

BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Proposed Alternatives Summary Table

<u>Idaho and Southwestern Montana Sub-Regional Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy EIS</u>	BLM Field Offices/ Forest Service Forest Addressed	<i>BLM Idaho:</i> Birds of Prey NCA; Bruneau FO; Challis FO; Craters of the Moon NM; Four Rivers FO; Jarbidge FO; Salmon FO; Owyhee FO; Pocatello FO; Shoshone FO; Burley FO; Upper Snake FO <i>BLM Montana:</i> Dillon FO <i>Forest Service Idaho:</i> Boise National Forest; Salmon-Challis National Forest; Targhee, Curlew National Grasslands; Caribou National Forest; Sawtooth (including a small portion in Utah) <i>Forest Service Montana:</i> Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest				
Range of alternatives considered with a brief summary of what they address.						
	Alternative A No Action	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Source, Origination and Scope:	Compilation of all existing plans in occupied habitat for both BLM and FS.	NTT Report applied to BLM and Forest Service occupied habitat.	Environmental Citizen Group based alternative + NTT Report ‘Plus’ applied to all BLM and FS occupied habitat and potentially other areas.	Sub-Regional alternative applies to BLM and FS occupied habitat in Idaho, Montana and Utah. Montana BLM/FS will continue current management direction with additional management actions responding to issues and NTT consistency.	State Alternative for BLM and FS occupied habitat in Idaho and Utah portion of Sawtooth NF. Composed of Idaho and Utah Governor’s alternative. No Governor’s Alternative in Montana; however, existing management was developed through coordination between BLM/FS and Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.	Environmental Citizen Groups based alternative + NTT Report ‘Plus’ for BLM and FS occupied habitat.
Habitat Categorization	No delineation of occupied sage-grouse habitat.	Occupied sage-grouse habitat is categorized into Priority Habitat and General Habitat areas as described in the April 2012 map, with associated management.	All occupied habitat is managed similarly.	Occupied habitat is categorized into three delineations in Idaho (Core, Priority and General), and two in Montana and Utah (Priority and General), with associated management.	<i>Idaho:</i> Occupied habitat is categorized into three delineations (Core, Important and General) with associated management. <i>Montana and Utah:</i> Occupied habitat is categorized into two delineations (Priority and General); with associated management.	All occupied habitat is categorized into Priority and General areas, with potentially other areas, each with associated management.

Fire Management and Wildfire	Continue to manage under current guidance.	<p>Prioritize Suppression immediately after life and property.</p> <p>Fuels Management projects to reduce fine fuels, including targeted grazing.</p> <p>Implement fuel breaks to protect sagebrush.</p> <p>Prioritize native seed allocation to sage-grouse habitat areas.</p> <p>Maintain 15% canopy cover post fuels treatment.</p> <p>Adjust management activities to support successful restoration post rehabilitation.</p>	<p>Manage vegetation for good or better ecological condition.</p> <p>Focus fuel breaks on areas of human habitation or significant disturbances.</p>	<p>Same as Alt. B, in addition:</p> <p>Preposition initial attack resources to higher fire occurrence areas.</p> <p>Use knowledgeable Resource Advisors on extended attack fire, and train fire fighters regarding sagebrush management during fire suppression activities.</p> <p>Ensure long term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants.</p> <p>Use chemical, mechanical, and seeding treatments with appropriate plant materials to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive, annual vegetation, and noxious weeds.</p> <p>Use native plant materials were appropriate and practicable.</p> <p>Use the warmer adapted variety of a species range when reseeding following fire to address potential climate change.</p>	<p>Incorporate BLM IM-2011-138 to reduce the number and size of wildfires in sage-grouse habitat including:</p> <p>Develop state-specific sage-grouse localized maps for use in prioritizing suppression.</p> <p>Preposition initial attack resources to higher fire occurrence areas.</p> <p>Use knowledgeable Resource Advisors on extended attack fire, and train fire fighters regarding sagebrush management during fire suppression activities.</p> <p>Design fuel treatments to protect existing sagebrush ecosystems.</p> <p>Core and Important Areas: Prioritize suppression in sage-grouse habitats immediately after human safety and structure protection.</p> <p>Interagency coordination, including mutual aid agreements.</p> <p>Create and maintain effective fuel breaks in strategic locations.</p> <p>Core Areas: Evaluate and decrease wildfire response time by 25%</p> <p>Evaluate the current fire suppression baseline and</p>	<p>Mow grass within fire breaks.</p> <p>Exclude livestock from burned areas until woody and herbaceous vegetation meet sage-grouse habitat objectives.</p> <p>Construct and utilize livestock exclosures to monitor fire restoration progress.</p>

