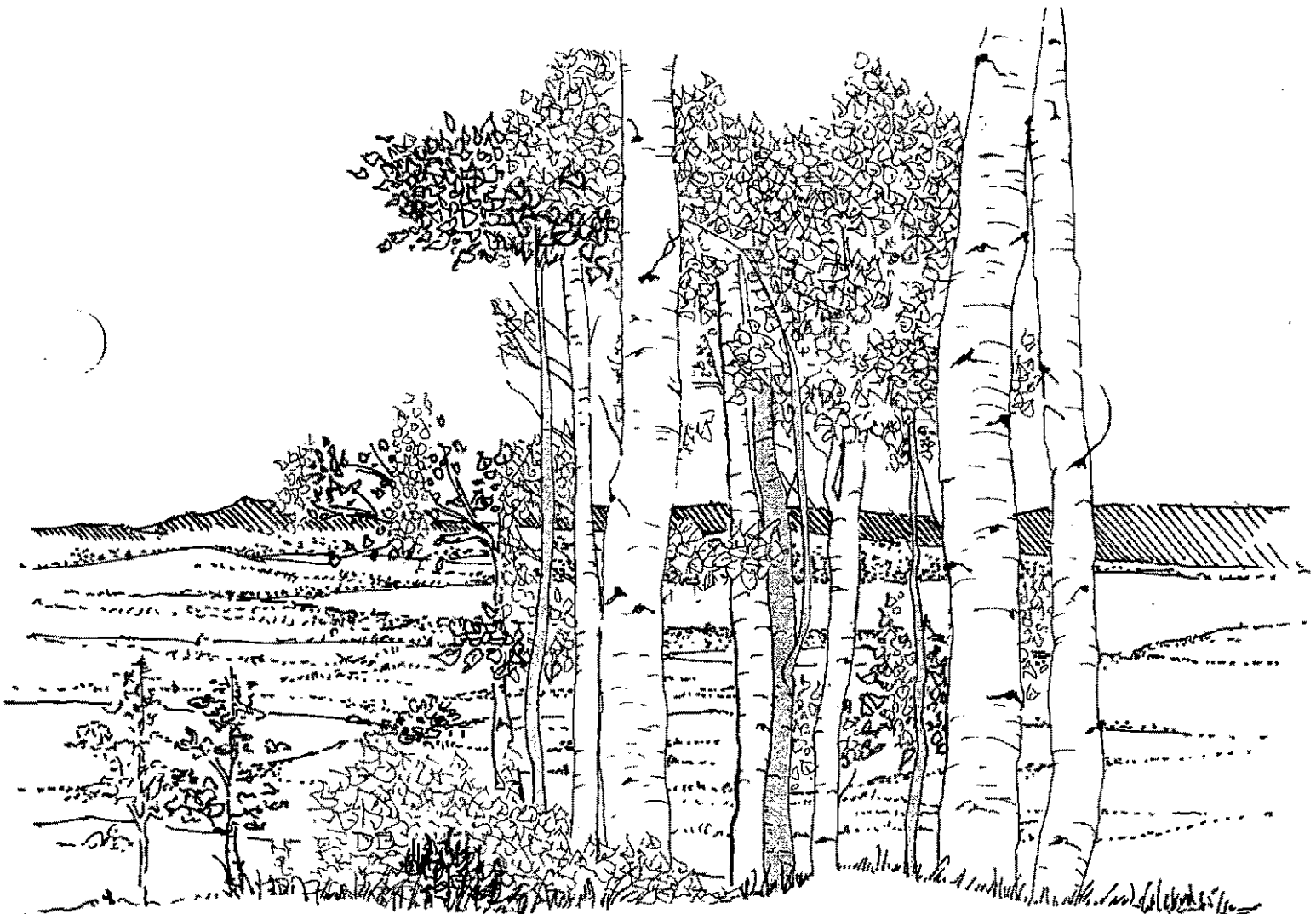


# ELKO

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN RECORD OF DECISION



# 1987

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko District Office Elko, Nevada



# United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO

1601 (NV-016)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

NEVADA STATE OFFICE

570 Harvard Way

P.O. Box 12000

Reno, NV 89520

MAR 11 1987

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Elko Resource Management Plan (RMP). This ROD is the approval of the Elko RMP and it completes the process which included the production of a draft and final plan and environmental impact statements. All of the planning records are available for inspection by the public at the Elko, Nevada BLM District Office.

Part I of the document is the ROD which displays the management decisions to be implemented as part of this planning process, a summary of alternatives considered and the rationale for selecting the preferred alternative. The Management Decisions Summary which is Part II of this document displays the decisions on issues in the RMP plus objectives, management policy and standard operating procedures. It reflects changes suggested by the public and those which occurred as a result of internal review processes.

A draft Wilderness Study Report and a preliminary final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) have been prepared by my office and are being reviewed prior to being submitted to the Director of the Bureau of Land Management for administrative review in preparation for the Secretary of the Interior's recommendation to the President on wilderness. When the Secretary is ready to transmit his recommendations to the President, he will file the Record of Decision for the Final Elko Wilderness EIS in a statewide legislative package containing records of decision for all final wilderness EIS's in Nevada. The final EIS will be made public and is a separate document from the RMP/EIS. The Wilderness Study Report will serve as the ROD for the wilderness EIS.

My preliminary wilderness recommendations, to date, draw from several elements of the study process, including the Elko Draft RMP and associated wilderness technical report which examined four Wilderness Study Areas. The results of public participation will be forwarded to the Director, along with mineral

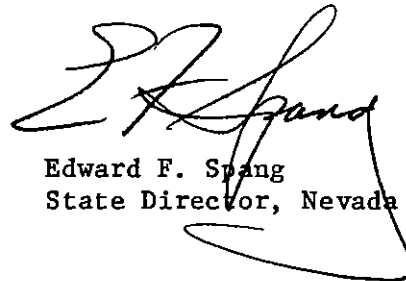
survey reports from the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines on those areas being recommended as preliminarily suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. When Congress acts on the President's recommendations, both nonsuitable and suitable areas will be announced.

The Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) which we plan to issue early the second half of 1987, has been designed to inform interested persons about the implementation of the rangeland management program as set forth in the planning decisions for the Elko Resource Area. The RPS explains the process of establishing initial and subsequent levels of livestock grazing use. It will identify allotment specific objectives for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses. It discusses the rangeland improvement program for the resource area in some detail, and describes the rangeland monitoring program upon which grazing decisions will be based. In the RPS you will find, by allotment, initial stocking levels of livestock, wild horses and wildlife. There is also more detailed information as to range improvement projects planned or completed. Periodic updates of the RPS will be issued as the rangeland management program is implemented.

The next phase of this RMP/EIS process is implementation. Some actions, such as land sales, can be initiated immediately while others will require more detailed analysis. Allotment Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans for wildlife, and Recreation Area Management Plans for special recreation management areas are currently being developed. Once these plans are completed and approved, work can commence.

Please be aware that the planning process does not end with this Record of Decision. One of the requirements of BLM Planning is a review process to determine whether the plan is still current and objectives are being met. The Elko RMP shall be reviewed on a minimum of five year intervals for currency and adequacy. As a result of the review process, changes to this plan could occur. Therefore, the Elko District Office should always be consulted if questions arise over the plan.

Sincerely yours,



Edward F. Spang  
State Director, Nevada

ELKO  
RECORD OF DECISION

MARCH 1987

United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Elko District  
Elko, Nevada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

PART I: RECORD OF DECISION

Management Decisions Summary

Lands . . . . .	1
Corridors . . . . .	1
Access . . . . .	1
Recreation . . . . .	1
Wilderness . . . . .	2
Livestock Management . . . . .	2
Wildlife . . . . .	2
Wild Horses . . . . .	3
Woodland Products . . . . .	3
Minerals . . . . .	3

Rationale for the RMP Decisions . . . . . 7

Summary of the Alternatives . . . . . 7

Mitigation Measures . . . . . 8

Monitoring . . . . . 8

PART II: MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Land Use and Resource Decisions

Lands . . . . .	9
Corridors . . . . .	11
Access . . . . .	13
Recreation . . . . .	13
Wilderness . . . . .	18
Livestock Management . . . . .	20
Wildlife . . . . .	29
Wild Horses . . . . .	33
Woodland Products . . . . .	35
Minerals . . . . .	35

Standard Operating Procedures . . . . . 39

Amendments . . . . . 41

Monitoring . . . . . 41

Relationship of the RMP with the Rangeland Program Summary . . . 42

Support Requirements . . . . . 42

LIST OF MAPS

	PAGE
Map 1 - Elko Resource Management Plan Area. . . . .	5
Map 2 - Land Status Map . . . . .	6
Map 3 - Land Tenure Adjustments and Corridors . . . . .	12
Map 4 - Access. . . . .	14
Map 5 - Off Road Vehicle Designations . . . . .	16
Map 6 - Special Recreation Management Areas . . . . .	17
Map 7 - Wilderness Study Areas. . . . .	19
Map 8 - Livestock Grazing Allotments with Management Category . . . .	22
Map 9 - Antelope and Deer Habitat Areas . . . . .	31
Map 10 - Streams, Sage Grouse Habitat and Bighorn Sheep Use Area. . .	32
Map 11 - Wild Horse Herd Areas. . . . .	34
Map 12 - Woodland Product Harvest Areas . . . . .	36
Map 13 - Oil/Gas and Geothermal Leasing Areas . . . . .	38

PART I: RECORD OF DECISION

This document summarizes the decisions and resource management objectives presented in the Elko Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Elko Resource Area, Elko District, Nevada.

The Elko RMP area encompasses all of the Elko Resource Area of the Elko District, located in northeast Nevada. The area is comprised of 5,967,854 acres of land primarily within Elko County, with smaller portions in Lander and Eureka counties. Of this total land area, BLM administers 3,134,019 acres or approximately 52 percent of the planning area.

The Elko RMP Area is bounded on the north by the Idaho border and the Humboldt National Forest, Mountain City Ranger District, United States Forest Service (USFS); on the west by the Winnemucca and Battle Mountain Districts (BLM); on the south by the Battle Mountain and Ely Districts (BLM); and to the east by the Humboldt National Forest, Ruby Mountain Ranger District (USFS), and the Wells Resource Area (BLM). The RMP Area Map shows the location and boundaries of the planning area (Map 1) while land ownership patterns are shown on Map 2.

MANAGEMENT DECISIONS SUMMARY

The following table summarizes the issue oriented management prescriptions provided in the proposed plan.

TABLE 1

ISSUE	MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION
Lands (Map 3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="651 1188 1476 1314">1. Make available, primarily through sale, up to 8,340 acres of public lands that are difficult and uneconomic to manage and 5,900 acres to meet community expansion needs.</li><li data-bbox="651 1346 1476 1409">2. Identify for transfer, primarily through exchange, 243,200 acres.</li></ol>
Corridors (Map 3)	Designate 243 miles of right-of-way corridors including 109 miles of low visibility corridor along Interstate 80 and identify 130 miles of planning corridors for future facilities.
Access (Map 4)	Acquire legal access for 60 roads (242 miles) considered high priority for management of all resources.
Recreation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="651 1724 1476 1913">1. Designate 98 percent of the planning area open to off road vehicles, and the remaining 2 percent, consisting of Special Recreation Management Areas and preliminary suitable portions of Wilderness Study Areas, limited to designated roads and trails (Map 5).</li></ol>

- Recreation (Cont.)
2. Designate the following five Special Recreation Management Areas to enhance camping and water based recreation: South Fork Owyhee River (3,500 acres); Wilson Reservoir (5,440 acres); Zunino/Jiggs Reservoir (800 acres); South Fork Canyon (3,360 acres); Wildhorse (5,760 acres). Manage the remainder of the planning area for dispersed recreation activities (Map 6).
- Wilderness (Map 7)
1. Preliminarily recommend the Rough Hills Wilderness Study Area (6,685 acres) and a portion of the Little Humboldt River Wilderness Study Area (29,775 acres) suitable for wilderness designation.
  2. Preliminarily recommend the Cedar Ridge and Red Spring Wilderness Study Areas and a portion of the Little Humboldt River Study Area, a total of 30,294 acres, nonsuitable for wilderness designation.
- Livestock Management
1. Initially license livestock use at the three to five year (1979-1983) average licensed use level of 305,247 AUMs. Over the long-term increase the availability of livestock forage to 402,096 AUMs. There would be no change in active preference unless adequately supported by monitoring.
  2. Treat or seed 120,978 acres; construct 258 miles of fence; drill 28 wells; lay 132 miles of pipeline; install 24 storage tanks, develop 97 spring sources and 97 reservoirs to improve livestock distribution, utilization of the range, provide additional livestock forage and enhance other multiple-use values.
  3. Develop Allotment Management Plans on 22 Category I allotments and 6 Category M allotments (Map 8).
  4. Implement a rangeland monitoring program to determine if management objectives are being met and adjust grazing management systems and livestock numbers as required.
- Wildlife (Map 9 & 10)
1. Manage wildlife habitat to provide 34,513 AUMs of forage for mule deer, 1,215 AUMs for prong-horn antelope, and 140 AUMs for bighorn sheep.
  2. Construct 20 guzzlers, 40 spring protection facilities, 40 water developments, and 189 miles of fencing to improve habitat. Implement 500 acres of vegetation treatment and modify 20 miles of fence within crucial big game habitat.



- Wildlife (Cont.)
3. Monitor the interaction between wildlife habitat condition and other resource uses and make adjustments to season-of-use for livestock to improve or maintain essential and crucial wildlife habitats.
  4. Jointly evaluate and analyze availability and condition of habitat areas identified by the Nevada Department of Wildlife to provide for the reestablishment, augmentation, or introduction of bighorn sheep and other wildlife species.
  5. Apply restrictions on leasable and/or salable mineral developments to protect crucial deer winter range, sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats, and antelope kidding areas.
  6. Manage 117 miles (3,480 acres) of high priority riparian/stream habitat to provide good habitat condition for wildlife and fish.
- Wild Horses
1. Manage four existing wild horse herd areas with an appropriate management level of 330 horses (Map 11).
  2. Construct two water development projects.
  3. Conduct wild horse gatherings as needed to maintain numbers.
- Woodland Products  
(Map 12)
1. Implement intensive management of Christmas tree cutting on approximately 23,000 acres of woodlands.
  2. Manage fuelwood harvesting to allocate the full allowable cut on approximately 60,000 acres.
  3. Provide for commercial pine nut sales in years when pine nuts are abundant.
- Minerals
1. Designate the resource area open to mineral entry for locatable minerals, except for an 11 acre administrative site in the City of Elko.
  2. Provide for oil/gas and geothermal leasing as follows (Map 13):
    - a) Designation: Limited - subject to no surface occupancy.

