

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
UPPER SNAKE FIELD OFFICE
Decision Record
For the
Deer Parks Wildlife Mitigation Unit 2014 Projects and Restrictions
Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2014-0008-EA**

Introduction and Background

The Deer Parks Complex currently includes three Wildlife Mitigation Units: Menan, Beaver Dick and Boyle segments. The Menan and Beaver Dick properties were acquired in 1997 and the Deer Parks (Boyle Ranch) property was acquired in 1999. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) provided funds to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to purchase the lands. The Deer Parks Complex properties, totaling 3,054 acres, are owned by the BLM and managed cooperatively with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (SBT).

The properties that comprise the Deer Parks Wildlife Mitigation Unit (DPWMU) Complex were acquired for the purpose of partial mitigation for the loss of wildlife habitat caused by construction of the Palisades Project dam and reservoir. Using BPA funding, the wildlife mitigation units were acquired from willing sellers by the BLM, with the agreement that the IDFG and the SBT would cooperatively manage them. IDFG has primary management responsibility.

IDFG completed the Deer Parks WMU Management Plan in 2013. While preparing this, they conducted several public scoping meetings, asking for the public's ideas and recreation demands. The public asked for more wildlife food plots and better access to Butte Slough. BLM needed to also make the management restrictions in this WMU official, such as no camping and no campfires within the WMU. After coordination meetings between BLM and IDFG, IDFG requested to complete seven (7) management actions listed below:

1. Cook's Pasture Food Plots (Cook's).
2. Butte Slough Pasture Food Plots (Butte Slough).
3. Gohr Field Irrigation well, Pump move, and Buried Mainline (Gohr Field).
4. County Road Field Buried Mainline/risers (County Road).

5. Snake River Bio-engineered Bank Stabilization (Bio-engineered Bank).
6. Butte Slough Road, Parking Area and Watercraft Launch Site (Boat Launch).
7. Public Use Restrictions.

Decision

It is my decision to allow for these seven management actions to occur on the Deer Parks WMU. These actions will improve wildlife habitats, make more efficient use of irrigation water, protect an eroding streambank, and make it easier to enforce public use restrictions within the WMU.

Rationale

Implementing these seven management actions as described in Alternative B meets the purpose and need for these actions, many of which were first recommended through public scoping during the management plan meetings. Implementing these actions will enhance the wildlife habitat values the public enjoys presently, improve recreation access, and also make better use of water resources on the WMU. Officially implementing the public use restrictions would make it easier for enforcement and compliance to occur.

I have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the 1985 Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan (RMP), which states that the plan would provide for existing wildlife populations and for projected expansion in the populations. These actions would enhance existing wildlife populations and likely increase populations.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2014-0008-EA, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant and an environmental impact statement is not required.



Upper Snake Field Manager



Date

Appeal Information:

Appeal procedures may be found at 43 CFR 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) or 43 CFR 2801.10.