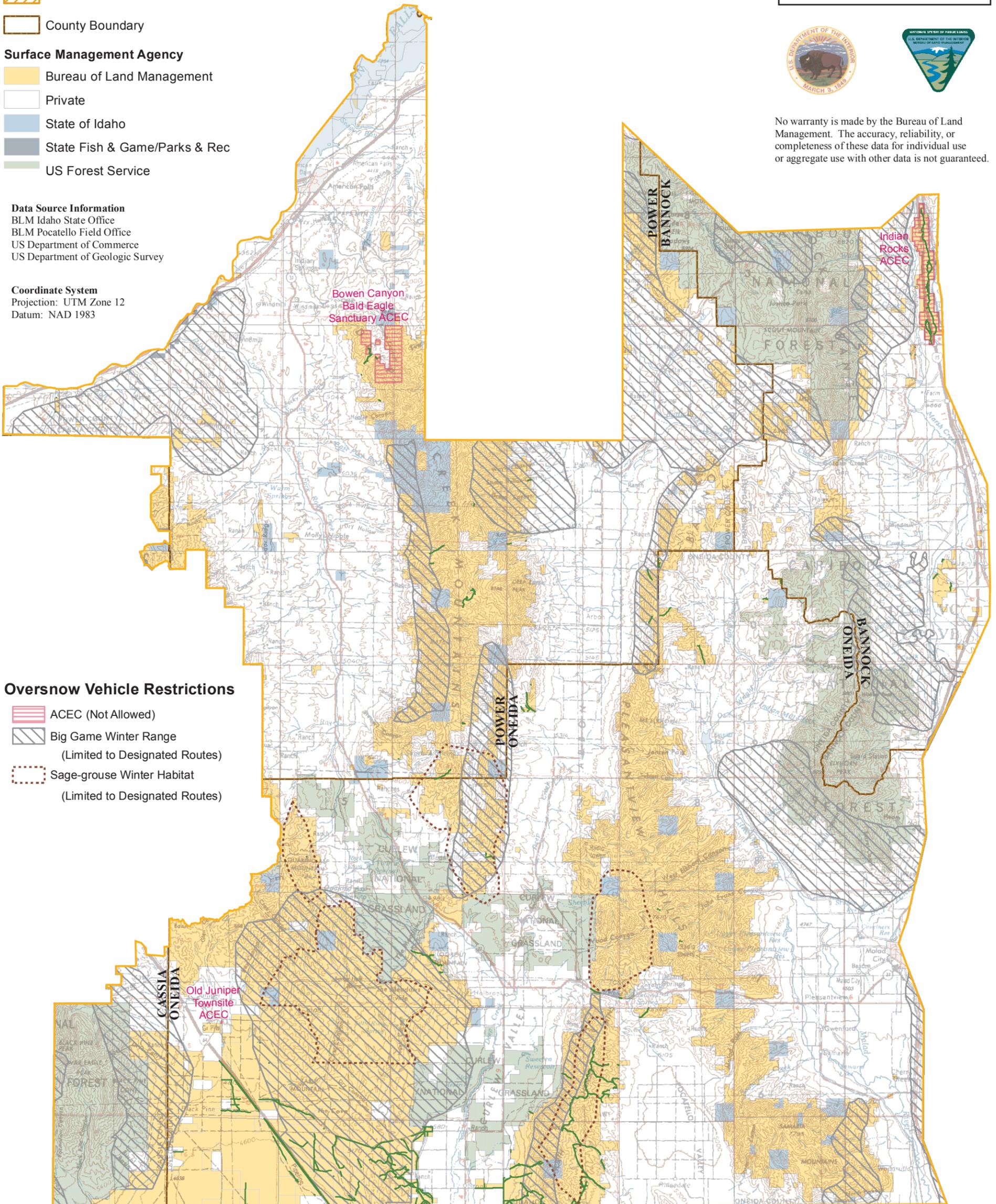
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
BLM Idaho State Office  
BLM Pocatello Field Office  
US Department of Commerce  
US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
Projection: UTM Zone 12  
Datum: NAD 1983



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.