Minerals (Cont.)

Purpose: Protection of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) and sage grouse strutting grounds. No surface occupancy would apply to areas within one-half mile of the high water line around Wilson, Zunino/Jiggs, Wildhorse, Rock Creek and South Fork Reservoirs and the South Fork Owyhee and South Fork Humboldt rivers within the designated Special Recreation Management Areas (Map 4).

Acres: 36,872 (1.2 percent of RMP area; 11,092 - SRMAs and 25,780 - sage grouse strutting grounds.)

b) Designation: Limited - subject to seasonal restriction.

Purpose: Protect crucial deer winter range, crucial antelope yearlong habitat, and sage grouse brood rearing areas (Map 6).

Acres: 470,714 (15 percent of RMP area).

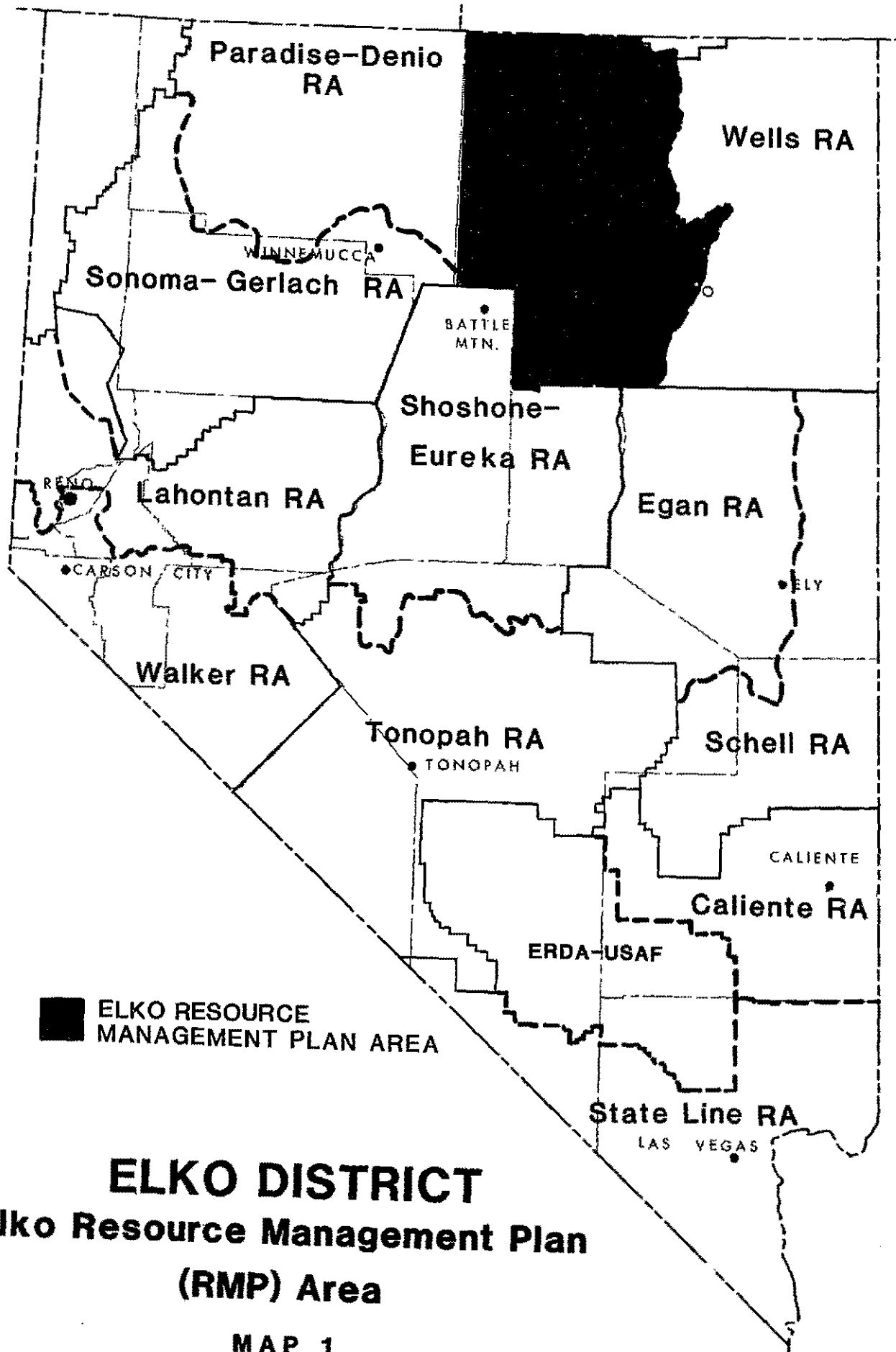
c) Designation: Open - subject to standard leasing stipulations.

Acres: 2,571, 337 (82 percent of RMP area).

d) Designation: Closed.

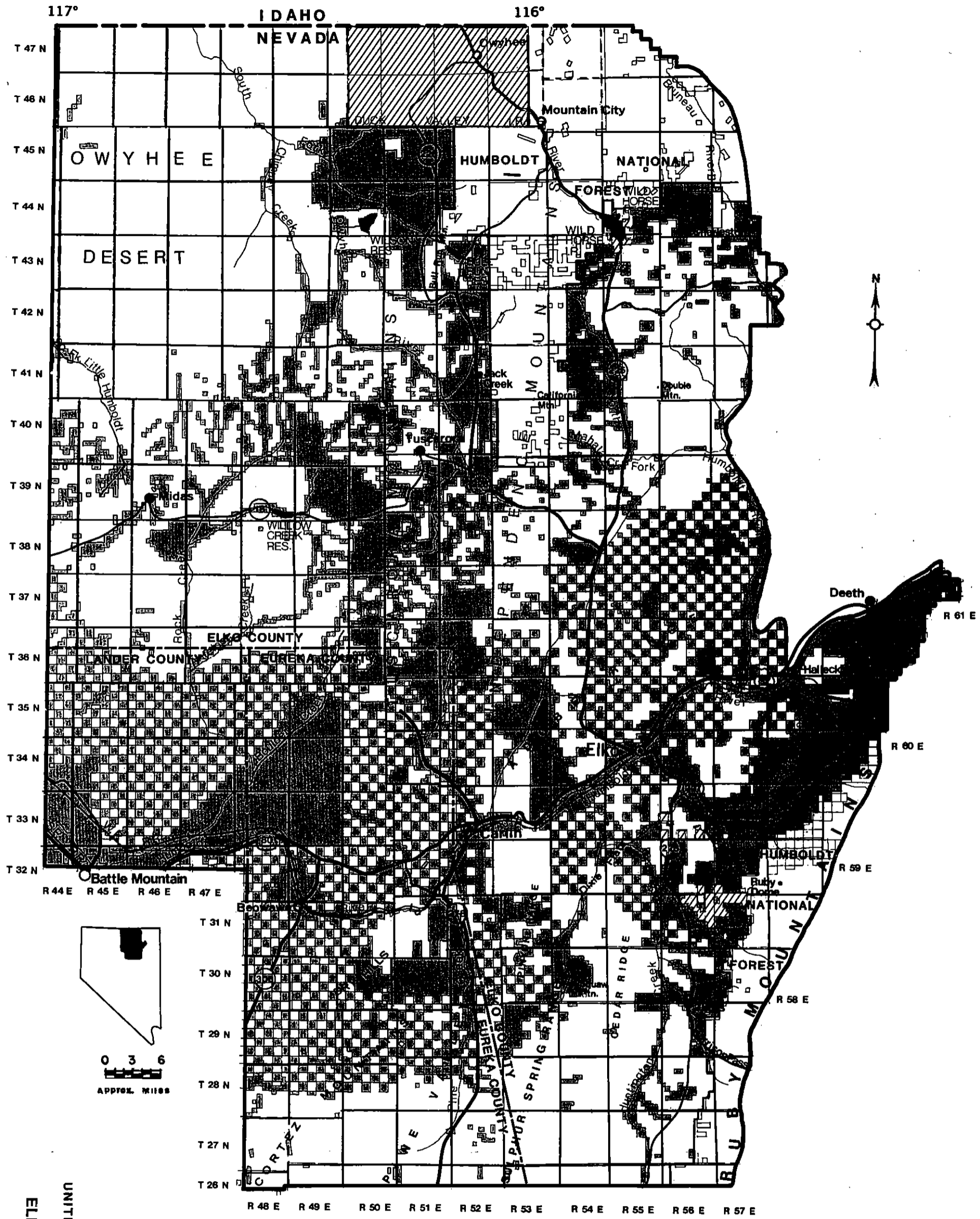
Purpose: Areas recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation, including 18,625 acres addressed in the Draft Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS and an 11 acre administrative withdrawal (Map 5).

Acres: 55,096 acres (1.8 percent of RMP area).



**ELKO DISTRICT**  
**Elko Resource Management Plan**  
**(RMP) Area**

MAP 1



- Public Lands
- Private Lands
- Indian Reservation

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
**ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
 RECORD OF DECISION

LAND STATUS  
**MAP 2**

## RATIONALE FOR THE RMP DECISION

The Proposed Plan is the same as Alternative D which was analyzed in the Draft Elko Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Proposed Plan, to a greater degree than any of the other alternatives analyzed, provides a balanced approach to land management. The Proposed Plan is designed to provide for a variety of resource uses within the sustained yield capabilities of the public lands. It represents a balancing of conflicts and tradeoffs between land uses while protecting fragile, nonrenewable resources as required by law, while responding to public issues and management concerns. The Proposed Plan would favorably influence orderly economic growth of the local and regional economy. Management attention would be directed toward improving rangeland conditions; expanding livestock grazing opportunities; improving or protecting habitat conditions for big game, upland game and fisheries; providing for a variety of recreation uses; improving access to the public lands for all users; maintaining existing numbers of wild horses; meeting the public demand for woodland products; providing for mineral exploration and development; and guiding future land tenure adjustments based upon land manageability and quality of resource values.

## SUMMARY OF THE ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

The following five alternatives were presented and analyzed in the Elko RMP/EIS.

Alternative A: This alternative represents a continuation of present resource management and use levels as required in 43 CFR 1610.4-5. Actions would be taken on a case-by-case basis as circumstances warrant except for wilderness, where this alternative provides for the mandatory "No Wilderness" analysis.

Alternative B: This alternative is oriented toward production of commercial resources with emphasis on livestock, minerals, land disposal, motorized recreation, woodland production, and utility corridors.

Alternative C: This alternative provides for the enhancement of fragile and unique natural resource values with emphasis on wildlife, wild horses, and wilderness. This provides for the mandatory "All Wilderness" analysis.

Alternative D: This is the Proposed Plan. It provides for a mix of natural and commercial resource uses based on the relative value of those uses. It has been selected as the proposed alternative because it best meets the public's demand for goods and services while minimizing disruption of the human environment.

Alternative E: This alternative was developed to provide for baseline data and a comparative analysis of the elimination of livestock grazing from the public lands.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Specific Resource or Program Guidance were identified in detail on pages 2-24 through 2-36 of the Draft RMP/EIS. This program guidance consists of standard operating procedures and mitigating measures resulting from existing Bureau policy, regulation and law. In addition to adopting this Specific Resource or Program Guidance as a minimum level of mitigation, additional mitigating measures will be developed on a case-by-case basis through the activity planning and/or environmental assessment process. If it is determined those mitigating measures would significantly alter the plan, a plan amendment would be initiated.

MONITORING

The effects of implementing the decisions outlined in this document will be monitored and evaluated on a periodic basis (a minimum of every five years) to assure that progress is being made toward the goals and management actions established in the plan. The results of monitoring will aid the manager in judging the utility of the plan and determine if the plan warrants amendment or revision.

MAR 11 1987

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward F. Spang  
Nevada State Director  
Bureau of Land Management

## PART II: MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

### LAND USE AND RESOURCE DECISIONS

#### LANDS

Objective: Allow disposals, land tenure adjustments, and land use authorizations to accommodate the overall goal of this alternative.

The resource area was separated into three management classification areas. The purpose of the three designations is to categorize these land types according to their suitability for various land tenure adjustments. These include Sales, Transfer Primarily by Exchange, and Retention (see Map 3). These were delineated on the principle that Sale areas were difficult to manage and have limited resource values. The resource values of Transfer Primarily by Exchange areas are fewer and consequently, less cost effective to manage than the areas identified for retention.

The lands in the Sale category can be disposed of by any available means, however, the primary vehicle would be through public sale. Around communities, Recreation and Public Purpose (R&PP) leases and sales would predominate. Lands within the sale category typically meet the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) sale criteria.

Unlike the Sale lands, public lands identified for Transfer Primarily by Exchange do not typically meet FLPMA sale criteria. They are, however, suited for exchange for private lands within the Retention areas and are suitable for development under the agricultural land laws. Exchanges that would acquire private lands within the Transfer Primarily by Exchange areas are generally discouraged.

Retention lands are high resource value public lands that are to be retained and managed intensively and consolidated where possible to enhance management opportunities. Disposals will generally not occur in the Retention areas. The exceptions to this would only occur adjoining existing private lands to resolve specific management problems, facilitate land exchanges within the Retention areas, or permit agricultural entry where state water law indicates priority water applications exist.

#### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Make available, primarily through sale, up to 5,900 acres of public land to meet community expansion needs (Map 3).
2. Make available, primarily through sale, up to 8,340 acres of public lands that are difficult and uneconomic to manage (Map 3).
3. Identify for transfer, primarily through exchange, 243,200 acres (Map 3).

#### Standard Operating Procedures:

All public sale lands are to remain under BLM management until such time as personnel and funding are available to initiate action or acceptable proposals are received. Sale lands around communities are to remain under BLM management until the communities indicate a need for the lands.

Transfer of lands from Federal ownership will be subject to the following provisions:

1. Mineral rights will be reserved to the United States unless there are no known mineral values, minerals exchanged are of similar value, or the nonmineral development of the land is of more value than the minerals and the reservation of mineral rights precludes nonmineral development.
2. Access to public lands will be maintained.
3. If disposal causes a reduction in grazing preferences a two year period is required for notification of the livestock permittee unless waived by the permittee.
4. The grazing permittee shall receive reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their investment in authorized permanent range improvements, not to exceed fair market value.