					<p>develop a consistent plan that improves on this baseline by 25%.</p> <p>Add additional initial attack resources and pre-position resources to the West Owyhee Conservation Area.</p> <p>Important Areas: Evaluate and decrease wildfire response time by 20% in the West Owyhee Conservation Area.</p> <p>Decrease wildfire response time in all other conservation areas by 15%.</p> <p>Evaluate the current fire suppression baseline and develop a consistent plan that improves on this baseline by 15%.</p> <p>General Areas: Emphasize fire suppression efforts, recognizing other local, regional and national fire suppression priorities.</p> <p>Use livestock to reduce fine fuels and maintain fuel breaks where appropriate.</p> <p>Reduce human caused fires, with additional prevention programs.</p> <p>Develop more aggressive fuels reduction strategies.</p>	
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<p>Invasive Species</p>	<p>Continue to treat invasive species as directed under current policy.</p> <p>Existing Coordinated Weed Management Areas and management remain without adjustment.</p> <p>Wash all fire fighting vehicles prior to deployment.</p>	<p>Same as No Action.</p>	<p>Wash project vehicles when leaving infested areas.</p> <p>Treat infested areas focusing on mechanical treatment before the use of herbicides.</p> <p>Do not graze infested areas until native vegetation is restored.</p> <p>Quarantine livestock before entering public lands when coming from infested areas.</p>	<p>Same as No Action.</p>	<p>All Habitat Areas: Wash all fire fighting vehicles prior to deployment.</p> <p>Core Areas: Manage to prevent invasion.</p> <p>Actively manage exotic undesirable species sufficient to prevent invasion into other management zones.</p> <p>Core and Important Areas: Monitor and treat invasives for at least 3 years following fire.</p> <p>Important Areas: Manage to treat infestations without impairing sage-grouse populations.</p> <p>Actively pursue eradication or control of invasives that threaten sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>Important and General Areas: Establish an effective monitoring system to determine effectiveness of treatment.</p> <p>Actively manage exotic undesirable species sufficient to prevent invasion into other management areas.</p> <p>General Areas: Employ aggressive measures in cooperation with CWMAs.</p> <p>Aggressively pursue eradication or control of invasives that pose a risk to sage-grouse habitat.</p>	<p>Restrict activities that spread invasives.</p> <p>Treat invasives after fire in sagebrush habitat.</p> <p>Ensure that soil and plants are at Ecological Potential in sage-grouse habitat to reduce vulnerability of invasion.</p>
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Infrastructure	Continue to manage existing and proposed infrastructure projects and rights-of-way under current guidance.	No new authorizations in Priority habitat unless development occurs within existing developed footprint.	No new ROW authorizations unless development occurs within existing developed footprint.	Core, Priority and General areas designated as ROW avoidance areas. Exclude development of larger (>50kV) transmission facilities, wind testing and development, solar development, commercial geothermal development, nuclear development, oil and gas development, airports, paved roads, graded gravel roads, and landfills, in Core areas.	Core and Important areas identified as ROW avoidance areas. Core areas – no new infrastructure except for in place upgrades. Important areas – new infrastructure can be authorized if specific criteria are met.	Same as Alternative A.
Habitat Restoration and Vegetation Management	Continue to manage under current guidance.	Prioritize restoration efforts based on the likelihood of success and considering Connelly 2000 and Hagen 2007. Reestablishment of sagebrush cover is highest priority.	Same as Alternative B and reestablish sagebrush cover on exotic seedings, and do not remove sagebrush cover in order to improve forage production.	<p>Utilize Habitat Assessment Protocols and Rangeland Health Assessments to determine habitat quality and priorities.</p> <p>Utilize best available tools for restoration efforts.</p> <p>Protect priority sage-grouse habitat from fire through strategic wildfire suppression planning. Planning measures may include: strategically placed fire resistant vegetation or green-strip seedings; strategically placed pre-treated areas that reduce fine fuels through mowing vegetation along roadsides, grazing strategies, herbicide application, etc.; pre-planning of wildfire suppression tactics in important sage-grouse habitat; prioritizing suppression of wildfire in priority habitats; conducting burn-out/backfiring operations in a manner that minimizes the loss of sagebrush.</p>	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative C.