**Oversnow Vehicle Restrictions**

- ACEC (Not Allowed)
- Big Game Winter Range (Limited to Designated Routes)
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat (Limited to Designated Routes)

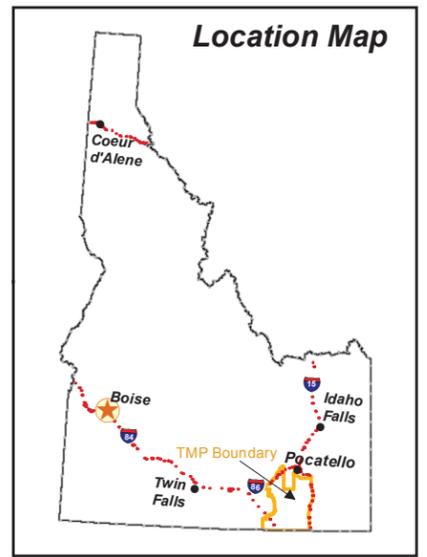
# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

## Map 2 - Alternative B

**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
 4350 Cliffs Drive  
 Pocatello, Idaho 83204



Date: 10 May 2013



### Alternative B Route Designations

- Open
- Not Designated

County Boundary

### Surface Management Agency

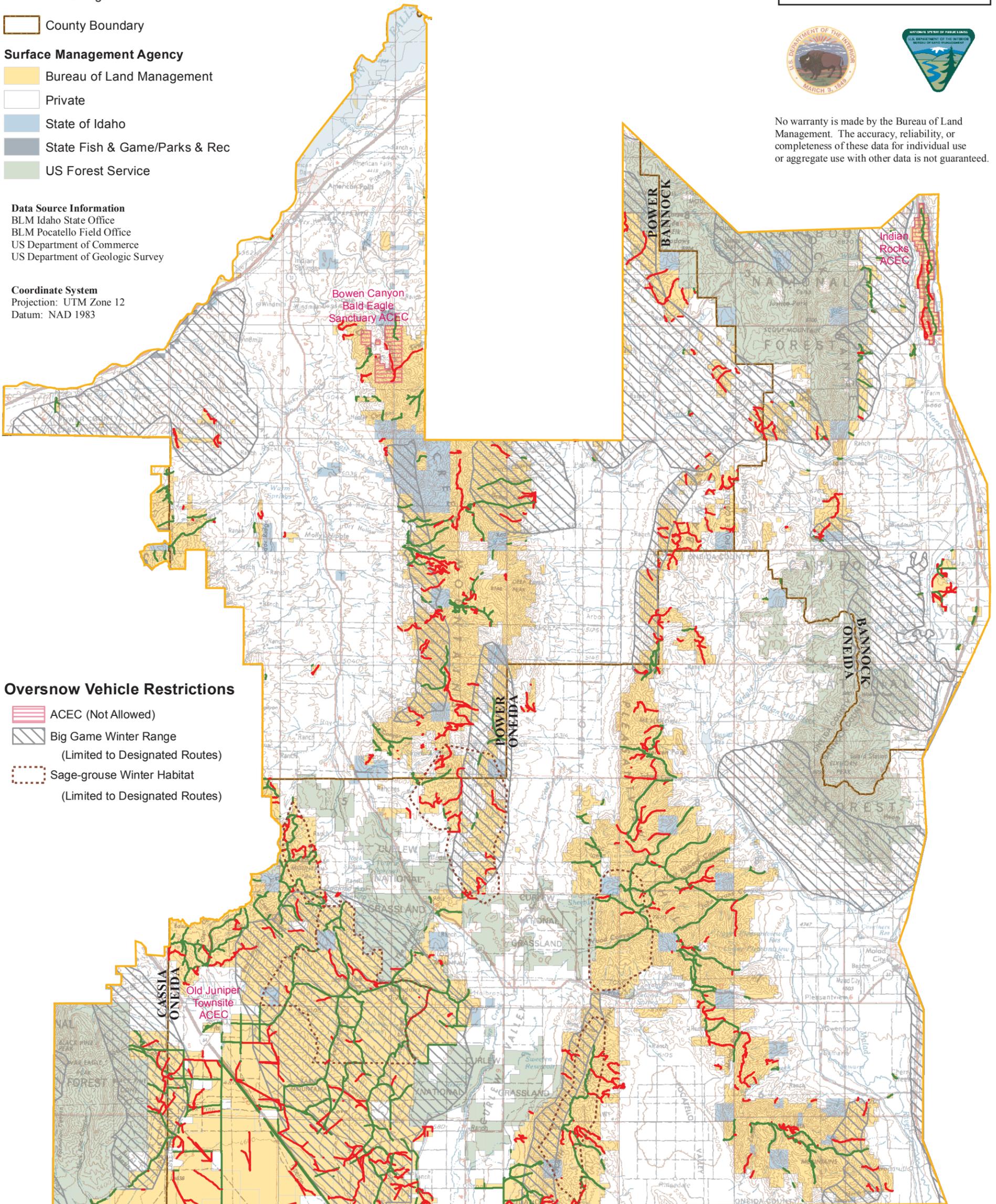
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
 BLM Idaho State Office  
 BLM Pocatello Field Office  
 US Department of Commerce  
 US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
 Projection: UTM Zone 12  
 Datum: NAD 1983



