

# Record of Decision Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan



**April 2008**

Eagle Lake Field Office





# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Eagle Lake Field Office  
2950 Riverside Drive  
Susanville, CA 96130  
(530) 277-0456  
FAX: (530) 257-4831  
[www.ca.blm.gov/eaglelake](http://www.ca.blm.gov/eaglelake)

In Reply Refer to:  
CA-350 1610

April 1, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

I am pleased to announce that, after several years of collaborative effort, the Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan (RMP) is complete. This document will provide guidance for the management of 1,022,767 acres of lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in northeast California and northwest Nevada.

The staff of the Eagle Lake Field Office of the BLM has prepared the attached Record of Decision (ROD) and RMP in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The ROD links final land use plan decisions to the analysis presented in the Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Minor changes and points of clarification are described in the ROD, in response to staff review and issues raised in the public protest process.

The ROD serves as the final decision for **Land Use Planning Decisions** described in the Proposed RMP. The public had an opportunity to protest these decisions after the publication of the Proposed Eagle Lake RMP/FEIS in June 2007. Ten protests were received. Resolutions to the protests did not result in the necessity for more analysis or repeat publication of the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/ Final EIS, or for additional public review and protest.

The ROD also describes a set of **Implementation Level Decisions**. These decisions authorize the issuance of a travel route network. An appeal opportunity for these decisions is being provided at this time. The process is described in the ROD and the appeal period will close **30 days** from the date the Notice of Availability of the ROD/RMP appears in the Federal Register. This date will also be announced via local news releases. Please review the ROD carefully for a more detailed discussion of the appeal process.

Additional hard copies and CD-ROM versions of the RMP/ROD may be obtained at the address above. The document is available on the internet at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/eaglelake.html>.

We appreciate your help in this planning effort and look forward to your continued participation as the plan is implemented. For additional information or clarification regarding the attached document or the planning process, please contact Jeff Fontana at (530) 257-5332 or Sue Noggles (530) 252-5345, or by e-mail at [rnoggles@ca.blm.gov](mailto:rnoggles@ca.blm.gov).

Sincerely,

Dayne Barron  
Field Manager, Eagle Lake Field Office

# Record of Decision Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan

## Manager's Recommendation

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated effects, and public input, I recommend adoption and implementation of the attached Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan. This plan contains the decisions that will guide management of the lands and resources under the jurisdiction of the Eagle Lake Field Office. The plan addresses all relevant issues raised during the planning process.



---

Dayne Barron  
Eagle Lake Field Manager

4/17/2008

---

Date

## State Director Approval

I approve the attached Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan. This document meets the requirement of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act to develop a land use plan for public lands administered by the Eagle Lake Field Office.



---

Mike Pool  
California State Director

4/17/2008

---

Date

## Decision

The decision is hereby made to adopt the Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan (RMP) as the land use plan for the public lands and resources managed by the Eagle Lake Field Office. The Eagle Lake RMP was developed under regulations implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 to consider this decision. The Eagle Lake RMP adopted here is nearly identical to the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP presented for public review and protest on June 15, 2007.

## Introduction

The Eagle Lake Field Office includes approximately 1,022,767 acres of BLM-managed surface acres in northeastern California and northwest Nevada. The geographic area includes BLM-administered lands within the counties of Lassen, Plumas, Sierra (California) and Washoe (Nevada). The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands it manages for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Eagle Lake RMP was developed in coordination with the Alturas and Surprise Field Office RMPs to provide a consistent framework for managing public lands and resource uses in northeast California and northwest Nevada.

The Eagle Lake RMP was prepared using the BLM's planning regulations and guidance issued under the FLPMA. An EIS is also included in this document to meet the requirements of NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1500-1508), and the requirements of the BLM's NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1.

The Eagle Lake RMP includes two levels of decisions in accordance with the NEPA and BLM regulations. These are **land use planning decisions** and **implementation decisions**. Land use planning decisions were protestable during the June 15 2007 – July 16, 2007 protest period in accordance with BLM regulations 43 CFR 1610.5-2. Eleven protest letters were received. There are also implementation decisions made in the RMP (see below). These decisions may be appealed in accordance with the Department of Interior regulations at 43 CFR 4 and 43 CFR 2450.

## Alternatives Considered

### MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN THE RMP

The underlying goal of developing alternatives was to explore the range of use options, protection options, and management tools that will achieve a balance between protection of the planning area's natural character, and a variety of resource uses and management issues. Alternatives must: meet the project purpose and need; be viable and reasonable; provide a mix of resource protection, management use, and development; be responsive to issues identified in scoping; and meet the established planning criteria, federal laws and regulations, and BLM planning policy.