Leased Fluid Minerals	Continue to manage under current guidance.	<p>No surface occupancy (NSO) within priority habitat.</p> <p>Limit disturbance to 3% and apply a 4 mile NSO buffer around leks if lease is entirely within priority habitat.</p> <p>Conservation measures would be applied.</p> <p>Applies to split estate as well.</p>	Same as Alternative B.	<p>Limit future lease disturbance to 3% (1 drill pad per section) in Core areas.</p> <p>Prohibit surface activities on future leases within a buffer around leks in Priority areas.</p>	<p>State Director may authorize oil and gas development if provisions are made in Core Areas.</p> <p>In Important Areas development is allowed on future leases if it will not cause a decline in sage-grouse populations.</p>	Same as Alternative A.
Unleased Fluid Minerals	Continue to manage under current guidance.	<p>Close priority areas to leasing.</p> <p>Upon expiration of existing leases in priority areas do not accept expressions of interest.</p> <p>Allow geophysical exploration in priority areas only to acquire data for areas outside and adjacent to priority areas, using helicopter drill rigs with timing stipulations.</p>	Same as Alternative B and no exploration permits allowed.	<p>Close Core and Priority areas outside the Bear Lake Plateau to leasing and no exploration permits allowed.</p> <p>Allow exploration in priority areas for areas adjacent to priority areas with timing stipulations.</p> <p>General areas are open to leasing and exploration with timing stipulations near leks.</p>	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative C.
Non-Energy Leasable Minerals (New Leases)	Continue to manage under current guidance.	No new leases in priority habitat.	Same as Alternative B.	<p>Close Core areas to leasing outside of Known Lease Areas.</p> <p>Consider leases within Core Areas in Known Lease Areas on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Consider new leases on a case-by-case basis in Priority areas.</p> <p>Allow new leases with stipulations in General areas.</p>	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B.

Non-Energy Leasable Minerals (Existing Leases)	Continue to manage under current guidance.	Follow Required Design Features (RDF) for solid and fluid minerals.	Same as Alternative B.	In Core and Priority areas follow required design features and best management practices (BMP) and require habitat rehabilitation or off-site mitigation if rehabilitation is not feasible. In General areas require BMPs as conditions of approval for the mine plan.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B.
Locatable Minerals	Continue to manage under current guidance.	Propose to withdraw all priority areas from mineral entry. Existing claims would be subject to buyout or validity examination. Make RDFs mandatory conditions of approval in priority areas.	No new mining claims allowed. Make RDFs mandatory conditions of approval in priority areas.	Same as Alternative B, in addition withdraw Core areas from mineral entry and close valid claims and require additional mitigation for sage-grouse habitat. Apply BMPs to priority and general areas as mandatory stipulations in Plans of Operation.	Same as Alternative A.	Same As Alternative C.
Saleable Minerals	Continue to manage under current guidance.	Close priority areas to mineral materials. Restore mineral material permit areas to sage-grouse habitat if no longer needed as a material source.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B, in addition close Core areas to mineral materials and apply timing stipulations and BMPs to permits in priority areas.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B.
Coal	Continue to manage under current guidance.	Identify all priority areas as unsuitable as set forth in 43 CFR 3461.5. No new leases in priority areas unless all surface disturbance occurs outside priority habitat. Locate mining operation	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B, and abate wastewater to reduce risk of West Nile virus.