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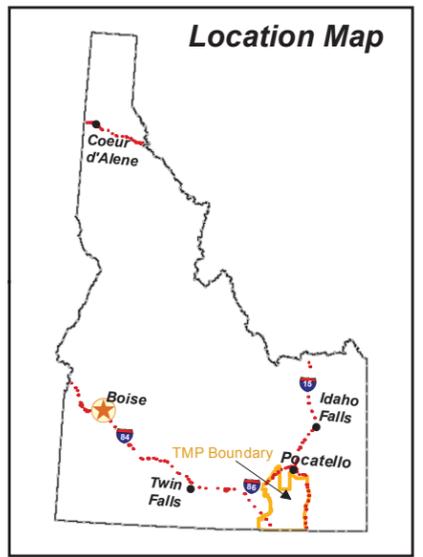


### Oversnow Vehicle Restrictions

- ACEC (Not Allowed)
- Big Game Winter Range  
(Limited to Designated Routes)
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat  
(Limited to Designated Routes)

# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

## Map 3 - Alternative C



Date: 10 May 2013

**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
4350 Cliffs Drive  
Pocatello, Idaho 83204

### Alternative C Route Designations

- Open
- Seasonal: Closed October 1 - May 15
- Seasonal: Closed May 2 - September 30
- Not Designated

