From:	Noreen Walsh
To:	James Lyons; Sarah Greenberger; Steven Ellis; Amy Lueders; Bret Birdsong
Cc:	Chris Iverson; Gary Frazer; Robert Dreher; Dan Ashe
Subject:	RE: Grazing language and grazing objectives
Date:	Tuesday, April 28, 2015 11:06:36 AM

Thank you Jim, in the regions we think these are good additions, I will let Gary, Bob, or Dan also weigh in.

Noreen

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From: Lyons, James [mailto:james_lyons@ios.doi.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 5:19 AM
To: Sarah Greenberger; Steven Ellis; Amy Lueders; Bret Birdsong
Cc: Chris Iverson; Noreen Walsh
Subject: Grazing language and grazing objectives

In reviewing the grazing "drop in" language, I think we would be well-advised to include some language that clarifies what we are trying to achieve with regard to grazing.

I suppose this can be incorporated into the Executive Summaries or the ROD, but the following from the COT report is what I suggest we should be following -- to leave no doubt about what our management objectives are for grazing. Without that, critics of grazing are likely to say that we are not clearly managing to improve rangeland health -- which I believe is our ultimate goal to benefit sage grouse and ranchers.

Here is the relevant language from the COT report:

1. **Ensure that allotments meet ecological potential and wildlife habitat requirements; and, ensure that the health and diversity of the native perennial grass community is consistent with the ecological site.**

2. Inform and educate affected grazing permittees regarding sage-grouse habitat needs and conservation measures.

3. **Incorporate sage-grouse habitat needs or habitat characteristics into relevant resource and allotment management plans, including the desired conditions with the understanding that these desired conditions may not be fully achievable: (a) due to the existing ecological condition, ecological potential or the existing vegetation; or (b) due to causal events unrelated to existing livestock grazing.**

4. **Conduct habitat assessments and, where necessary, determine factors causing any failure to achieve the habitat characteristics. Make adjustments as appropriate.**

5. Given limited agency resources, priority should be given to PACs and then sage grouse habitats adjacent to PACs.

The priorities for review we set are consistent with COT guidance. And, the advice to work with affected permittees is essential.

The more we stick with specific guidance from the COT report, the better.

I think this language does a better job of making clear what we are trying to achieve.
--
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