		<p>facilities outside of priority areas or within the footprint of existing facilities.</p> <p>Minimize surface disturbing activities in General areas.</p>				
Recreation and Visitor Services	Continue to manage under current guidance.	In priority areas only permit special uses that are neutral or beneficial to sage-grouse.	Same as Alternative B.	<p>No sage-grouse hunting permits will be approved in Core or Priority areas. All other applications will be analyzed with the goal of minimizing impacts.</p> <p>Minimize adverse recreation effects to sage-grouse in Recreation Management Areas.</p>	<p>Core and Important Areas: Prioritize Travel Planning to minimize impacts to sage-grouse and reduce the risk of wildfire.</p> <p>Restrict motorized use to existing routes prior to travel planning.</p> <p>Apply timing and seasonal restrictions on activities which demonstrate disturbance of nesting sage-grouse.</p>	Same as Alternative B, and apply seasonal camping closures within 4 miles of active leks.
Livestock Grazing	Continue to manage under current guidance.	<p>Incorporate sage-grouse habitat objectives into grazing permits and Allotment Management Plans in priority areas.</p> <p>Use integrated ranch planning in priority areas to plan grazing on all ownerships.</p> <p>Prioritize completion of land (range) health assessments and grazing permit NEPA analyses on allotments in priority areas with the most potential for conserving sage-grouse.</p> <p>Develop sage-grouse</p>	<p>No authorized grazing within occupied sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>No new water developments in sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>No new structural range improvements.</p> <p>Retirement of grazing would be allowed and fast tracked.</p> <p>Any vegetation treatments must have pre-treatment data recorded, be monitored for 3 years</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B; in addition:</p> <p>Manage riparian areas, lentic areas and wet meadows to move toward PFC in Core and Priority areas.</p> <p>Consider retiring grazing in Core and Priority areas.</p>	<p>Core and Important Areas: Prioritize allotments for permit renewal where populations are declining.</p> <p>Add sage-grouse guidelines into management plans as desired conditions, recognizing livestock grazing may not always be a causal factor in non-attainment.</p> <p>Prioritize completion of land (range) health assessments and grazing permit NEPA analysis on allotments in priority areas with declining sage-grouse populations.</p> <p>Allotment assessments will be use published characteristics of</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B; in addition:</p> <p>Reduce authorized grazing within occupied sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>Maintain at least 6 inch stubble height of all species at all times in wet meadows.</p> <p>No new water developments in sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>Avoid all new</p>

	<p>objectives for allotment management and analyze an alternative in permit renewal NEPA that conserves or enhances sage-grouse habitat.</p> <p>Implement changes to grazing management needed to meet seasonal sage-grouse requirements.</p> <p>During drought change grazing management as necessary to attain sage-grouse objectives.</p> <p>Manage riparian areas within priority areas to attain Proper Functioning Condition (PFC).</p> <p>Manage wet meadows in priority and general areas to maintain forbs to facilitate brood rearing needs.</p> <p>Authorize only new water developments in priority areas that are beneficial to sage-grouse.</p> <p>In priority areas only authorize treatments that benefit sage-grouse.</p> <p>Evaluate exotic grass seedings to determine their values for sage-grouse and manage for</p>	after treatment.		<p>sage-grouse habitat and comply with 43 CFR 4180.2(c).</p> <p>Allotment management changes must be tailored to address specific problems.</p> <p>Change grazing management only when monitoring indicates sage-grouse objectives are not being met.</p> <p>Management changes, when needed, must be tailored to specifically address habitat objectives that need improvement.</p> <p>Core Areas: Altering grazing schemes in allotments, where needed and appropriate, may be facilitated by enhanced grazing opportunities with introduced seedings or areas with lower value to sage-grouse (i.e. General areas). The unintended consequences of altering grazing use, such as possible increased risk of wildfire, must be carefully considered in any management proposal.</p>	<p>structural range improvements and supplement locations in occupied habitat.</p> <p>Any vegetation treatments must have pre-treatment data recorded; must be monitored for 3 years after treatment with no grazing and monitored for 5 years after grazing resumes.</p>
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		<p>sage-grouse objectives.</p> <p>Design new structural range improvements and supplement locations to conserve sage-grouse.</p> <p>Evaluate existing range improvements in priority areas and design to conserve sage-grouse.</p> <p>Mark or remove fences that present a high risk for strikes by sage-grouse.</p> <p>Maintain the option to retire grazing use in priority areas on an opportunity basis.</p> <p>Identify those allotments where retirement of grazing would benefit sage-grouse.</p>				
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Maintain designation of 53 existing ACECs containing 325k of occupied sage-grouse habitat.	Same as Alternative A.	Designate 39 new ACECs encompassing approximately 4.2 million acres of occupied sage-grouse habitat.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Designate 17 new ACECs encompassing 11.5 million acres of occupied sage-grouse habitat; or designate 18 new ACECs encompassing 3.01 million acres of occupied sage-grouse habitat..