Additional Private Access Restrictions

County Boundary

### Surface Management Agency

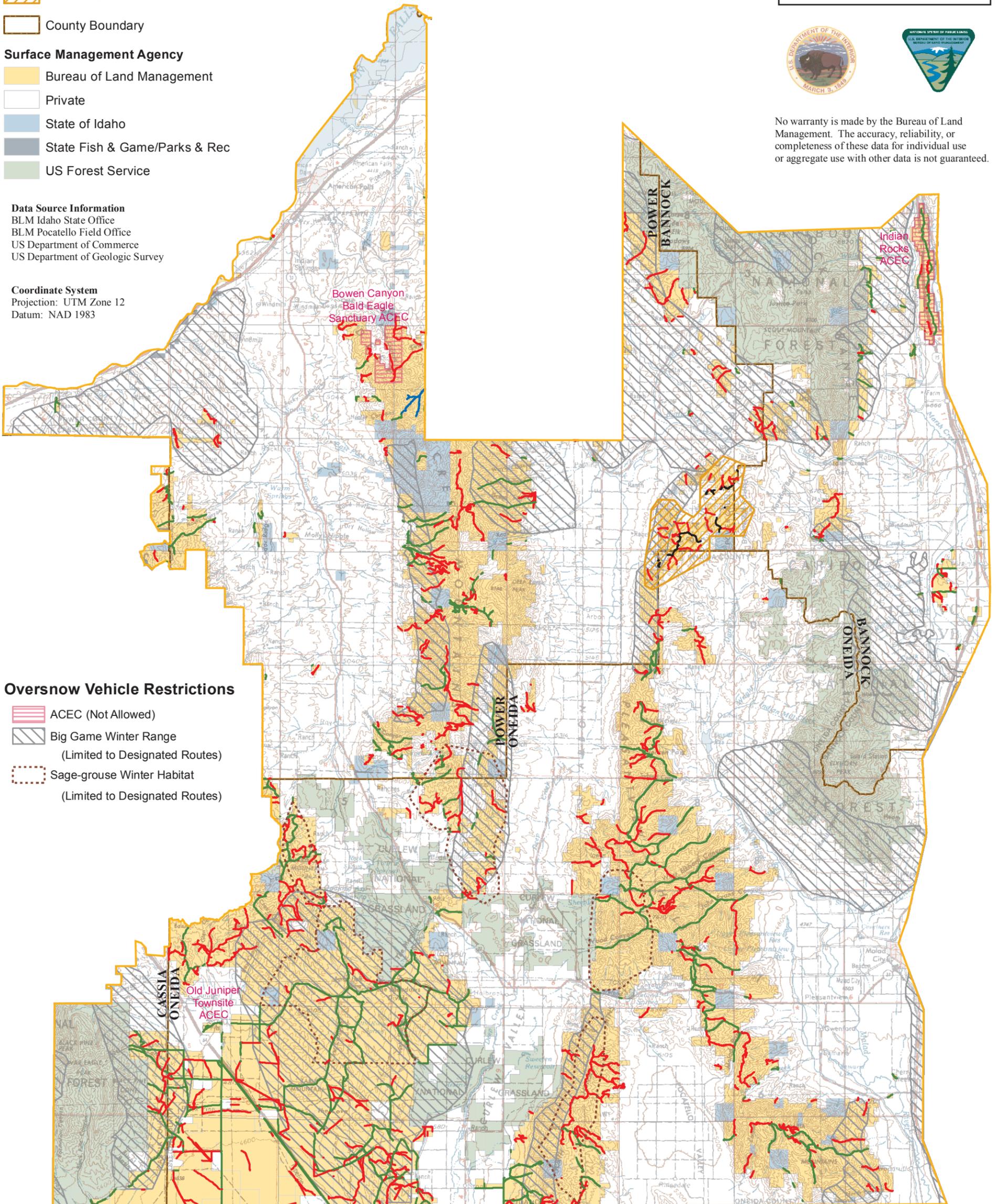
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
BLM Idaho State Office  
BLM Pocatello Field Office  
US Department of Commerce  
US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
Projection: UTM Zone 12  
Datum: NAD 1983



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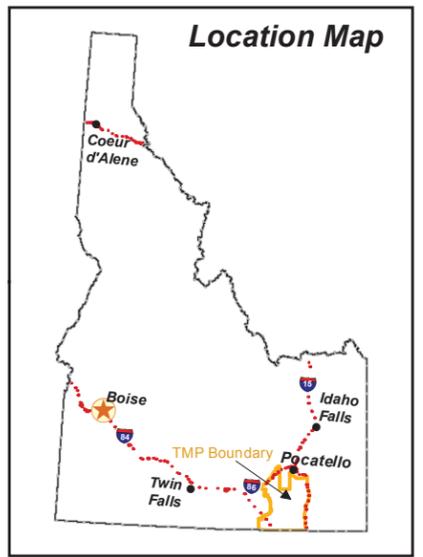


### Oversnow Vehicle Restrictions

- ACEC (Not Allowed)
- Big Game Winter Range (Limited to Designated Routes)
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat (Limited to Designated Routes)

# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

## Map 4 - Alternative D



Date: 10 May 2013

**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
4350 Cliffs Drive  
Pocatello, Idaho 83204

### Alternative D Route Designations

- Open
- Seasonal: Closed May 2 - September 30
- Not Designated

Additional Private Access Restrictions

County Boundary

### Surface Management Agency

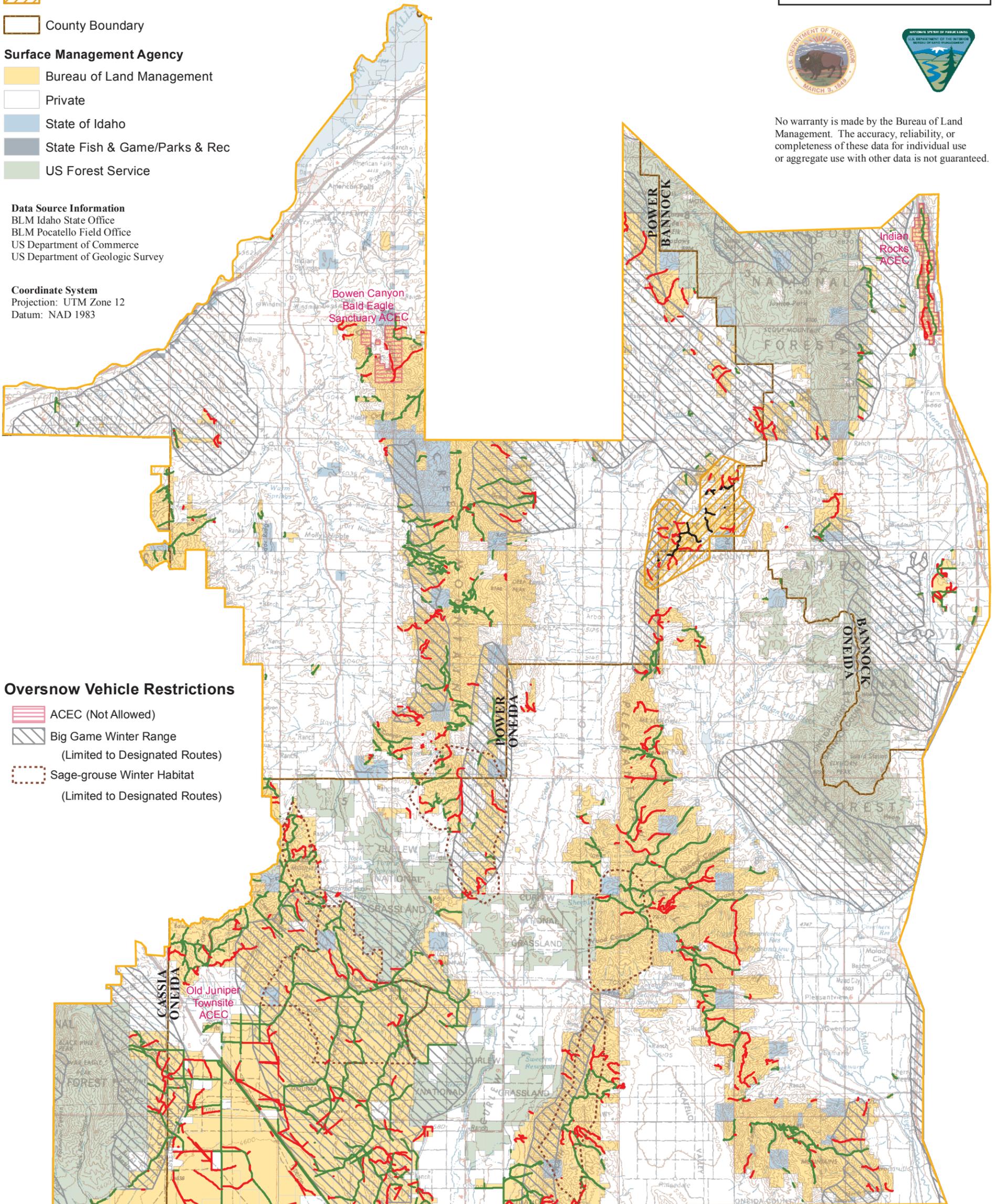
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
BLM Idaho State Office  
BLM Pocatello Field Office  
US Department of Commerce  
US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
Projection: UTM Zone 12  
Datum: NAD 1983