## RECORD OF DECISION

Five alternatives were developed for detailed analysis. The “No Action Alternative” was a continuation of current management, and was developed from existing planning decisions, policies, and guidance. Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 were developed with input from BLM internal and public scoping, public workshops, and collaborative work among the BLM interdisciplinary planning team.

Of the management alternatives, Alternative 2 represented less intense management and/or use, emphasizing a greater utilization of natural processes wherever possible, and minimizing human impacts. This would result in lower levels of active involvement in resource restoration and management, as well as limited recreation use. In the middle of the spectrum, Alternative 3 provided a greater diversity of uses and approaches to management, with a broad mix of tools that would allow for moderate levels of use. Alternative 1 took a more active approach, allowing more intense management and/or use while still maintaining and enhancing resource conditions. It included the widest application of management tools and actions, and provided the highest level of recreation use. The Preferred Alternative and Proposed RMP were developed using decisions from each of the management alternatives. See the *Management Considerations* section for more detail.

## ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE

Federal regulations (40CFR 1505.02(b)) require that an agency identify the “environmentally preferable” alternative(s) in the Record of Decision (ROD) for an EIS. The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that would result in the greatest beneficial impacts to the identified aspects of the environment. Compared to the other alternatives analyzed, Alternative 2 and the Preferred Alternative best meet the national environmental goals identified above.

Alternative 2 provides the highest level of protection of natural and cultural resources, however it does not allow for a wide range of beneficial uses of the environment. The Preferred Alternative would enhance the ability of the BLM to achieve the purpose and need of the RMP, as outlined in Chapter 1 of the document, as well as meet desired future conditions, goals and objectives of specific resources as outlined in Chapter 2. The No Action Alternative, as well as Alternatives 1 and 3, do not contain sufficient management emphasis designed to protect native plant communities and restore degraded sagebrush steppe habitats, when compared to the Preferred Alternative. Portions of the field office area that are currently in a degraded condition can only be improved successfully with the scope of active restoration efforts that are provided for within the Preferred Alternative.

The Preferred Alternative would result in overall minor to moderate adverse impacts to resources, and these impacts would continue to be mitigated. Proposed management actions would result in moderate to major beneficial impacts to native vegetation communities and wildlife habitat from restoration efforts, and the removal of invasive juniper. Improvements to riparian areas, water bodies, and other special habitats would improve soil and water resources, and wildlife habitat. The designation of seven areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC), one wild and scenic river (WSR) segment, and an increased emphasis on cultural resource protection and management would have beneficial impacts to these important and unique resources.

## Management Considerations/ Decision Rationale

The approved management actions defining the Eagle Lake RMP were selected by the BLM, with input from Tribes, State and county governments, other federal agencies, the Northeast California Resource Advisory Council (RAC), interested organizations, and the public. The BLM considers the Approved Eagle Lake RMP as the best approach to meeting the purpose and need of this project, addressing the planning issues, and providing the optimal combination of flexibility and balance in managing both resources and uses of the lands in the planning area. Factors considered during this selection process include: environmental impacts; issues raised throughout the planning process; specific environmental values, resources, and resource uses; conflict resolution; public input; and laws and regulations.

The Approved Eagle Lake RMP draws from the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and is nearly identical to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The FLPMA requires that the BLM manage the public lands according to land use plans (43 U.S.C. 1702; 43 U.S.C. 1732) in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in the natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use (43 U.S.C. 1701); and that will regulate the use, occupancy, and development of public lands (43 U.S.C. 1732). The Approved Eagle Lake RMP is the land use plan that provides the framework to accomplish these mandates. Through implementation of the RMP and other actions that may become necessary, the BLM will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands it manages.

## Changing Land Use Plan Decisions

Land use plan decisions can be changed through a plan amendment. Plan amendments change one or more of the terms, conditions or decisions of an approved plan including resource restrictions. Plan amendments are often prompted by the need to consider a proposal or application for a land use that does not conform to the RMP, or to respond to new or intensified interest in uses on public land.

When an applicant requests that the BLM amend the land use plan to allow an otherwise nonconforming proposal, BLM regulations (43 CFR 1600) and CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1500) guide preparation of plan amendments. The plan amendment process involves and encourages meaningful public participation. This process begins with the publication of a Notice of Intent to amend a land use plan in the *Federal Register* and local newspapers.