Land tenure adjustment would be subject to a detailed analysis. This analysis generally includes preparation of an environmental assessment/land report, a cultural resources evaluation, a report on mineral potential, and an appraisal to establish fair market value. The following is a list of criteria that are considered during the analysis process:

1. Public resource values or concerns, including but not limited to: threatened, endangered, or sensitive species habitat; riparian areas, flood plains, and wetlands; fisheries, nesting/breeding habitat for game birds or animals, key big game seasonal habitat, wild horse and burro habitat; developed recreation and recreation access sites, municipal watersheds, mineral potential, visual resources, cultural resource sites eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, wilderness, and areas being studied for wilderness; and other statutory-authorized designations.
2. Accessibility of the land for public uses.
3. Amount of public investment in facilities or improvements (e.g. range improvements, wildlife projects) and the potential for recovering those investments.
4. Difficulty or cost of administration (manageability).
5. Significance of the decision in stabilizing business and social and economic conditions.
6. Encumbrances or conflicts of record; consistency of the decision with cooperative agreements and plans or policies of other agencies.
7. Suitability and need for change in land ownership or use for purposes including but not limited to: community expansion or economic development, such as industrial, residential, or agricultural (other than grazing) development.



Tracts that this analysis indicates are not suitable for disposal would be retained. If the analysis indicates that a tract is suitable for disposal, a Notice of Realty Action would be distributed to interested parties, including state and local governments. This notice is published with a right of protest. A final decision would occur upon analysis of any protests.

Implementation:

Generally any lands disposal actions will occur in the following order of priority.

1. R&PP disposals to local governments for orderly community expansion.
2. Public sales for orderly community expansion.
3. Private exchanges in areas where the Bureau would acquire lands having high public values. In general, no consolidation will take place within the Sale or Transfer Primarily By Exchange areas.
4. Desert Land Applications for agricultural development.
5. Public sales of unmanageable parcels to meet specific needs.
6. Other land sales including trespass resolution cases.

CORRIDORS

Objective: Identify designated corridors and planning corridors in coordination with other multiple-use objectives.

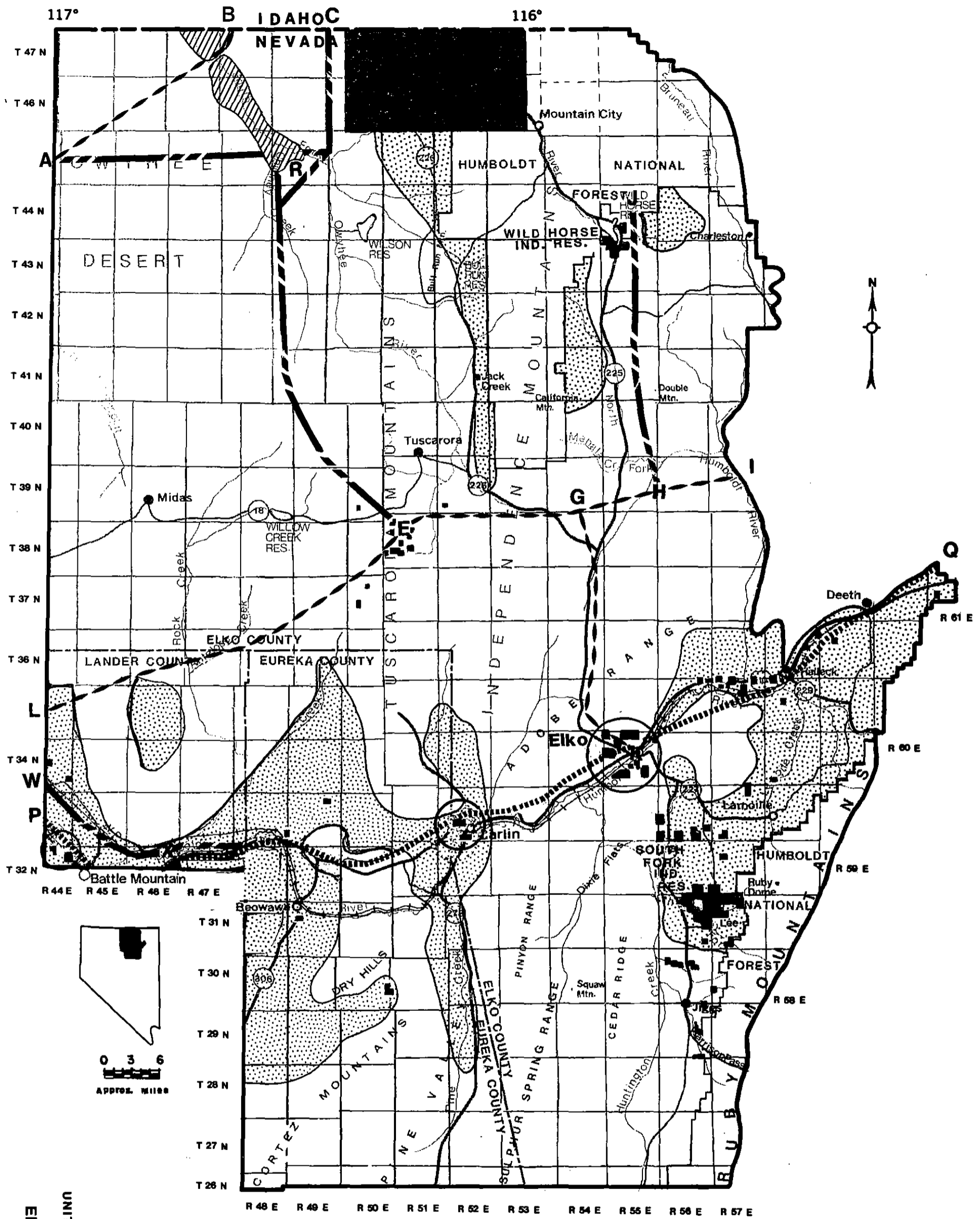
Short and Long-Term Management Actions:








1. Designate 243 miles of right-of-way corridors. This includes 109 miles of low visibility corridor designation along Interstate 80. Future facilities within this low visibility corridor would be accommodated if the facility were not evident in the characteristic landscape (Map 3). Projects will not be authorized within segment R-C until completion of an Idaho BLM Statewide Corridor EIS and if projects are compatible with a route identified in the Record of Decision for the Idaho BLM Statewide Corridor EIS.
2. Identify 130 miles of planning corridors for future facilities.

Standard Operating Procedures:

The designation of right-of-way corridors is intended to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-way. All major transmission or transportation facilities will be restricted to these corridors as preferred routes. Other rights-of-way will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Designated corridors will be three miles wide and planning corridors will be five miles wide except where constraints exist. Corridors will be identified and evaluated following standard Bureau procedures.



-  SALES (Community Expansion)
-  SALES
-  TRANSFER PRIMARILY BY EXCHANGE
-  CENTERLINE OF DESIGNATED CORRIDORS (3 Miles Wide)
-  CENTERLINE OF DESIGNATED LOW VISIBILITY CORRIDOR (3 Miles Wide)
-  CENTERLINE OF PLANNING CORRIDOR (5 Miles Wide)
-  OWYHEE CANYONLANDS WSA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
RECORD OF DECISION

LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENTS  
AND CORRIDORS

MAP 3

Corridor management involves working with prospective applicants on facility placement within corridors to allow for the highest usage of the land. This may limit other activities within corridors which are not compatible with the major type of usage of the particular corridor. Compatibility problems would justify expanding or shrinking individual corridor widths or adding additional corridors. Land sales within planning or designated corridors will consider impacts to the corridor.

Time of day and/or time of year restrictions will be placed on construction activities associated with transmission and utility facilities that are in the immediate vicinity of or would cross crucial sage grouse habitat, crucial mule deer and pronghorn antelope winter and summer habitats, antelope kidding areas, or raptor wintering or nesting areas. Restrictions will also be placed on activities affecting riparian areas and erosive soils.

## ACCESS

Objective: Initiate procedures to acquire legal access for routes which would enhance opportunities to use public resources and provide for public land administration.

Long-Term Management Action: Acquire legal access for 60 roads (242 miles) considered high priority for management of all resources (Map 4).

### Standard Operating Procedures:

Bureau roads are for use, development, protection, and administration of public lands and resources. Although public use is generally allowed, roads may be closed or use restricted to fulfill management objectives, protect public health and safety, or preserve resources. Easements required to provide access to public lands will be acquired when a substantial public need is documented or the access is needed to achieve resource management objectives.

### Implementation:

Access will be acquired as funding and work schedules permit and as respective private land owners indicate a willingness to allow such easement acquisitions.

## RECREATION

Objective: Provide a wide range of recreation opportunities.

### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

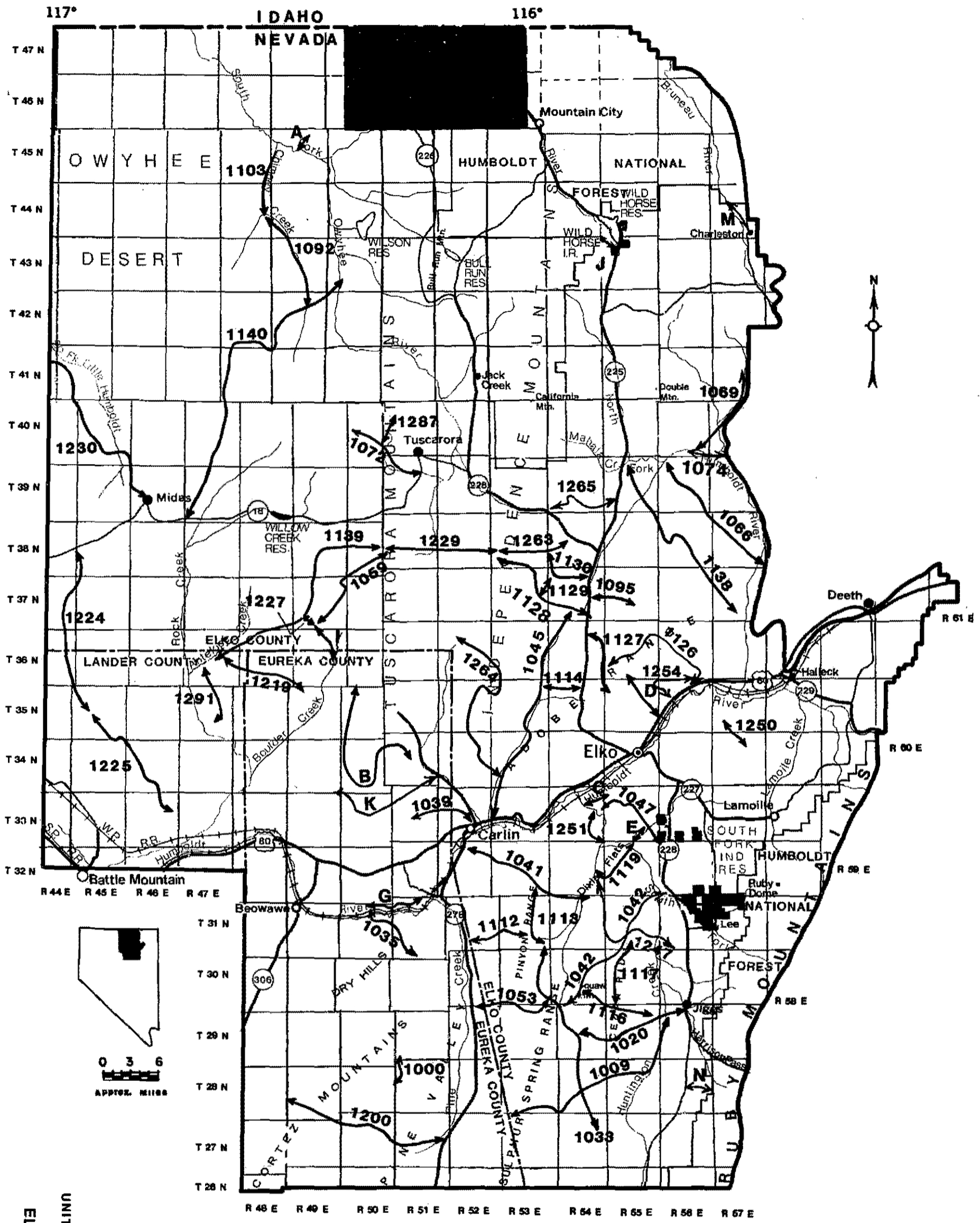
1. Make the following ORV designations: 3,060,074 acres open (98 percent of the planning area) and the remaining area limited to designated roads and trails - 73,945 acres; composed of Special Recreation Management Areas and preliminarily suitable portions of Wilderness Study Areas, including 18,625 acres addressed in the Draft Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS (Map 5).

LEGAL ACCESS IDENTIFIED FOR ACQUISITION

<u>Resources</u>	<u>Number of Roads</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Miles of Roads</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Wilderness	1	2	7	3
Range	22	36	94	38
Recreation	3	5	13	5
Woodland	5	8	12	5
Minerals	3	5	14	6
Other Government	5	8	29	12
Range/Woodland	7	11	23	10
Wilderness/ Range/ Recreation/Woodland	1	2	5	2
Range/Recreation	4	7	19	8
Wilderness/Range/ Recreation	2	3	10	4
Recreation/Wildlife	1	2	1	1
Range/Wildlife	1	2	3	1
Wilderness/Recreation	1	2	1	1
Recreation/Woodland	1	2	2	1
Range/Recreation/ Other Government	2	3	4	2
Wildlife/Other Government	$\frac{1}{60}$	$\frac{2}{100\%}$	$\frac{5}{242}$	$\frac{2}{100\%}$

ROAD NUMBERS

1000, 1009, 1020, 1030, 1033, 1035, 1041, 1042, 1045, 1047, 1053, 1059, 1066, 1069, 1072, 1074, 1092, 1095, 1103, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1116, 1117, 1119, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1130, 1138, 1139, 1140, 1200, 1219, 1224, 1225, 1227, 1229, 1230, 1239, 1247, 1250, 1251, 1254, 1263, 1264, 1265, 1287, 1291, A, B, C, D, E, G, I, J, K, M, N.



