

Montana/Dakotas BLM: State Specific Circumstances

Addressing Peripheral Populations

The population between the borders of Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota represents the eastern-most sage-grouse population. Here, the sagebrush steppe transitions into prairie communities. The limited habitat in this area has a low population density and adds complexity of cross-state, multi-entity coordination.

Northern populations migrate long distances from breeding habitat near the Canadian border to winter areas farther south.

Cedar Creek Anticline

North Dakota

South Dakota

Connectivity: CHMA

Historical and ongoing land use is resulting in decreased lek attendance. Therefore, objectives reflect a long-term restoration approach.

With limited greater sage-grouse habitat, minimizing disturbance and protecting habitat is key, but restoration will also be needed to meet goals.

Due to limited habitat and low population size, all occupied habitat in South Dakota is considered core by the state and PHMA by the BLM.

The BLM identified areas based on the State of Montana approach for connectivity areas to capture these migratory pathways.

The area remains a Restoration HMA in Alternatives 4-6; the focus is on restoration and connectivity with habitat in North Dakota.

Alternatives 4-6 build on existing protections by including recently active lek sites and adding focused management on habitat enhancement

In Alternatives 4-6, BLM adopts the new core areas as PHMA based on recent research used by the state in the 2022 Action Plan.

Management focus on maintaining stopover sites, especially areas of native vegetation in this mixed-use landscape.

Management actions target cross-boundary approaches, as possible, to increase or improve the quality and quantity of habitat.

Addressing mixed ownerships, Alternatives 4-6 would emphasize a cooperative approach to implementing sage-grouse conservation.

