

Appendix C— Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendments Under the Proposed Action

The following narrative constitutes the language that would amend RMPs under the Proposed Action. Two distinct types of amendments would be achieved: the first section, All RMPs, contains the language with which all BLM RMPs for Montana and the Dakotas would be amended. The second section, Specific Decisions, contains the language that would amend certain additional decisions in specified RMPs.

All RMPs

The Big Dry, Billings, Garnet, Headwaters, Judith-Valley-Phillips, North Dakota, Powder River, South Dakota, and West HiLine RMPs, would be amended to include the following:

- Fire Management Zones and corresponding categories, as described in Tables 2 and 3, and the rationale (available in the administrative record).
- Direction for fire and fuels management needed to protect other resource values (described in section 2.5.3.1 of this EA).
- Broad levels of treatment over 10 years, as described by category in Table 2.

Specific RMPs

Big Dry RMP

Commercial timber sales will be allowed in all forest and juniper woodland types. Commercial and pre-commercial material may be removed to reduce fuel loadings and prepare the site for prescribed fire activities. Treatments will move the sites toward Desired Future Conditions and/or a fire resilient classification.

Sites that are in Fire Condition Class 2 may have commercial and pre-commercial material removed.

Sites that are in Fire Condition Class 3 will have pre-commercial and commercial material removed or treated prior to prescribed fire activities.

Sites that are in condition Class 1 may be treated with pre-commercial or commercial mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire, if conifers are considered to be encroaching on shrubland and grassland/shrubland habitat types.

Wood product sales will be allowed on all forest and juniper woodland types in the planning area. The purpose is to reduce or maintain fuel loads, to achieve desired forest health conditions and to maintain wildlife values.

Pre-commercial thinnings, removals, and treatments will be allowed on all forest and juniper woodland sites that are Fire Condition Class 2 or 3 except for those special management areas identified in the RMP.

Use of ground based harvest and slash treating equipment will be limited to 40 percent slopes and less. Material removal may occur without equipment occupying the site on steeper slopes, by using equipment such as feller buncher booms, pulling cable and winching, helicopter yarding, and cable yarding.

Powder River RMP

Commercial timber sales will be allowed in all forest and juniper woodland types. Commercial and pre-commercial material may be removed to reduce fuel loadings and prepare the site for prescribed fire activities.

Sites that are in Fire Condition Class 2 may have commercial and pre-commercial material removed.

Sites that are in Fire Condition Class 3 will have pre-commercial and commercial material removed or treated prior to prescribed fire activities.

Prescribed fire may be used on all Fire Condition Class 2 sites and all Fire Condition Class 3 sites following treatment or removal of pre-commercial material and treatment or removal of commercial material. Prescribed fire treatment acres are unlimited.

Sites that are in condition Class 1 may be treated with pre-commercial or commercial mechanical treatments and/or prescribed fire, if conifers are considered to be encroaching on shrubland and grassland/shrub habitat types.

Judith, Valley, Phillips, West HiLine, and Billings RMPs

Harvest of merchantable timber as a result of community protection projects or hazardous fuels removal would be considered incidental under RMP allowable cut guidelines and not be counted against the yearly Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).

Sales of forest products would be coordinated with adjacent landowners and agencies where possible, and emphasize forest health and fuels reduction through sound silvicultural prescriptions. Offerings would be through both negotiated and public auction sales.

Implementation: A wide variety of silvicultural prescriptions may be used depending on fuels management objectives and site characteristics (e.g., tree size, age, species composition).