ROADS IDENTIFIED AS NEEDING ACCESS ACQUISITION CONSIDERATIONS

- A Bureau Roads Not On Transportation Plan
- 1043 Bureau Roads on Transportation Plan

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION

ACCESS  
 MAP 4

2. Maintain three existing Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs): the South Fork of the Owyhee River for sport and commercial river recreation (3,500 acres, the rim-to-rim portion); Wilson Reservoir (5,440 acres), and Zunino/Jiggs Reservoir (800 acres) for camping and water based recreation (Map 6).
3. Designate the South Fork Canyon of the Humboldt River (3,360 acres) as a SRMA for water based recreation and other day use related activities (Map 6).
4. Designate the Wildhorse Special Recreation Management Area (5,760 acres) for camping and water based recreation (Map 6).
5. Manage the remainder of the planning area for dispersed recreation activities.

Standard Operating Procedures:

A broad range of outdoor recreation opportunities are provided for all segments of the public. Opportunities for dispersed and resource dependent types of outdoor recreation will be provided commensurate with demand, resolution of user conflict and the need to provide resource protection. Recreation facilities will be provided to meet existing and projected demand.

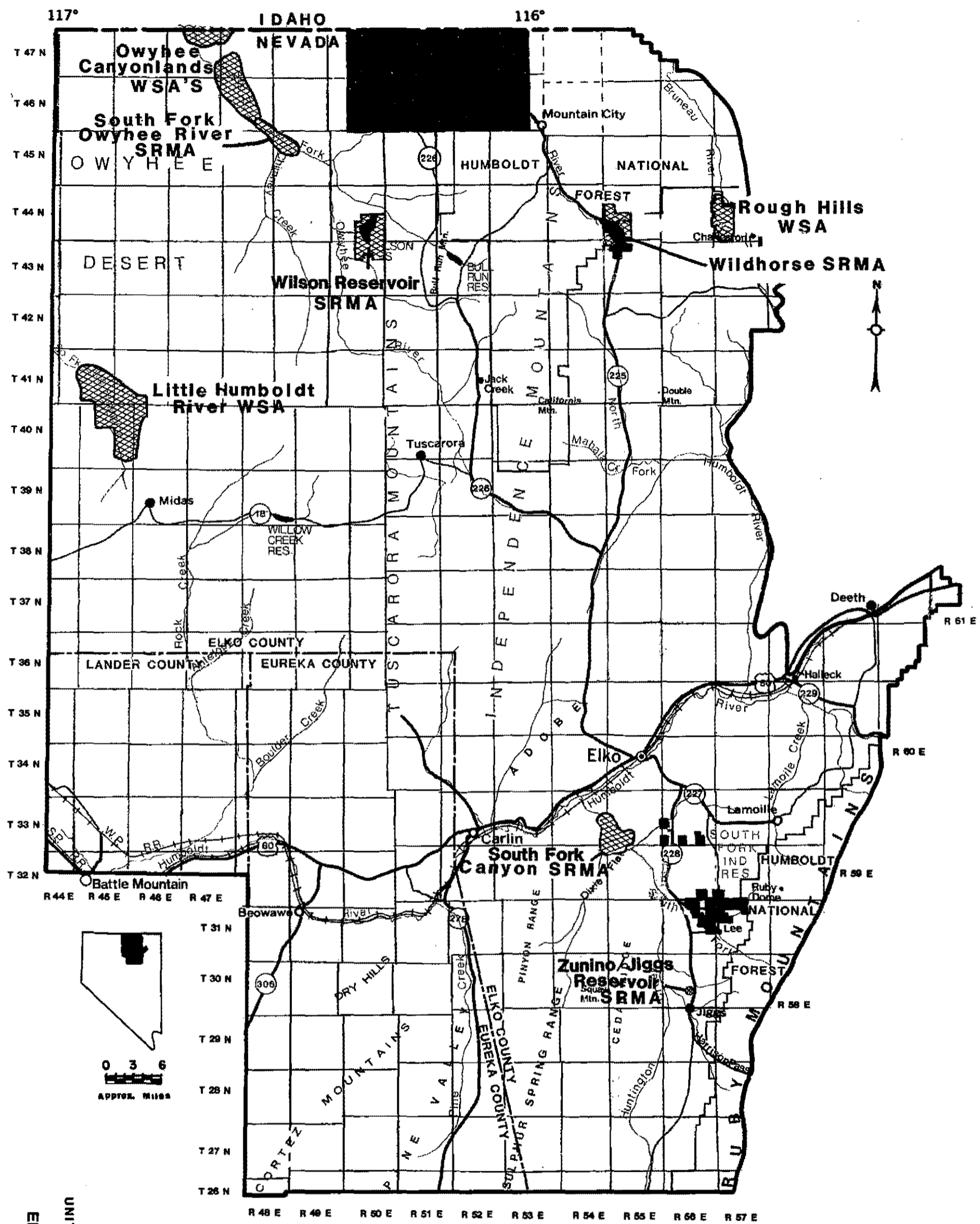
Recreation Area Management Plans will be developed and implemented for all existing and proposed Special Recreation Management Areas.

Except for areas designated as limited in the resource management plan, the planning area will be designated open to use by off-road vehicles. Areas designated as limited to off-road vehicles include existing and proposed Special Recreation Management Areas and Wilderness Study Areas. Applications for commercial or competitive special recreation use permits in areas designated as open will be analyzed through the special recreation use permit/environmental assessment process to determine what impacts may occur. These potential impacts will then be weighed against resource values to determine whether the special recreation use permits will be authorized.

Implementation:

Activity plans or actions necessary to implement the recreation management actions will generally occur in the following priority order:

1. ORV designation plan.
2. Activity or management plans for the three existing SRMAs:
  - a. Wilson Reservoir
  - b. Zunino/Jiggs Reservoir
  - c. South Fork of the Owyhee River
3. Activity or management plans for the two new SRMAs:
  - a. South Fork Canyon
  - b. Wildhorse



- OPEN
- LIMITED TO DESIGNATED ROADS AND TRAILS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION  
 OFF-ROAD VEHICLE  
 DESIGNATIONS  
 MAP 5





4. The remainder of the resource area for dispersed recreation activities.
  - a. Provide signs and information programs as needed.
  - b. Provide minimum developments and access necessary for recreation opportunities.
  - c. Include recreation actions in other activity plans as appropriate.

**WILDERNESS**

Objective: Manage as wilderness those portions of the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) that are manageable as wilderness and where wilderness values are capable of balancing other resource values and uses which would be forgone.

Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

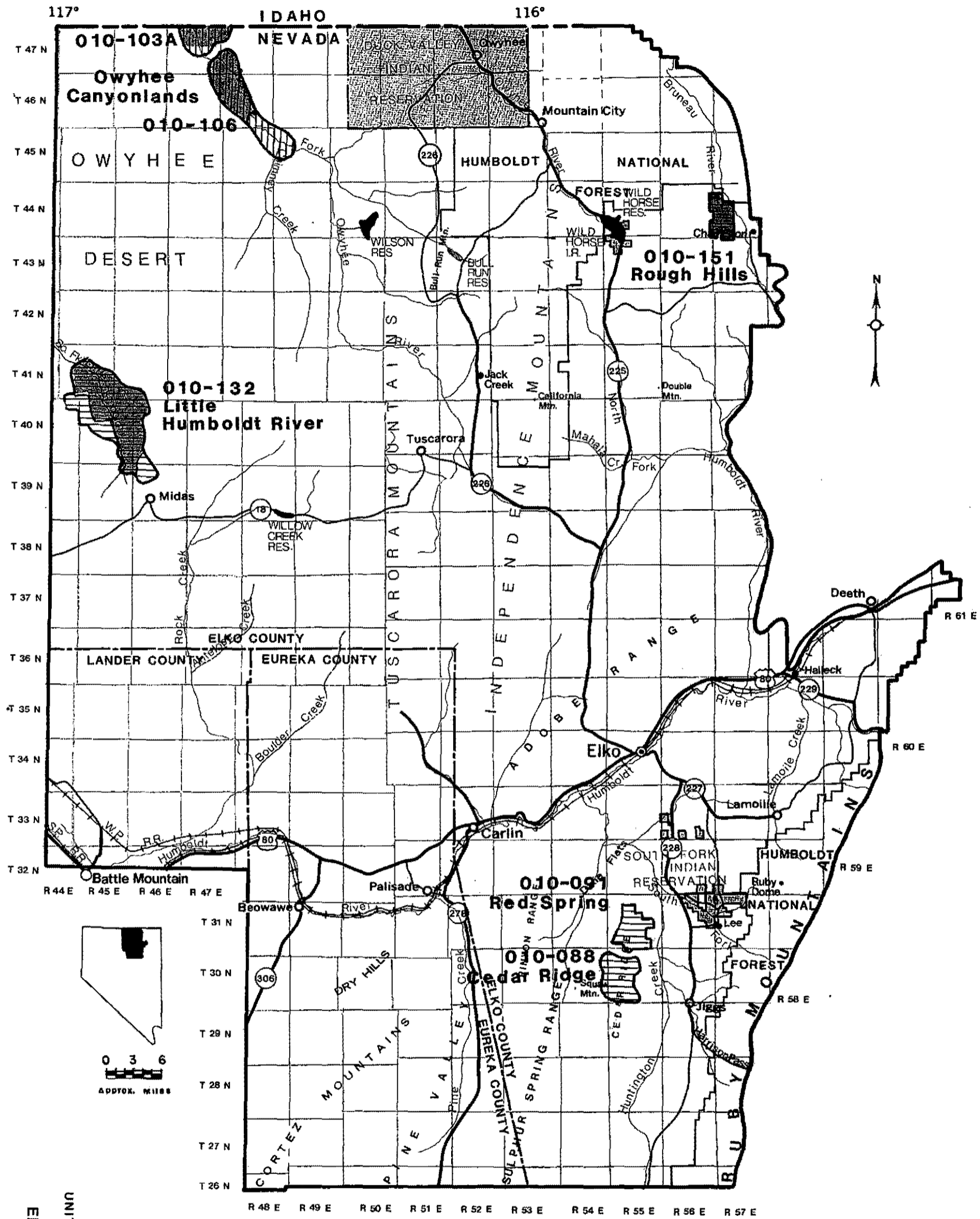
1. Preliminarily recommend the entire Rough Hills WSA (6,685 acres) and a portion of the Little Humboldt River WSA (29,775 acres) suitable for wilderness designation (1.2 percent of RMP area; Map 7).
2. Preliminarily recommend the Cedar Ridge and Red Spring WSAs and a portion of the Little Humboldt River WSA, totaling 30,294 acres, as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 7).





<u>WSA</u>	<u>Suitable Acres</u>	<u>Nonsuitable Acres</u>
Rough Hills	6,685	0
Little Humboldt River	29,775	12,438
Cedar Ridge	0	10,009
Red Spring	0	7,847
TOTAL	<u>36,460</u>	<u>30,294</u>

Standard Operating Procedures:

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 requires the Secretary of the Interior to review areas of the public lands determined to have wilderness characteristics, and to report to the President by October 21, 1991 his recommendation as to the suitability or nonsuitability of each such area for preservation as wilderness. The President will submit his recommendations to Congress by October 21, 1993.

All wilderness study areas will continue to be managed under the Bureau's Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review until completion of the wilderness review process (USDI, BLM, 1979). Wilderness recommendations made in the final environmental impact statement for the resource management plan are preliminary and subject to change during administrative review. A separate legislative final environmental impact statement will be prepared for the wilderness study recommendations. A wilderness study report will also be written that addresses each area individually. The Director of the Bureau of Land Management has requested mineral surveys by the United States Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines for each area recommended as preliminarily suitable.



-  Elko RMP Wilderness Study Areas
-  Owyhee Canyonlands EIS Wilderness Study Areas
-  Preliminarily Recommended Suitable
-  Preliminarily Recommended Non Suitable

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
RECORD OF DECISION

**WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

### Implementation:

Separate management plans tailored to the characteristics of each designated wilderness area will be developed through consultation with interested parties. They will be coordinated with other activity plans for their areas. Specific management objectives, requirements, and decisions implementing administrative practices and visitor activities will be developed in each plan.

Designated wilderness areas will be segregated against appropriation and operations under the land laws and mining laws, mineral leasing laws, and other mineral disposal authorities subject to valid existing rights. Designation of certain nonconforming uses such as livestock grazing would be allowed. Lands released by Congress from further wilderness consideration will be managed in accordance with management objectives and actions for the selected alternative (USDI, BLM, 1981).

Upon designation, wilderness areas would become closed to off-road vehicle use.

### LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Objective: Maintain or improve the condition of the public rangelands to enhance productivity for all rangeland values.

#### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Initially license livestock use at the three to five year (1979-1983) average licensed use level of 305,247 AUMs. Over the long-term increase the availability of livestock AUMs to 402,096 AUMs, a four percent increase over active preference and 32 percent over the three to five year average licensed use level.

There would be no change in active preference unless adequately supported by monitoring.

2. Treat or seed 120,978 acres to provide additional livestock forage and reduce the grazing pressure on adjacent areas.
3. Construct 258 miles of fence; drill 28 wells; lay 132 miles of pipeline; install 24 storage tanks; develop 97 springs, and 97 reservoirs to improve livestock distribution and utilization of vegetation (Table 2).
4. Develop and implement Allotment Management Plans (AMP) on 22 Category I allotments and six Category M allotments to allow for natural improvement of range condition while considering multiple-use values and increasing livestock carrying capacity (Map 8).
5. Implement a rangeland monitoring program to determine if management objectives are being met and adjust grazing management systems and livestock numbers as required.