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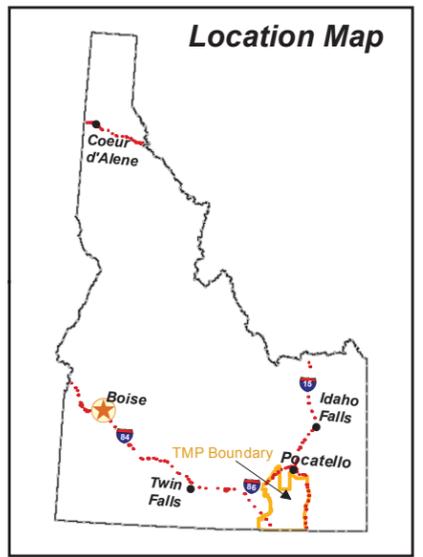
### Oversnow Vehicle Restrictions

- ACEC (Not Allowed)
- Big Game Winter Range (Limited to Designated Routes)
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat (Limited to Designated Routes)

The following (map) cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with its data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.

# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

## Map 5 - Alternative E



Date: 19 June 2013

**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
4350 Cliffs Drive  
Pocatello, Idaho 83204

### Alternative E Route Designations

- Open
- - - Open: 50 inches or less
- Seasonal: Closed October 1 - May 31
- - - Seasonal Restricted 50 inches or less: Closed October 1 - May 31
- Seasonal: Closed May 2 - September 30
- Not Designated