## Changes Made To the Approved RMP

This Record of Decision adopts the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/Final EIS (May 2007) as the Approved Eagle Lake RMP, with a few minor clarifications to the decision, as listed below. No substantive changes have been made to the land use plan decisions. Based on changed circumstances and protests the BLM received on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, the following modifications were made to the Approved RMP:



## RECORD OF DECISION

1. The Approved RMP adopts management guidance from and tiers to the impacts analysis section of the *Final Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development on BLM Administered Lands in the Western United States* (Wind Energy PEIS), BLM, 2005, and subsequent amendments. The BLM will follow guidance from BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2006-216, and subsequent BLM policy, in processing right-of-way applications for wind energy projects. In order to reduce adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat the BLM will implement best management practices for wind energy projects in accordance with the Wind Energy PEIS.

Due to the changing energy goals at the national level and particularly here in California, renewable energy production on BLM public lands is growing in importance. While renewable energy such as geothermal and wind are already established uses in some parts of the State, new geothermal and wind proposals as well as new solar proposals are emerging new public land uses in other parts of California.

Placement of these facilities depends on a number of factors that cannot always be anticipated in the BLM's land use plans such as economics, relationship to the State's energy grid, project design, current technology and potential resource impacts. However, BLM land use plans can always be amended through the public process to accommodate such uses when necessary. In addition to renewable energy, other unforeseen public needs and demands often arise outside of the planning cycle and plans are amended according to the process outlined in *Changing Land Use Plan Decisions*.

2. The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) has recently been removed from the federal list of threatened and endangered (T&E) species. At the time of the BLM's request to initiate formal consultation on T&E species with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the Draft and Proposed Eagle Lake RMP/EIS, the bald eagle was federally listed as threatened. On June 28, 2007, the Secretary of the Interior announced that the bald eagle was being removed from the federal list of T&E species. The final rule delisting the bald eagle was published on July 9, 2007, and became effective on August 8, 2007 (USFWS, 2007). After delisting, bald eagles will continue to be protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The USFWS has encouraged the BLM to continue managing bald eagles as stated in the Biological Assessment (BLM 2007), which implements management actions from the Preferred Alternative in the Eagle Lake PRMP/FEIS (Biological Opinion on the Proposed Resource Management Plan for the Eagle Lake Field Office, Susanville, California, USFWS, August 2007). The BLM has agreed to manage bald eagles as requested by USFWS, and according to management actions within the Eagle Lake PRMP/FEIS (Sec. 2.25.2.4, p. 2-147). However, the BLM will no longer consider the bald eagle a "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act.

3. In 2007 the California State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO), in coordination with the California BLM, and the Nevada SHPO, revised the State Protocol Agreement regarding cultural resources. The revised protocol suspends the requirement that all unevaluated cultural resources will be allocated to "use categories", as described in Section 2.2.5 (p. 2-7) of the Eagle Lake PRMP/FEIS.

**The Approved RMP has been changed by deleting the following paragraph:**

“As specified in BLM Information Bulletin No. 2002-101, evaluate all currently recognized archaeological sites, as well all sites found in the future, for placement in one of six management categories (Table 2.2-1 below).”

**The Approved RMP now states:**

“The BLM may allocate evaluated archaeological sites to one of six uses as outlined in USDI-IB No. 2002-101 “Cultural Resource Considerations in Resource Management Plans”, and Table 2.2-1 below.”

4. The Approved RMP adopts the visual resources management (VRM) classes listed for all lands in the Proposed RMP, Chapter 2.21 Visual Resources Management, as the official VRM Management Classes.
5. The Draft *Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy* (Modoc National Forest, Alturas BLM, and Modoc County) was completed and published in August 2007. The Approved RMP will incorporate recommendations contained in this document, once it is final, to manage for the improved health of plant communities, and to reduce the encroachment of western juniper.
6. The Approved RMP adopts and tiers to the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Programmatic Environmental Report, *Vegetation Treatments using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States*, BLM, September 2007; the Environmental Assessment, *Integrated Weed Management Program and Record of Decision, BLM, Alturas, Eagle Lake, and Surprise Field Offices*, EA # CA320-07-14, CA350-07-07, CA370-07-04, June 2007; and the Environmental Assessment, *Integrated Weed Management Program and Record of Decision, BLM Nevada Lands Portion, Eagle Lake, and Surprise Field Offices*, EA # CA350-04-05, CA370-04-05, May 2004 and DNA #CA370-07-02, February 2007.
7. The BLM will designate energy corridors, perform environmental reviews required to complete corridor designation, and incorporate designated corridors into relevant agency land use plans, as defined in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, *Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the 11 Western States*, Department of Energy, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Department of Defense, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October 2007, and subsequent amendments.