TABLE 2  
 POTENTIAL RANGELAND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS  
 FOR THE ELKO RMP

Livestock

Culvert	1	\$ 2,000
Wells (Each)	28	168,000
Pipelines (Miles)	132	528,000
Water Storage Tanks (Each)	24	48,000
Spring Developments (Each)	97	291,000
Fences (Miles)	258	619,200
Cattleguards (Each)	37	92,500
Land Treatment (Acres)	120,978	2,179,405
Reservoir (Each)	97	776,000
SUBTOTAL		<u>\$4,704,105</u>

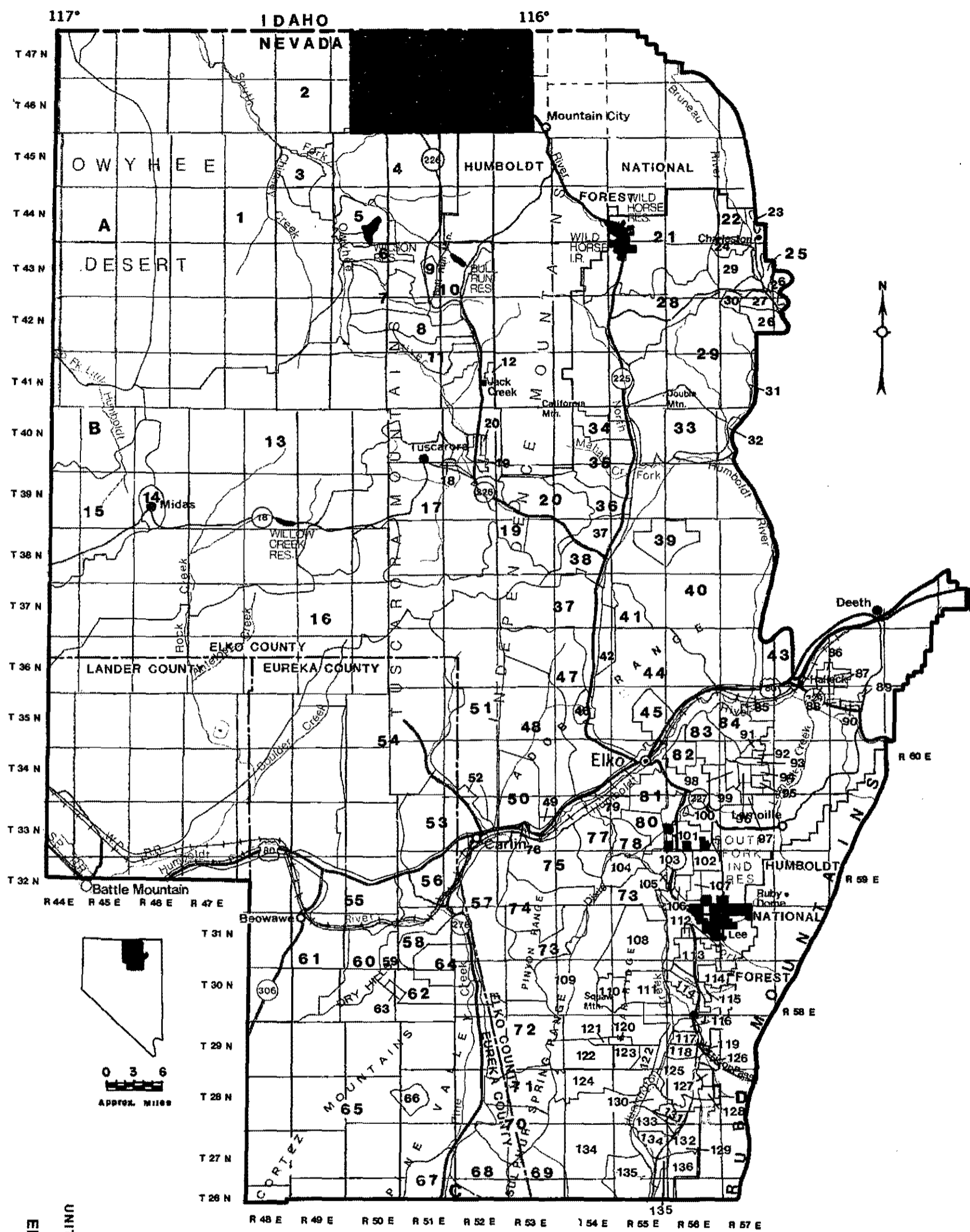
Wild Horses/Burros

Water Developments (Each)	2	<u>\$ 20,000</u>
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Wildlife

Guzzlers (Each)	20	\$ 40,000
Spring Protection (Each)	40	20,000
Vegetation Treatments (Each)	500	30,000
Water Developments (Each)	40	80,000
Fence Modification (Miles)	20	20,000
Fences (Miles)	189	453,600
SUBTOTAL		<u>\$643,600</u>

TOTAL COST		\$5,367,705
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

RECORD OF DECISION

ALLOTMENT BOUNDARIES

MAP 8

ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY MAP REFERENCE LIST

MAP REF. NO.	ALLOTMENT	ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT CATEGORY	MAP REF. NO.	ALLOTMENT	ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT CATEGORY
1	Owyhee	I	46	Adobe	M
2	YP	M	47	Blue Basin	I
3	Owyhee-Petan	M	48	Dry Susie	C
4	Indian Creek FFR	C	49	Carlin Canyon	C
5	VN Pocket Petan	M	50	Carlin Field	I
6	VN Pocket Allied	I	51	Hadley	I
7	Cornucopia	M	52	Taylor's Carlin	C
8	Andrae	M	53	Mary's Mountain	C
9	Wilson Mountain	M	54	T Lazy S	I
10	Lime Mountain	M	55	Horseshoe	I
11	Mori	M	56	Palisade	C
12	Bucket Flat	C	57	Pine Mountain	I
13	Rock Creek	I	58	Iron Blossom	M
14	Midas	M	59	Safford Canyon	M
15	Little Humboldt	M	60	Scotts Gulch	I
16	Twenty-five	I	61	Geyser	C
17	Tuscarora	I	62	Thomas Creek	M
18	Six Mile	I	63	Thomas Creek FFR	C
19	Taylor Canyon	M	64	Devils Gate	C
20	Eagle Rock	M	65	South Buckhorn	I
21	Wildhorse Group	M	66	Potato Patch	M
22	Rough Hills	M	67	Pine Creek	C
23	Stone Flat FFR	C	68	Mineral Hill	I
24	Annie Creek	M	69	Union Mountain	I
25	Bruneau River	M	70	Bruffy	M
26	Rattlesnake Canyon	I	71	Pony Creek	M
27	Stone Flat	I	72	Indian Springs	I
28	Four Mile	I	73	Dixie Flats	I
29	Beaver Creek	M	74	Emmigrant Springs	I
30	Mason Mountain	M	75	Tonka	I
31	Mexican Field	M	76	Old Eighty FFR	C
32	Cotant	I	77	Grindstone Mtn.	I
33	Double Mountain	I	78	Cut-Off	C
34	Sheep Creek	M	79	Bullion Rd.	I
35	Mahala Creek	M	80	Ten Mile	I
36	Eagle Rock 1	I	81	Four Mile Canyon	C
37	Lone Mountain	M	82	Burner Basin	C
38	Fox Springs	M	83	Elko Hills	I
39	Coal Mine Basin	I	84	East Fork	I
40	North Fork Group	I	85	East Fork FFR	C
41	Dorsey	M	86	Smiraldo	I
42	Long Field	M	87	King Seeding	M
43	Halleck	C	88	Horse Fly	M
44	Adobe Hills	M	89	Heelfly	C
45	White Rock	M	90	Secret	C

ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY MAP REFERENCE LIST  
(Continued)

<u>MAP REF. NO.</u>	<u>ALLOTMENT</u>	<u>ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT CATEGORY</u>	<u>MAP REF. NO.</u>	<u>ALLOTMENT</u>	<u>ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT CATEGORY</u>
91	Kennedy Seeding	I	114	Willow Creek Pockets	I
92	Walther	C	115	Cottonwood FFR	C
93	Palacio Seeding	M	116	Merkley-Zunino	I
94	Sandhill North	C	117	Achurra	M
95	Sandhill South	C	118	Barnes Seeding	M
96	Bellinger	M	119	Barnes FFR	C
97	Hog Tommy	I	120	Little Porter FFR	C
98	Bottari Seeding	I	121	Robinson Mtn. FFR	C
99	Olgivie-Orbe	I	122	Robinson Mountain	I
100	LDS FFR	C	123	Little Porter	I
101	Shoshone	I	124	Robinson Creek	I
102	Chimney Creek	M	125	Frost Creek	M
103	Twin Bridges	I	126	Corta FFR	C
104	River	I	127	Corral Canyon	M
105	LDS	I	128	Pearl Creek	M
106	McMullen FFR	C	129	Lindsay Creek	M
107	South Fork	I	130	Twin Creek North	M
108	Crane Springs	I	131	Twin Creek East	M
109	Dixie Creek	I	132	Twin Creek South	M
110	Sleeman	I	133	Merkley FFR	C
111	Hansel	I	134	Red Rock	I
112	Wilson FFR	C	135	Browne	I
113	Willow	M	136	Mitchell Creek	I

## Standard Operating Procedures

### 1. Selective Management Policy

It is the policy of the BLM to address range management problems through a selective management approach. This approach assigns management priorities among allotments within a planning area. This is based on identifying allotments with similar management needs, resource characteristics, and potential for improvement in both resource and economic returns.

The similarity among the allotments allows them to be grouped into three categories with each having its own objective. The three categories and their objectives are: Maintain current satisfactory condition; Improve current unsatisfactory condition; or manage the allotments Custodially, while protecting existing resources. The use of these allotment categories will help to establish priorities for distributing available funds and personnel in such a way as to achieve cost effective improvement of rangeland production and condition. Generally, "Improve" category allotments will have the highest priority for implementation of range improvements and grazing systems, "Maintain" category allotments will have next highest priority with "Custodial" category allotments having the lowest priority for development.

The categorization process will be used to develop grazing treatments and systems, and install range improvements in order to resolve grazing related problems. The priorities identify those allotments where more intensive management is needed. This initial categorization was developed through analysis of existing data and consultation with the public, including the livestock permittee and the Nevada Department of Wildlife, and may be changed as new information becomes available (Map 8).

### 2. Allotment Management Plans

Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) will be multiple-use in nature, designed to address the objectives identified in the Resource Management Plan and the Rangeland Program Summary. AMPs will be developed in consultation with interested parties and coordinated with other resource activity plans. Key components of allotment management plans are allotment specific objectives, monitoring studies, grazing systems, season-of-use, area of use, authorized numbers, kind and class of stock and range improvements designed to meet management objectives.

### 3. Grazing Treatments and Systems

A grazing treatment describes the level of grazing use and periods-of-use for a unit (usually a pasture) of an allotment, or an entire allotment in one or more years. Grazing treatments are the building blocks of the grazing plan, and are designed to improve rangeland condition by manipulating livestock grazing to accomplish objectives of management. The deferment of grazing or complete rest from grazing during the critical growth period of key management species will allow these species



to maintain and/or increase their density, composition, vigor, production, and reproduction. The following treatments (singly or in various combinations) will be used in the design of grazing systems incorporated into allotment management plans:

Treatment 1: Rest from livestock grazing for two consecutive growing seasons (approximately April 1 of one year to August 31 of the following year). Two growing seasons of rest would allow key management species to improve vigor and increase litter accumulation, seed production, and seedling establishment.

Treatment 2: Rest from livestock grazing at least one year in both the spring (April 1 to May 30) and summer (June 1 to August 31) during each three or four year cycle.

Treatment 3: Graze each pasture at some time during each grazing year.

Treatment 4: Graze no pasture more than twice in the same growing season (spring or summer) during any three or four year cycle.

Treatment 5: Graze livestock from midsummer to late fall only (approximately July 16 to November 15), and rest during the spring or summer the following year to improve the vigor, density, and reproduction of key management species.

Treatment 6: Provide rest from livestock grazing for two years until seedlings are established or until it is determined that a vegetation manipulation or recovery project is unsuccessful. This treatment provides the protection necessary for establishment or recovery of key management species following wildfire, prescribed burning, and vegetation treatment.

Treatment 7: Defer livestock grazing from early spring to midsummer each year (approximately April 1 to June 30). Improved vigor and reproduction for key management species in each allotment would result.

Treatment 8: Graze livestock in early spring, so as to reduce or maintain annual and perennial grasses, while improving or maintaining key browse species (i.e. bitterbrush) on mule deer winter range. This treatment would probably only occur once in every five to six years.

#### 4. Range Improvements

Range improvements will be developed to meet identified management objectives. Fencing and water developments improve livestock distribution, especially when developed in conjunction with a grazing management plan. Table 2 shows projected numbers of range improvements and associated costs for implementing the Proposed Plan.

Development of range improvement projects will include the following procedures:

- a) Benefit/Cost (B/C) analysis will be performed on an allotment basis for those range improvements required to implement new AMPs. The B/C analysis will be performed in compliance with BIM policy.

- b) Minimal clearing of vegetation will be allowed on project sites requiring excavation.
- c) Alteration of sagebrush areas either through application of herbicides, prescribed burning, or by mechanical means will be guided by the procedures specified in the Western State's Sage Grouse Guidelines, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Nevada Department of Wildlife and Bureau of Land Management, as amended, and as future studies might dictate.
- d) Vegetation manipulation projects will be designed to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and to improve it whenever possible. Projects that would alter the potential natural plant composition will not be allowed in riparian areas.
- e) Active raptor nests adjacent to areas proposed for vegetation manipulation will be protected. On-the-ground work will be confined to the period preceding nesting activity or after the young have fledged. Areas containing suitable nesting habitat will be inventoried for active raptor nests prior to initiation of any project.
- f) A site specific soils analysis will be completed prior to planning vegetation type conversions to determine land treatment feasibility.
- g) Prescribed burn plans will be developed before any planned burning occurs on any native vegetation or seeded areas.
- h) Fence construction will comply with BLM Manual Handbook H-1741-1 and NSO Manual Supplement 4730. Lay-down fences will be constructed in wildlife and wild horse areas if necessary and feasible. Fences in wild horse areas will contrast enough with surroundings so as to be visible to horses and will have gates installed at least once every mile and at all corners.
- i) Livestock water improvements will include bird ramps in watering troughs, and as needed, drinkers along pipelines, overflows at troughs, and protected seep areas.

Spring developments will be fenced to prevent trampling of adjacent vegetation and provide escape areas for small wildlife. A portion of the water at these spring developments will be maintained at the source ensuring that wildlife which have used the water will have access to it as per Nevada Revised Statutes 533.367.

- j) Disturbed areas will be treated, where such action is necessary and practical, to replace ground cover and prevent erosion.
- k) Maintenance of structural improvements shall be provided by the user deriving the primary benefit from the improvement through cooperative agreements and as specified in the BLM's 1982 Rangeland Improvement Policy.
- l) Water will be made available in allotments and rested pastures for wild horses and wildlife, wherever feasible.

- m) The selection and use of herbicides as a means to remove brush will be deferred until completion of a Bureau Environmental Impact Statement on the use of herbicides on the public lands.