Additional Private Access Restrictions

County Boundary

### Surface Management Agency

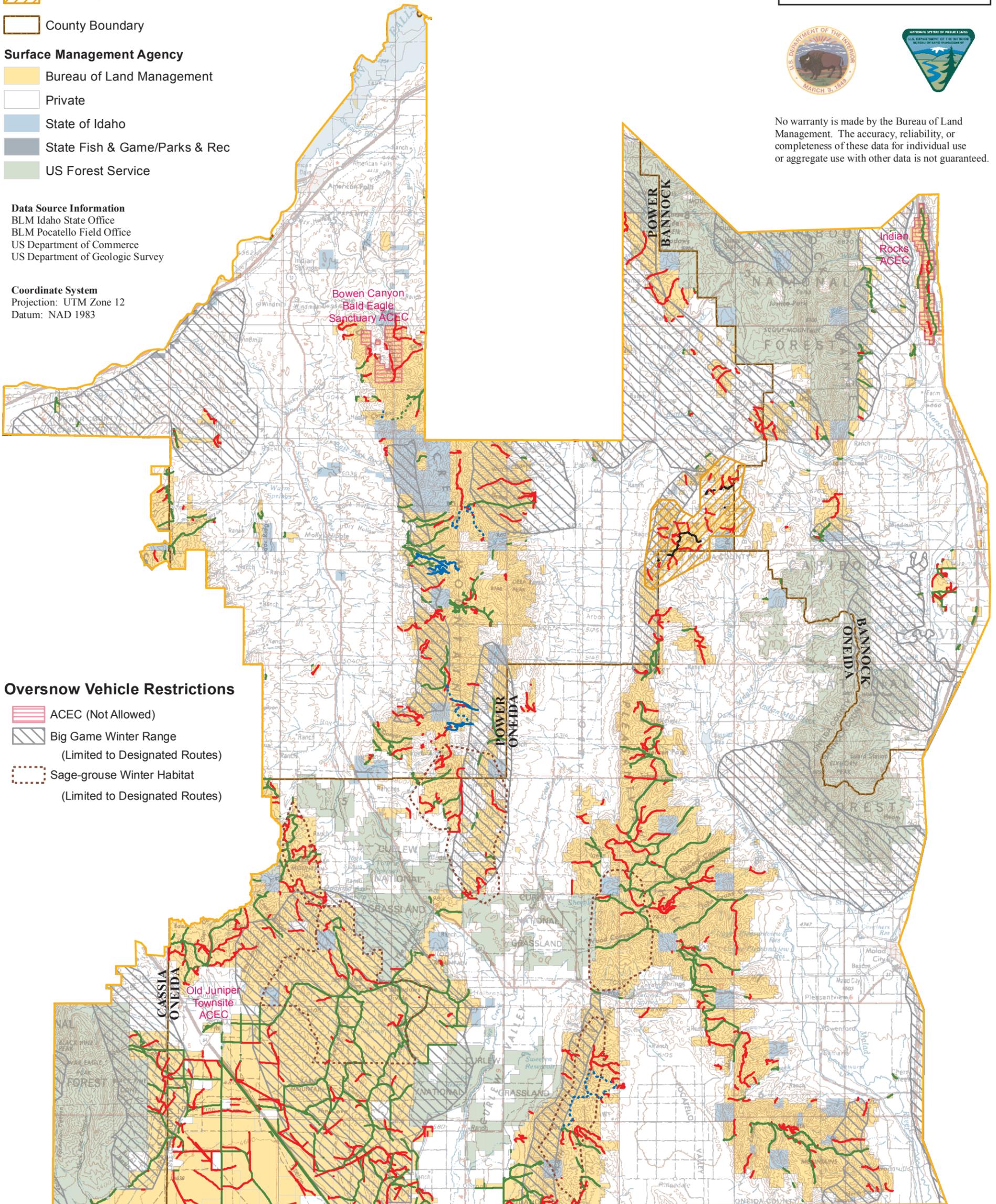
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
BLM Idaho State Office  
BLM Pocatello Field Office  
US Department of Commerce  
US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
Projection: UTM Zone 12  
Datum: NAD 1983



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### Oversnow Vehicle Restrictions

- ACEC (Not Allowed)
- Big Game Winter Range (Limited to Designated Routes)
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat (Limited to Designated Routes)

# Curlew/Deep Creek Mountains Travel Management Plan

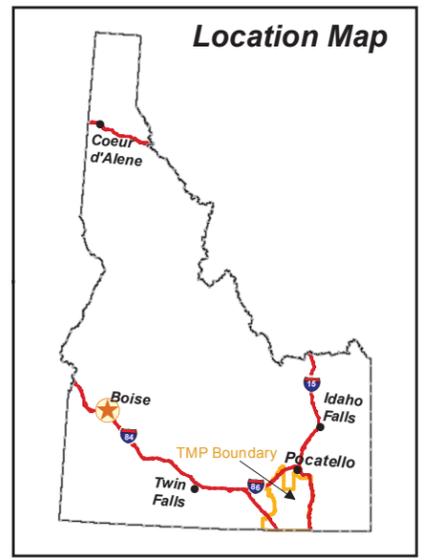
## Map 6 - Sage-grouse Preliminary, General, and Winter Habitat



**BLM Pocatello Field Office**  
 4350 Cliffs Drive  
 Pocatello, Idaho 83204



**Date: 3 June 2013**



- Sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat
- Sage-grouse Preliminary General Habitat
- Sage-grouse Winter Habitat
- County Boundary