## Approved RMP Executive Summary

The Eagle Lake RMP provides a detailed description of management actions for 25 resource subjects. The desired future condition, goals, objectives, and management actions for each major resource and use are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the Proposed/Approved RMP. The highlights of management actions for each resource subject are listed below. Please note that this Executive Summary is designed to provide only an overview of some of the proposed management actions within the Eagle Lake RMP. The table below contains an abbreviated version of the management actions for each subject, and is not a complete listing of all management actions within the RMP.



## RECORD OF DECISION

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Air Quality

- Manage prescribed fires and wildland fire use (0–4,500 acres/year) in a manner to reduce impacts to air quality.

#### Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Designate and manage 17 important cultural sites as Cultural Resource Management Areas.
- Designate Buffalo Creek Canyons and Lower Smoke Creek as archeological areas of critical environmental concern.

#### Energy & Minerals

- Manage 391,339 acres as 'Open' to mineral leasing under standard terms and conditions.
- Manage 1,014,361 acres as 'Open' to locatable minerals.
- Manage 634,002 acres as 'Open' to saleable minerals.
- Manage 553,011 acres as 'Open' to renewable energy. Manage WSAs (380,359 acres) as renewable energy exclusion zones, according to the BLM Interim Management Policy (IMP) for Lands under Wilderness Review (July 1995). Designate seven areas of critical environmental concern (89,397 acres) as renewable energy avoidance areas.
- Adopt management guidance for wind energy development from the *Final Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development on BLM Administered Lands in the Western United States* (Wind Energy PEIS), 2005, and subsequent amendments. Environmental analyses for wind energy development projects will tier to the impacts analysis section of the Wind Energy PEIS.
- Implement best management practices for wind energy projects in accordance with the Wind Energy PEIS in order to reduce adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat.

#### Fire Management

- The NorCal Fire Management Plan identifies aggressive, full suppression as the appropriate management response (AMR) under conditions of severe fire intensity, especially in the wildland urban interface. However, exceptions may be made where resource objectives could safely be achieved.
- Under conditions of low fire intensity, a less aggressive AMR, such as containment/confinement, would be implemented in previously identified areas likely to benefit from wildland fire use.
- Manage wildland fires using the Appropriate Management Response (AMR):
  - Full suppression AMR 282,304 acres
  - Full range of AMR suppression options 730,124 acres
  - Wildland Fire Use 10,339 acres

#### Forestry Resources

- Manage 11,020 acres as commercial forest using a mix of silvicultural methods.
- Harvest trees and biomass from 1,100 forested acres per year.
- Rehabilitate 773 forested acres burned in the Willow and Devil fires.
- Manage 1,332 acres along the Biz Johnson Trail for wildfire defense by employing commercial and pre-commercial thinning.

Implement fuels reduction in the Tunnison Wilderness Study Area (1,734 acres).

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Forestry Resources (continued)

- Manage commercial forests in Upper Murrer Meadows for preservation of wildlife habitat and late seral stages in addition to commercial harvest.

### Fuels Management

- Implement fuels treatments through prescribed fire and mechanical, chemical, and biological methods to reduce build-up of hazardous fuels, provide fuel breaks, and create defensible space in communities at risk.
  - Prescribed fire 0 - 4,500 acres per year
  - Mechanical treatment 500 - 3,500 acres per year
  - Biological treatment 50 - 1,500 acres per year
  - Chemical treatment 50 - 500 acres per year

### Lands and Realty

- Prioritize acquisition of lands with important resource values, to improve public access, and lands within or adjacent to special designations.
- Prioritize disposal of lands with no significant resource values that are difficult to manage.
- Corridor width would be a minimum of 2,000 feet unless adjacent to exclusion areas.

### Rights-of-Way

- Wilderness study areas (380,359 acres) would be designated as rights-of-way exclusion zones. All proposals must meet non-impairment criteria which prohibit permanent facilities unless they are grandfathered, have valid existing rights, or provide access to private inholdings.
- Avoid rights-of-way within areas of critical environmental concern (89,397 acres).
- Establish new communications sites on Antelope, Shaffer, and Grasshopper Mountains, as needed.
- Designate and prioritize the Alturas Transmission Line Route (Western Regional Corridor Study) and the Tuscarora Pipeline Empire Lateral as rights-of-way corridors.