## 5. Livestock Use Adjustments

Livestock use adjustments are most often made by changing one or more of the following: the class or kind of livestock grazing an allotment, the season-of-use, the stocking rate, or the pattern of grazing. Livestock use adjustments may be implemented through agreement or decision in compliance with existing regulation. When livestock use adjustments are implemented by decision, the decision will be based on adequate data, monitoring of resource conditions, and after consultation with the affected permittee. Current BLM policy emphasizes the use of a systematic monitoring program to identify the need for livestock adjustments. Adjustments may also be made through mutual agreement.

## 6. Monitoring Program

The purpose of monitoring is to measure the accomplishment of the various objectives identified within activity plans. It incorporates approved methods contained in the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook. Monitoring will be completed in compliance with BLM Rangeland Monitoring Technical Reports 4400-1, -2, -3, -4 and 4400-7. More specifically the monitoring program objectives are to:

- a) Maintain an inventory of ecological status and a record of trend on Elko Planning Area rangelands.
- b) Determine if grazing management actions are meeting resource management objectives within prescribed time frames.

The field procedures or methods recommended by the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Task Group, as applied to grazing agreements and decisions in the Elko Resource Area, may include recording actual use, use pattern mapping, measuring key forage plant utilization on key areas, placement of utilization cages, collecting frequency trend data, determining ecological status and/or resource value ratings, noting information on growing conditions, and documentation of other events and observations.

Monitoring will be conducted in essential and crucial wildlife areas as well as in wild horse areas. Information gained through these efforts and other studies will be used in making any grazing decision. For more detailed information on these monitoring procedures, refer to the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook (Nevada Range Studies Task Group, 1984), the draft Bureau Monitoring Studies Manual (1981), the Nevada Wildlife Manual Supplement 6630 (1982) and the Nevada Stream Survey Manual 6671 (1978).

For category I allotments, monitoring will be focused on the effects of management prescriptions on objectives developed through consultation and coordination with interested parties and in evaluating the effects of existing grazing practices in meeting specific allotment objectives. The monitoring program for those allotments in Category M and C will generally be of lower intensity for range purposes.

7. Grazing Use Records

Accurate recording of actual grazing use by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife will be maintained by use areas to help make adjustments in management plans. As data are recorded and accumulated, they provide managers accurate information on the season and duration of use and the number, kind, and class of grazing animals that are using or have used pastures of varying sizes. The permittee will be responsible for the livestock portion of this record. This actual use information is the day-to-day working record of a livestock operation.

8. Use Mapping

The use map is one of the most important tools in grazing management. It is used to help establish key management areas, to identify distribution problems and solutions, to develop objectives and grazing plans, to locate range improvements, and to make adjustments in management plans.

The utilization map for an allotment or pasture can help determine whether or not the grazing plan is functioning as designed. The map can identify and indicate the relative extent of areas underused, overused, and properly used. Problem areas can be identified for closer study to determine causes and potential solutions.

9. Key Forage Plant Utilization

The key forage plant utilization method is used to monitor utilization on key areas. Utilization cages may be used in conjunction with this method on key areas to help the observer make reliable estimates of the present utilization-by-weight of the key species. It is used in short-term monitoring where documented use is needed on key areas in addition to use maps. Practice and experience with this method also helps observers properly recognize the light, moderate, and heavy use classes when doing use mapping. Key forage plant utilization is also used in long-term monitoring to help interpret why vegetation changes have taken place. The following chart shows the allowable use level guidelines for five plant categories by season-of-use.

Degree of Allowable Use Guide

<u>Plant Category</u>	<u>Grazing Seasons</u>				
	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Yearlong</u>
Annual Grasses	60%	90%	90%	90%	83%
Perennial Grasses & Grasslike	50%	50%	60%	60%	55%
Annual Forbs	60%	90%	90%	90%	83%
Perennial Forbs & Biennial Forbs	50%	50%	60%	60%	55%
Shrubs, Half Shrubs, & Trees	30%	50%	50%	50%	45%

Source: Nevada Rangeland Task Force, 1984.

The utilization determined on key areas is used with actual use data, trend, ecological status, use patterns, weather, and/or supplementary information to evaluate whether management changes are needed.

10. Weather Data

Weather is an important factor influencing variation in forage production, and when properly recorded is an important part of both short and long-term monitoring. General observations on growing conditions and any applicable measured weather data will be considered when making changes in grazing use.

11. Frequency

A frequency sampling procedure is used to measure trend in long-term monitoring. Both a landscape and a closeup photograph are taken each time a transect is sampled. When frequency transect data indicate a significant change in the frequency of occurrence of the key species, the change is evaluated to see if the specific management objectives for the rangelands represented by the key area are being met.

12. Ecological Status

Ecological status is defined as the present state of the vegetation of an ecological site in relation to the potential natural community for that site. Potential natural community is a biotic community that would become established if all successional sequences were completed without interference under present environmental conditions. It is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions, and amounts of plants in the present plant community resemble that of the potential natural community. The four seral stage classes that relate to the potential natural community are:

<u>Percent of Potential Natural Community by Air Dry Weight</u>	<u>Seral Stage Classes</u>
76 - 100	potential natural community(climax)
51 - 75	late seral
26 - 50	mid seral
0 - 25	early seral

The primary purpose of determining ecological status in long term monitoring is to provide a basis for comparing or monitoring the extent and direction of changes in the plant community as a result of specific treatment or management. When establishing key area studies for native plant communities, ecological status may be determined to facilitate monitoring the accomplishment of specific management objectives.

### Implementation:

Generally, Allotment Management Plans (AMP) or grazing systems will be developed in the following order of priority:

1. Those allotments in the "I" category for which no grazing plan exists.
2. Those allotments in the "I" category with existing plans or systems which need to be rewritten or updated.
3. Those allotments in the "M" category for which no grazing plan exists.
4. Those allotments in the "M" category with existing plans or systems which need to be rewritten or updated.
5. Allotments in the "C" category for which no grazing plan exists.
6. Allotments in the "C" category with existing plans than need to be rewritten or updated.

Generally, range improvement funds will be invested first on category "I" allotments, then "M", and finally "C" category allotments. Factors such as available manpower, funding, and permittee cooperation and contribution may affect the priority for AMP development and implementation.

A Rangeland Program Summary will be issued after completion of the RMP to inform livestock permittees and interested publics about the implementation of the rangeland management program. It will identify allotment specific objectives for livestock, wildlife and wild horses. It will outline allotment specific monitoring studies needed to evaluate the attainment of objectives and the range improvements proposed to implement the RMP.

### WILDLIFE

Objective: Conserve and enhance terrestrial, riparian and aquatic wildlife habitat.

#### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Manage wildlife habitat to provide 34,513 AUMs of forage for mule deer, 1,215 AUMs for pronghorn antelope, and 140 AUMs for bighorn sheep.
2. Construct 20 guzzlers, 40 spring protection facilities, 40 water developments, and 189 miles of fencing to improve habitat and management for wildlife. Implement 500 acres of vegetation treatment and modify 20 miles of fence within crucial big game habitat (Table 2).

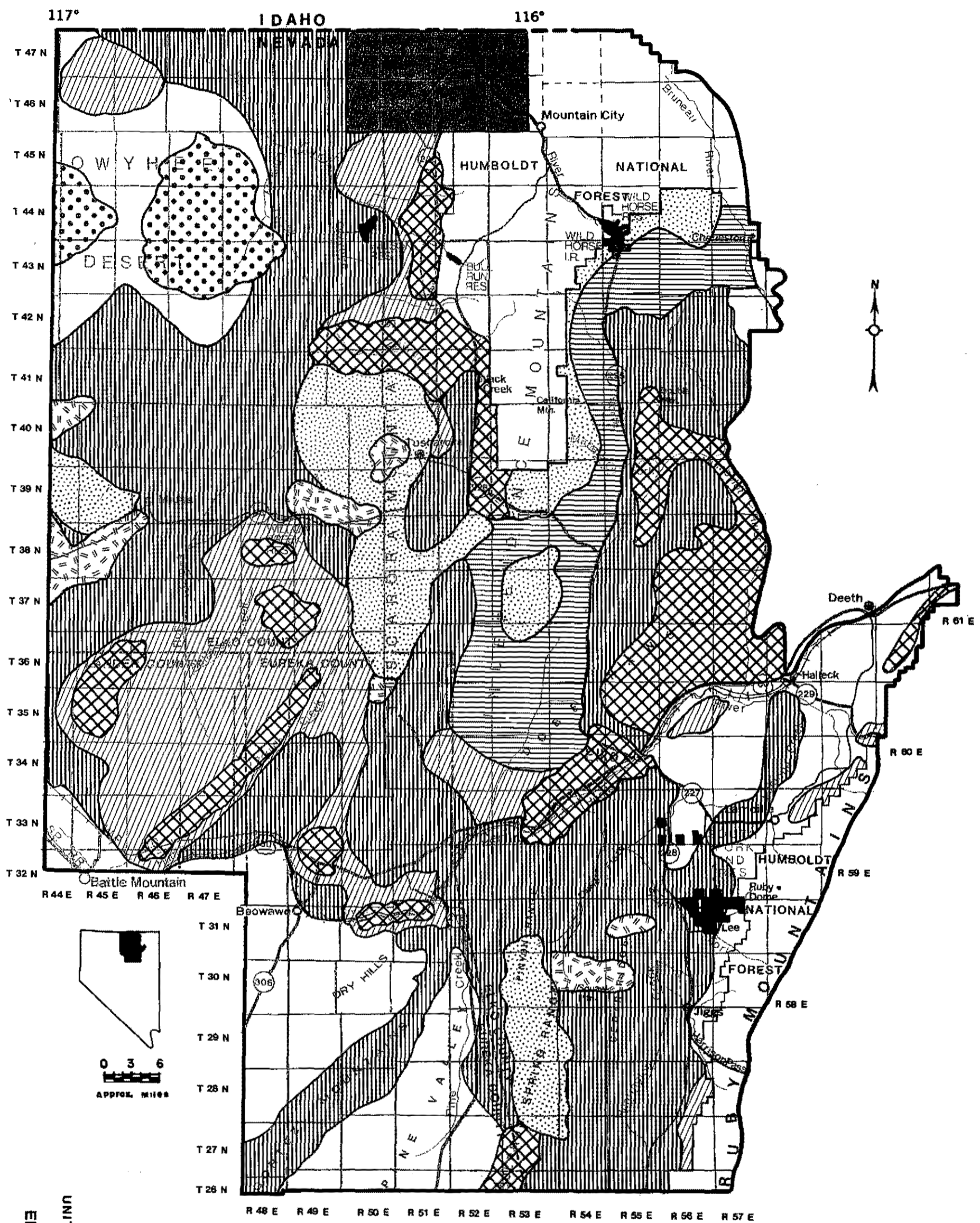
3. Monitor the interaction between wildlife habitat condition and other resource uses and make adjustments in season-of-use for livestock to improve or maintain essential and crucial wildlife habitats.
4. Jointly evaluate and analyze availability and condition of habitat areas identified by the Nevada Department of Wildlife for the reestablishment, augmentation, or introduction of bighorn sheep and other wildlife species. Accommodate this through Habitat Management Plans.
5. Apply restrictions on leasable and/or saleable mineral developments to protect crucial deer winter range, sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats, and antelope kidding areas (Map 9 & 10).
6. Manage 117 miles (3,480 acres) of high priority riparian/stream habitat to provide good habitat condition for wildlife and fish. Techniques which would result in a minimum improvement of 30 percent in habitat condition in the short-term from the date of implementation would be used (Map 10).

Standard Operating Procedures:

Wildlife habitat improvement projects (Table 2) will be guided primarily through habitat management plans. These plans will be developed through consultation with interested parties and other activity plans. These plans will be focused on maintenance and improvement of wildlife habitat through actions including water developments, grazing management, fencing, and vegetation treatments. Habitat management plans will be written for specific purposes including management of crucial habitats to provide for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species where present; management of big game ranges to provide habitat for reasonable numbers of animals over the long-term; improvement of riparian, wetland, and aquatic habitats; and management of other habitats to meet the needs of upland game and nongame animals.

Techniques proven to be effective in improving and protecting riparian habitat will be used. These include the following:

1. Road relocation.
2. Mitigation of mining and mineral exploration activities where possible.
3. Modifying the time of forage use.
4. Reducing intensity of streamside forage use.
5. Adding more rest to a grazing cycle.
6. Fencing streamside corridors.
7. The inclusion of a riparian pasture as a separately managed resource.
8. Changing the kind of livestock grazing riparian habitat.
9. Use of structures to stop head cutting and/or build up the drainage base level.