**Surface Management Agency**

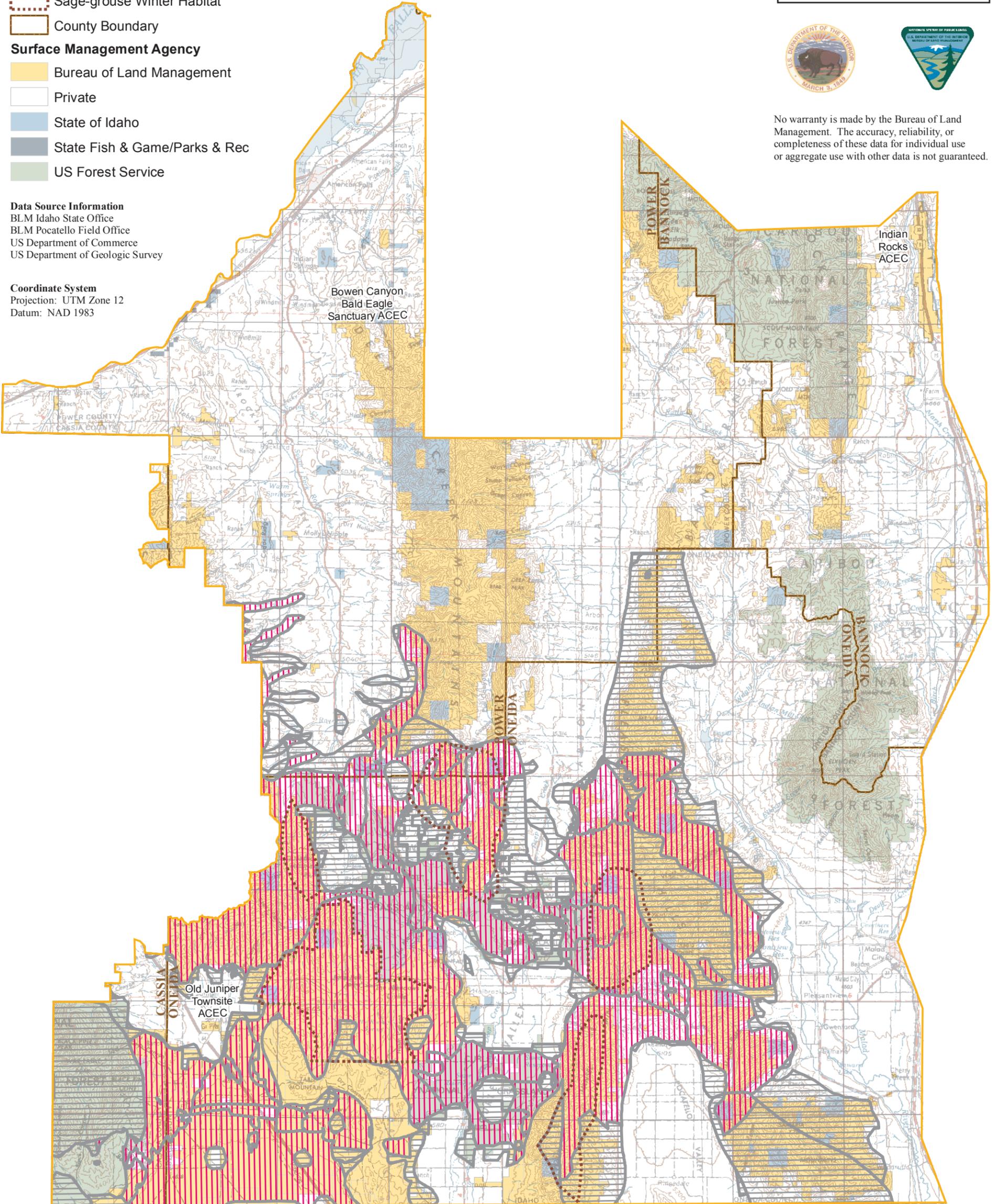
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State of Idaho
- State Fish & Game/Parks & Rec
- US Forest Service

**Data Source Information**  
 BLM Idaho State Office  
 BLM Pocatello Field Office  
 US Department of Commerce  
 US Department of Geologic Survey

**Coordinate System**  
 Projection: UTM Zone 12  
 Datum: NAD 1983



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Map 7. Fire history for the period 1980 through 2012 for the Curlew/Deep Creek Travel Management Planning Area.

