From:	Deibert, Pat
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Cc:	Scott Larson; Jodi Bush; Mark Sattleberg; Laura Romin; Brent Esmoil; Larry Crist; Kurt Broderdorp; Kathleen Hendricks; Dennis Mackey; Paul Henson; Ted Koch; Nicole Alt; Mary Grim; Theresa Rabot; Jesse DElia; Matt Kales
Subject:	GRSG: Additional direction on review of BLM documents
Date:	Friday, March 27, 2015 3:27:34 PM
Attachments:	Standard Language for Deviations on Lek Buffers.docx

Hello all -

Last week I sent you the checklist that Jesse and I pulled together for reviewing BLM plans (starting with Chapter 2). I received some additional clarification which I wanted to share with you.

The lead BLM planners (Lauren Mermejo, Matt Magaletti and Stephanie Carmen) told me today that BLM is NOT taking comments on Chapter 2. Therefore, they are not expecting anything from us unless we see major flaws. I know that some of you have received different direction from your state BLM offices - I would respect those requests, but please advise if you receive such a request. Remember *any* comments you do send should be shared with the FMT. If they are substantive comments they need to go through our normal review process before submitting to the BLM.

I will be sending you the individual state guidance dated the end of January to assist in your reviews as well. I think that is old news for all of you but want to be sure. Be sure to reference those documents in your review.

I did notice one variation in the lek buffer language that was not referenced in any of the state guidance I reviewed regarding justifiable departures from USGS buffers. Its attached here for your use in reviews:

Although BLM is not taking comments we still need to review the information received and check for consistency with the products I sent last week. If everything in that checklist is hunky dory in the plan (or components) you have received then we are good. If not you should reach out to your BLM counterparts and find out why things are different than the provided guidance. IN EITHER CASE YOU NEED TO DOCUMENT THE OUTCOME. This is critical for our record. So please after review, even if no comments are sent, send an e-mail about the outcome of your review and any response received by the BLM. E-mails should be sent to Jesse and I, and copied to Nicole Alt and Mary Grim (who get to go back to DC in April and meet with BLM).

Thanks everyone. This ends your regular late Friday afternoon transmission....

pat
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got leks?

Standard Language for Deviations on Lek Buffers:

The BLM will apply the lek buffer-distances specific as the lower end of the interpreted range in the report unless justifiable departures are determined to be appropriate.

Justifiable departures to decrease or increase from these distances, based on local data, best available science, landscape features, and other existing protections (e.g., land use allocations, state regulations) may be appropriate for determining activity impacts. The USGS report recognized "that because of variation in populations, habitats, development patterns, social context, and other factors, for a particular disturbance type, there is no single distance that is an appropriate buffer for all populations and habitats across the sage-grouse range". The USGS report also states that "various protection measures have been developed and implemented…[which have] the ability(alone or in concert with others) to protect important habitats, sustain populations, and support multiple use demands for public lands". All variations in lek buffer distances will require appropriate analysis and disclosure as part of activity authorization.

Justifiable departures in PHMA will only be approved if:

- The BLM, with input from the state fish and wildlife agency, determines, based on the best avaialbe science, landscape features, and other existing protections, that a buffer distance other than the distance identified above (within the USGS report) offers the same or greater level of protection to GRSG and its habitat, including conservation of seasonal habitat outside of the analyzed buffer area.

Justifiable departures in GHMA will only be approved if:

- Based on best available science, landscape features, and other existing protections (e.g. land use allocations, state regulations), the BLM determines that a lek buffer-distance other than the applicable distance identified above offers the same or a greater level of protection to GRSG and its habitat, including conservation of seasonal habitat outside of the analyzed buffer area; or
- The BLM determines that impacts to GRSG and its habitat are minimized such that the project will cause minor or no new disturbance (ex. co-location with existing authorizations); and
- Any residual impacts within the lek buffer-distances are addressed through compensatory mitigation measures sufficient to ensure a net conservation gain, as outlined in the Mitigation Strategy (Appendix X).