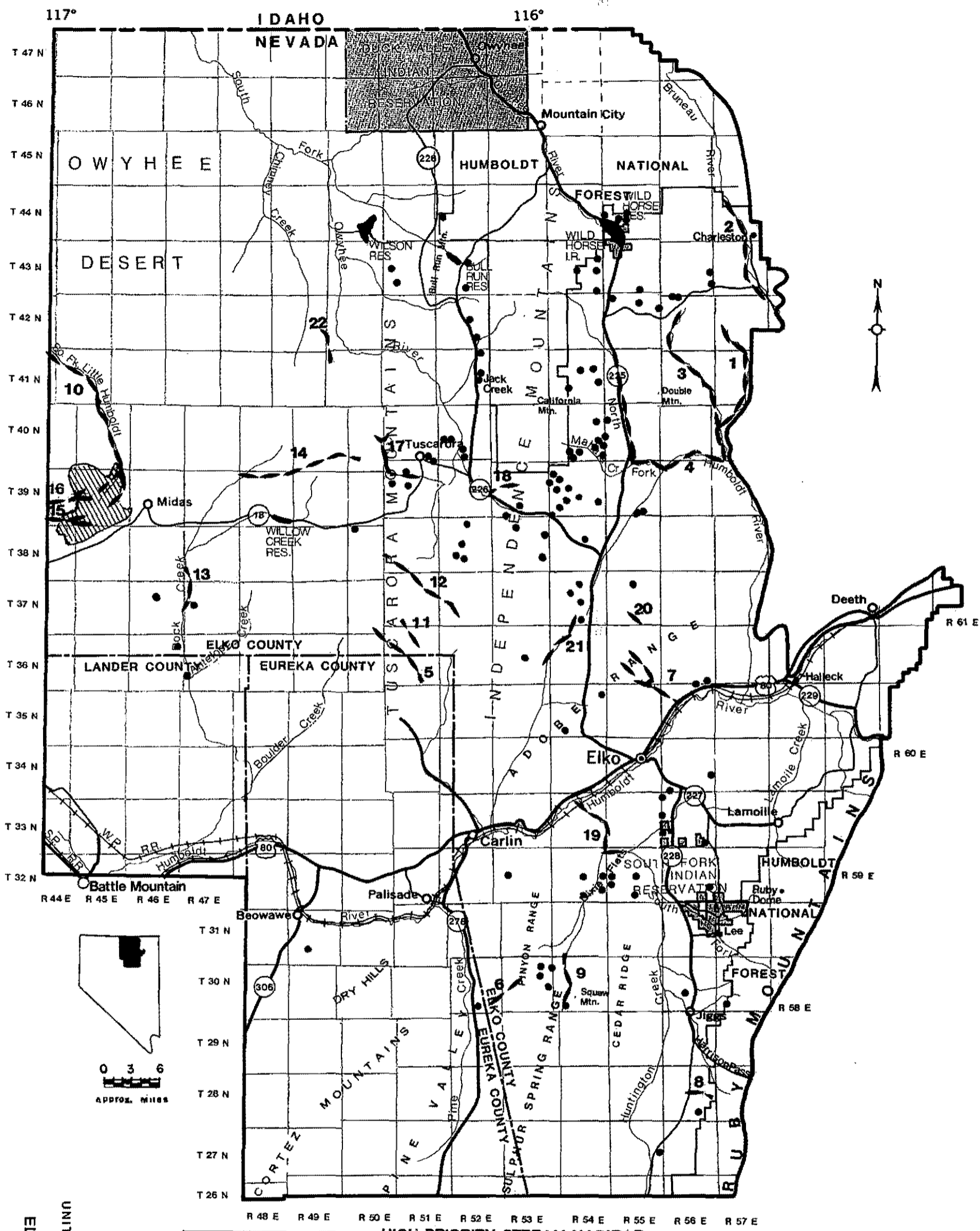
-  CRUCIAL ANTELOPE YEARLONG HABITAT (Includes Kidding Areas)
-  CRUCIAL DEER WINTER HABITAT
-  OTHER DEER WINTER RANGE
-  OTHER DEER YEARLONG RANGE
-  OTHER DEER SUMMER RANGE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION

ANTELOPE AND DEER HABITAT AREAS

MAP 9





HIGH PRIORITY STREAM HABITAT					
#	Stream Name	Miles on Public Land	#	Stream Name	Miles on Public Land
1.	E. FORK BEAVER CREEK	14.0	12.	BEAVER CREEK	3.5
2.	BRUNEAU RIVER	4.0	13.	ROCK CREEK	4.6
3.	W. FORK BEAVER CREEK	19.5	14.	TOE JAM CREEK	1.5
4.	N. FORK HUMBOLDT RIVER	16.0	15.	S. FORK JAKE CREEK	5
5.	LITTLE JACK CREEK	2.0	16.	N. FORK JAKE CREEK	2.5
6.	TROUT CREEK	3.9	17.	McCANN CREEK	2.5
7.	SHERMAN CREEK	3.5	18.	WATER PIPE CANYON	1.5
8.	PEARL CREEK	2.5	19.	SO. FORK HUMBOLDT R.	2.5
9.	DIXIE CREEK	2.5	20.	DORSEY CREEK	1.5
10.	SOUTH FORK LITTLE HUMBOLDT RIVER	14.5	21.	SUSIE CREEK	2.0
11.	COYOTE CREEK	4.0	22.	RED COW CREEK	3.5
			<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>117</b>

- HIGH PRIORITY STREAM HABITAT
- KNOWN SAGE GROUSE STRUTTING GROUNDS
- ▨ EXISTING BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION  
**HIGH PRIORITY STREAMS**  
**SAGE GROUSE STRUTTING GROUNDS**  
**BIGHORN SHEEP USE AREAS**  
**MAP 10**

## HIGH PRIORITY STREAM HABITAT

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>Miles on Public Land</u>
1	E. Fork Beaver Creek	14.0
2	Bruneau River	4.0
3	W. Fork Beaver Creek	19.5
4	N. Fork Humboldt River	16.0
5	Little Jack Creek	2.0
6	Trout Creek	3.9
7	Sherman Creek	3.5
8	Pearl Creek	2.5
9	Dixie Creek	2.5
10	South Fork Little Humboldt River	14.5
11	Coyote Creek	4.0
12	Beaver Creek	3.5
13	Rock Creek	4.6
14	Toe Jam Creek	1.5
15	S. Fork Jake Creek	5
16	N. Fork Jake Creek	2.5
17	McCann Creek	2.5
18	Water Pipe Canyon	1.5
19	South Fork	2.5
20	Dorsey Creek	1.5
21	Susie Creek	2.0
22	Red Cow Creek	<u>3.5</u>
	TOTAL	117

Which technique or combination of techniques to be used will be determined individually for each stream or riparian area.

Implementation:

The priority for developing habitat management plans and/or implementing habitat improvement projects will generally be as follows:

1. Terrestrial and stream critical habitat (threatened and endangered species)
2. Other high priority stream habitat
3. Crucial terrestrial habitat (key habitat)
4. Other stream habitat
5. All other habitat

WILD HORSES

Objective: Manage wild horse populations and habitat in the established herd areas consistent with other resource uses.

Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

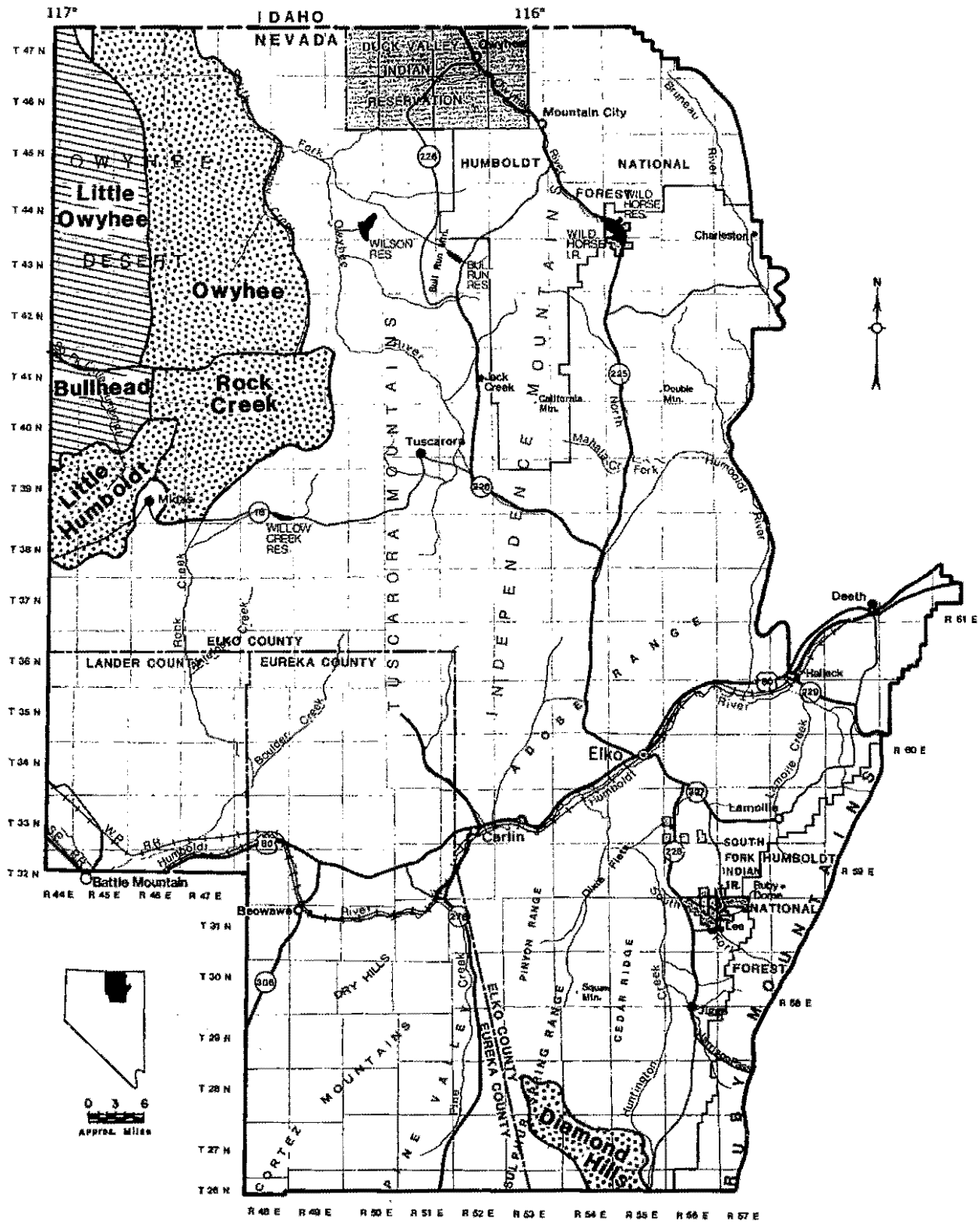
1. Manage the four wild horse herd areas with an appropriate management level of 330 horses (Map 11) as follows:



<u>Herd Management Area Name</u>	<u>Appropriate Management Level</u>	<u>Grazing Allotment</u>
Owyhee	58	Owyhee
Little Humboldt	107	Little Humboldt
Rock Creek	119	Rock Creek
Diamond Hills	46	Red Rock, Brown

2. Monitor wild horse populations and habitat conditions.
3. Construct two water development projects (catchment type) each with a storage tank and trough (Table 2).
4. Conduct wild horse gatherings as needed to maintain numbers.

Standard Operating Procedures:

Wild horse management will be guided by Herd Management Area Plans. These plans will be developed through consultation and coordination with interested parties and will be coordinated with livestock and wildlife plans and other resource plans. They will focus on wild horse management through determination of proper population management, habitat improvement, and population and habitat monitoring studies.



-  HERD AREAS ADMINISTERED BY WINNEMUCCA DISTRICT
-  HERD AREAS ADMINISTERED BY ELKO DISTRICT

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 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION

WILD HORSE HERD AREAS  
 MAP 11

Wild horse gathering procedures will be designed so that captured animals are handled in a safe manner, death loss of captured animals is limited to less than two percent, and use of helicopters on roundups does not occur six weeks before and after the peak foaling season.

#### WOODLAND PRODUCTS

Objective: Manage woodland areas to provide as wide a variety of products and services as possible to both the general public and commercial users.

#### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Implement intensive management of Christmas tree cutting on approximately 23,000 acres of woodlands (Map 12).
2. Manage fuelwood harvesting to allocate the full allowable cut on approximately 60,000 acres of pinyon pine, Utah juniper and curlleaf mountain mahogany. Additional live fuelwood harvesting areas would be opened as needed (Map 12).
3. Provide for commercial pine nut sales in years when pine nuts are abundant.

#### Standard Operating Procedures:

Woodland products will be harvested in accordance with sound forest management and BLM guidelines using the principles of sustained yield and multiple-use. The harvest of dead trees, with the exception of aspen, is allowed throughout the planning area. Aspen harvest will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Woodlands will be managed in such a way that other resource values are conserved and/or enhanced. Reforestation may be employed to enhance the sustained yield capabilities of the forest resource. Harvest areas will be closed as planned thinning levels are achieved.

Type conversions of pinyon pine/juniper stands to improve livestock and/or wildlife forage production will be limited to areas where forage production is the most beneficial (and has the greatest cost/benefit ratio).

#### Implementation:

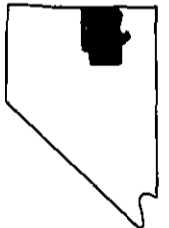
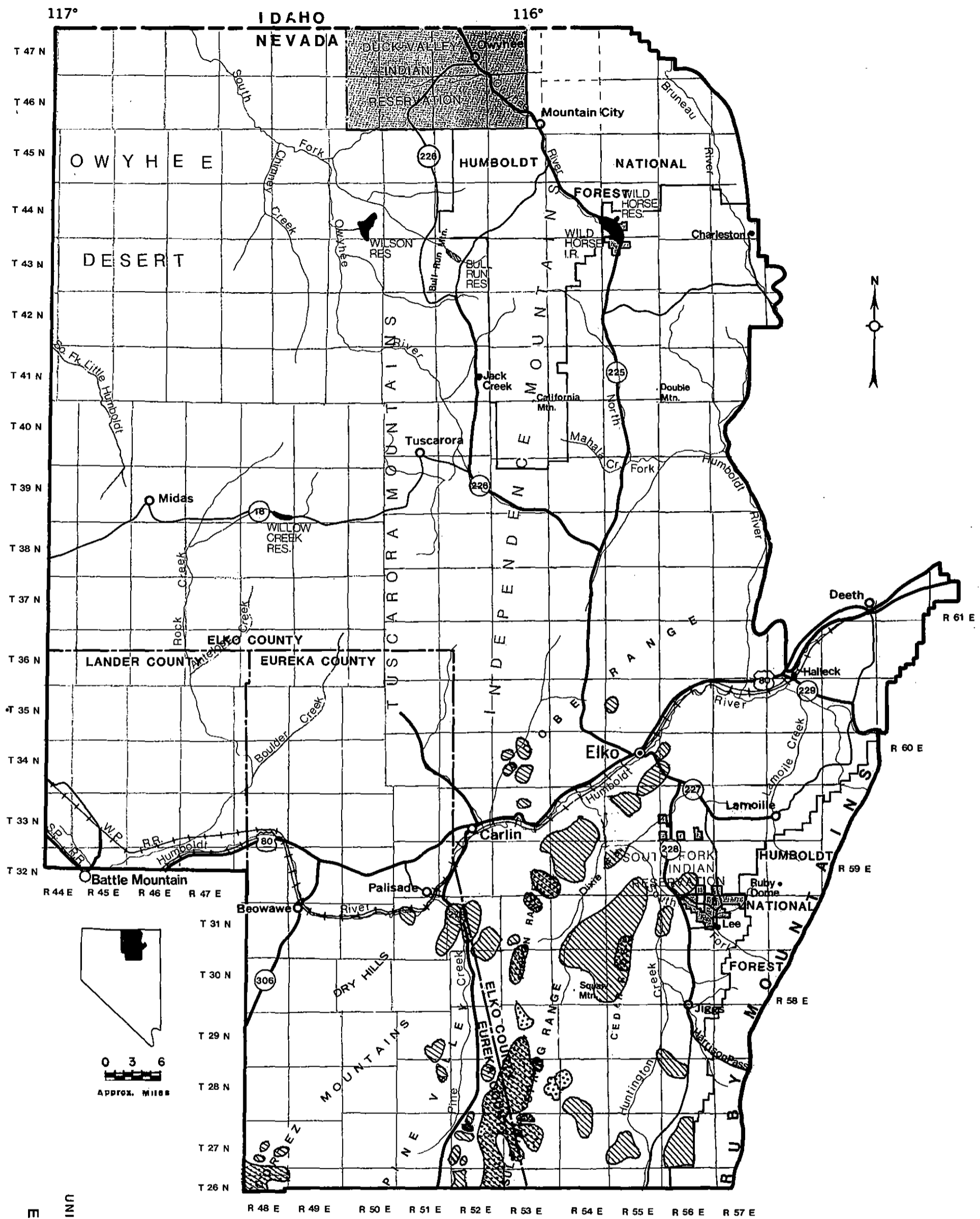
Develop forest management plans for all forested areas capable of sustained yield production on an as needed basis.

#### MINERALS

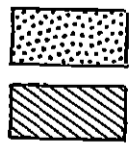
Objective: Maintain public lands open for exploration, development, and production of mineral resources while mitigating conflicts with wildlife, wild horses, recreation, and wilderness resources.

#### Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Designate the resource area open to mineral entry for locatable minerals, except for the districts 11 acre administrative site.



0 3 6  
Approx. Miles



CHRISTMAS TREE HARVEST AREA  
FUEL AND POSTS HARVEST AREA

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 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION  
 WOODLAND PRODUCT HARVEST AREAS  
 MAP 12

2. Provide for oil/gas and geothermal leasing as follows (Map 13):

- a) Designation: Limited - subject to no surface occupancy.  
Purpose: Protection of Special Recreation Management Areas, nonfederal recreation areas and sage grouse strutting grounds. No surface occupancy would apply to areas within one-half mile of the high water line around Wilson, Zunino/Jiggs, Wildhorse, Rock Creek and South Fork Reservoirs and the South Fork Owyhee and South Fork Humboldt Rivers within the designated Special Recreation Management Areas.  
Acres: 36,872 (1.2 percent of RMP area; 11,092 - SRMAs and 25,780 - sage grouse strutting grounds).
- b) Designation: Limited - Subject to seasonal restriction.  
Purpose: Protect crucial deer winter range, crucial antelope yearlong habitat, and sage grouse brood rearing areas.  
Acres: 470,714 (15 percent of RMP area).
- c) Designation: Open - subject to standard leasing stipulations.  
Acres: 2,571,337 (82 percent of RMP area).
- d) Designation: Closed.  
Purpose: Areas recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation, including 18,625 acres addressed in the Draft Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness EIS and the districts 11 acre administrative withdrawal.  
Acres: 55,096 acres (1.8 percent of RMP area).

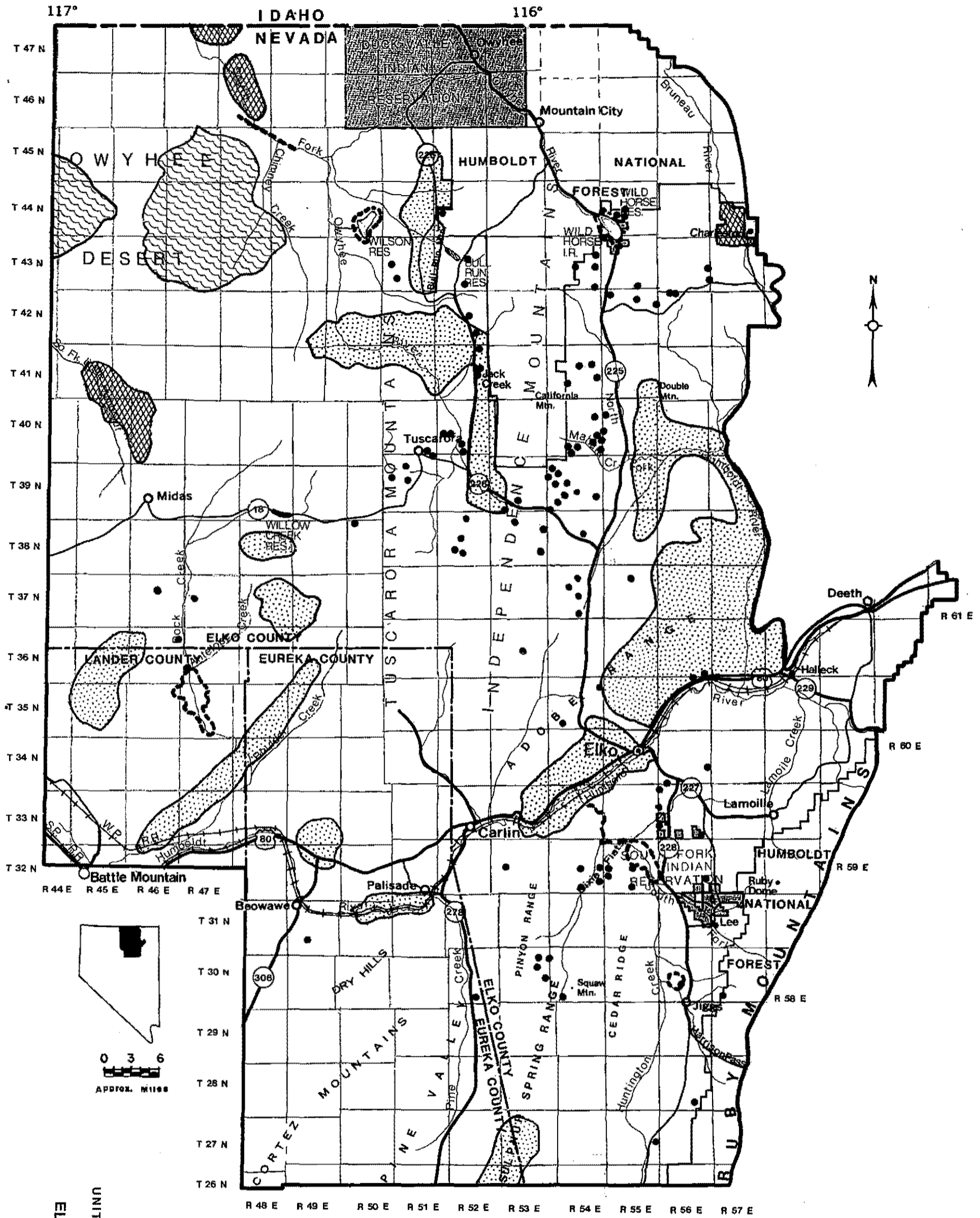
Standard Operating Procedures:

Locatable mineral exploration and development on public land will be regulated under 43 CFR 3802/3809 to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation of the land. To the extent feasible and allowed by regulation, mineral exploration activities will be restricted during wet ground conditions. In areas of unsuitable or highly erodible soils, consultation with the authorized officer is required prior to entry.

The Bureau's Interim Management Policy for Wilderness Study Areas allows mining claim location, prospecting and mining which will not impair suitability of the area for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Should any lands be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System by Congress, they will be withdrawn from mineral entry at that time, subject to any valid existing rights existing at the time of wilderness designation.

Mineral material disposals will be authorized as provided for by applicable laws and regulations. Sound management practices to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of the public lands will continue to be used. Disposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Use of existing disposal areas will be encouraged.

To the extent feasible, mining activities will be discouraged within 400 feet of streams, springs, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs.



- LIMITED**      **SUBJECT TO SEASONAL RESTRICTION**
  - KNOWN SAGE GROUSE STRUTTING AREAS (Includes one mile radius around each dot during brood rearing season)
  - ▨ CRUCIAL ANTELOPE YEARLONG HABITAT
  - ▨ CRUCIAL DEER WINTER HABITAT
- LIMITED**      **SUBJECT TO NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY**
  - KNOWN SAGE GROUSE STRUTTING AREAS
  - RESERVOIRS AND STREAMS WITHIN SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS
- OPEN**      □ **SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASING STIPULATIONS**
- CLOSED**      ▩ **PRELIMINARILY SUITABLE PORTION OF THE WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
 ELKO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 RECORD OF DECISION

OIL / GAS, AND  
 GEOTHERMAL LEASING

MAP 13



No oil, gas, or geothermal leasing will be permitted within incorporated city limits.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (COMMON TO ALL ISSUES)

The following Standard Operating Procedures are applicable to all of the issues addressed in the proposed plan.

1. General

In general, this Resource Management Plan will be implemented through activity plans. These are detailed, site-specific management actions outlined in livestock allotment management plans, wildlife habitat management plans, wild horse management area plans, recreation area management plans, and wilderness management plans among others. These plans will be multiple-use in nature. They will include actions such as range improvements and grazing systems. This is consistent with the RMP process. Monitoring will be used to evaluate the plans to see if they are meeting their objectives.

Public lands will be managed under the principles of multiple-use and sustained-yield. Any valid use, occupancy, or development of the public lands will be considered subject to existing environmental review procedures unless specifically excluded in this plan.

Environmental analysis, in compliance with existing laws and regulations, will be implemented prior to decisions on uses or projects involving public lands.

The Bureau will coordinate its review of projects prepared in conjunction with the RMP with officially adopted and approved plans, policies, and programs of other affected agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes to ensure consistency.

Any management action undertaken in connection with the RMP will consider local social and economic factors along with resource potentials and cost efficiency.

2. Watershed

A variety of methods, including structural, may be employed to maintain, improve, protect, and restore watershed conditions and to provide for various water improvements. Meeting emergency needs will be the first priority. The BLM will comply with state water laws and will coordinate with local, state, and Federal agencies in designing and locating watershed projects.

Watershed management plans will be developed through consultation with interested parties and will be coordinated with livestock, wildlife, and wild horse management plans. After the plans have been implemented, watershed conditions will be monitored through water quality and wind and water erosion studies. If necessary, changes in future watershed treatments will be proposed.

Management actions within floodplains and wetlands will include measures to preserve, protect and if necessary, restore their natural functions (as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990).

3. Air Quality

Air quality will be protected. BLM and BLM authorized activities must prevent air quality deterioration beyond the established standards specified in the National and the State of Nevada Ambient Air Quality Standards.

4. Soils

Soils will be managed to maintain or improve rangeland productivity as well as minimize present and potential erosion due to wind or water.

5. Water

Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with state and Federal standards, including consultation with state agencies on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality. Management actions on public land within municipal watersheds will be designed to protect water quality and quantity.

Management actions within riparian zones will be designed to maintain or, where possible, improve riparian habitat condition.

Road and utility corridors will avoid riparian zones.

6. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species

Activities that could adversely affect threatened, endangered, or sensitive species habitat will not be permitted. Actions in threatened, endangered, or sensitive species habitat will be designed to benefit these species through habitat improvement. All project work will require a threatened, endangered, or sensitive species clearance before implementation. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as per Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is necessary if a threatened, endangered, or proposed threatened or endangered species, or its habitat may be impacted. Other species considered sensitive, but not under the protection of the Act, are given special management considerations through Bureau policy. If adverse impacts to these other sensitive species are identified during project planning, the project will be modified or possibly abandoned to avoid these impacts.

7. Visual Resources

Visual resources will continue to be considered and evaluated for compliance with Visual Resource Management Design Procedures described in BLM Manual 8400. Effects on visual resources will be evaluated as a part of the environmental analysis process for activity and project plans and other proposed actions. Such evaluation will consider the significance of the proposed project and the visual sensitivity of the affected area. Stipulations will be attached as appropriate to assure that the visual

integrity of the area remains intact and that visual resource management objectives are met. The degree of alteration allowed is determined through an inventory process which results in the classification of all public lands into one of five Visual Resource Management Classes, each class allowing for a different degree of modification.

#### 8. Cultural Resources

All actions are required to comply with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, section 206 of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980, and section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Additionally, compliance with Executive Order 11593 requires that no federally owned property which may qualify for the National Register of Historic Places be transferred, sold, demolished, or substantially altered without pursuing appropriate Section 106 consultation. State Director guidelines will be followed to implement the above laws. Prior to project approval, intensive field inventories will be conducted in specific areas that could be impacted by implementing activities. If cultural or paleontological sites are found, every effort will be made to avoid adverse impacts. However, in the case of National Register quality sites where avoidance of adverse impacts is not possible, BLM will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in accordance with the Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement between the BLM and the Council dated January 14, 1980. This agreement sets forth a procedure for developing appropriate mitigative measures to lessen the impact of adverse effects.

#### AMENDMENTS

The resource management plan may be changed through amendment. An amendment may be initiated when there is a need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan. Amendments may be made through such processes as environmental assessments or environmental impact statements (depending on the level of intensity of the change) and must meet all prescribed requirements for public involvement, coordination and consistency.

#### MONITORING

Monitoring includes not only provisions for tracking progress toward resource objectives but monitoring of the RMP itself. Completion of actions in support of plan objectives will be tracked and documented on an allotment and an overall basis to insure conformance with the overall scope and extent of the RMP. At intervals not to exceed five years, the management actions will be analyzed for consistency with plans adopted by local, state, and other federal agencies and Indian tribes; new data will be analyzed to determine its significance to the plan.

Monitoring activities include plan maintenance. This involves posting new information and refining the analysis. Maintenance does not extend the scope or level of resource uses, or change uses or restrictions from those prescribed in the approved RMP.

Future proposals or actions that are not in conformance with the RMP, but warrant further consideration prior to a complete plan revision, will be considered through the plan amendment process. These amendments follow a similar process as the RMP but are generally limited to one or two issues and do not require preparation of an EIS if impacts are insignificant.

The RMP will be completely revised when plan monitoring indicates that maintenance of the plan and amendments to the plan are inadequate to keep the plan current with changing circumstances, resource conditions, or policies. All the requirements for preparing and approving an original RMP are followed.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF THE RMP WITH THE RANGELAND PROGRAM SUMMARY (RPS)

A Rangeland Program Summary will be issued after completion of the RMP to inform livestock permittees and interested publics about the implementation of the rangeland management program. It will identify allotment specific objectives for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses. It will outline allotment specific monitoring studies needed to evaluate the attainment of objectives and the range improvements proposed to implement the RMP.

#### SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Support requirements such as cadastral survey, engineering design, additional inventories, etc., needed to implement an RMP objective or management action will be determined during the preparation of activity plans when more detailed, specific proposals are available.

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