### Livestock Grazing

- Maintain livestock grazing within 54 allotments. Continue to implement rest or deferred grazing within 60%-80% of total allotments annually.
- Authorize 52,250 Animal Unit Months annually.
- Maintain 987,779 acres open to livestock grazing. Continue to implement rest or deferred grazing within 80%-90% of total grazing lands during some part of the grazing season.
- Maintain and construct 2,000- 2,500 acres of enclosures to protect sensitive resources.
- Manage and rehabilitate existing seedings for livestock forage on 3,000-4,000 acres and prioritize new seedings on a case by case basis.
- Implement strategies to progress towards meeting land health standards.
- Livestock salting will not be allowed within ¼ mile of springs, meadows, streams, archaeological sites, and aspen areas. Location of salting stations would be determined by the BLM in consultation with livestock permittees.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Recreation and Visitor Services

- Manage 848,620 acres of land outside of special recreation management areas as extensive recreation management areas.
- Manage three existing special recreation management areas (totaling 65,570 acres) under the provisions of their current management plans.
- Designate and manage the South Dry Valley Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), (46,813 acres) in the Dry Valley - Sand Pass area, for recreational day use and motorcycle trail riding.
- Designate and manage the Antelope/Schaffer/Bald Mountain SRMA (61,764 acres) in the Honey Lake Valley area, for non-motorized recreational day use.
- Provide accessible camping opportunities for disabled visitors at all developed campgrounds in compliance with federal law.
- Limit camping to 14 consecutive days and 28 days annually.
- Prohibit camping within 200 feet of creeks, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs unless posted otherwise. Enforce additional buffers near guzzlers and near the following five Lassen County wells: Butte, Shaffer, Tableland, Table Mountain, and Belfast.
- Designate seven additional scenic byways to promote recreational sightseeing.
- Apply restrictions to energy and mineral development to protect recreation experiences.
- Work with local governments and agencies to acquire the Modoc Line Railroad corridor for recreational use.
- Develop a management plan for the Honey Lake Valley Rim Trail. Provide public access to the public shoreline of Honey Lake.
- Develop hang glider launch areas in hills north of Wendel and at other sites subject to user demand.
- Apply Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes to all lands to provide a diversity of recreational experiences:
  - 'Backcountry' 675,335 acres
  - 'Roaded Natural' 109,497 acres
  - 'Primitive' 237,953 acres

### Soil Resources

- Implement practices to promote recovery of 113,236 acres of upland soils not meeting Standards for Rangeland Health.
- Ensure all management activities result in “no net loss” of soil mass or productivity within the management area.
- Developments and uses would be limited to soils which are considered unproductive or most suitable for construction purposes.
- Minimize management activities within perennial and intermittent drainages where watershed function would be adversely affected.
- Implement soil protection practices that emphasize mitigation, natural recovery, and bio-engineering. Use of additional restoration practices would be employed where natural recovery efforts are not sufficient.
- Employ bio-engineering projects to improve soil condition and achieve proper functioning condition (PFC).

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Soil Resources (continued)

- Apply sediment intrusion buffer zones greater than or equal to 50 feet around sensitive resources on a case-by-case basis.
- Implement mitigation actions to offset soil and productivity losses within the same sixth-level watershed area (conceptually 10,000 – 40,000 acres).

### Special Designations

#### Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

- Designate seven new ACECs totaling 89,397 acres:
  - Eagle Lake Basin 34,320 acres
  - Susan River 2,495 acres
  - Pines Dunes Research Natural Area 2,887 acres
  - Willow Creek 2,130 acres
  - Lower Smoke Creek 894 acres
  - Buffalo Creek Canyons 36,515 acres
  - North Dry Valley 10,156 acres
- All ACECs are rights-of-way avoidance areas. This means that any applications for new rights-of-way or utility corridors would undergo a site-specific NEPA review, and would only be granted if the BLM concurs 1) the only feasible location is within the ACEC, and 2) no relevant and important resources would be adversely affected.
- Livestock grazing would be managed according to permit stipulations, allotment management plans, and ACEC management plans.
- Noxious weeds would be aggressively controlled in all ACECs.

### Special Designations

#### National Historic Trails

- Develop a management plan for 38 miles of the Nobles Emigrant Trail to include inventory, interpretation, and protection.
- Initiate inventory and interpretation of six additional historic trails.
- Secure public title or access to abandoned railroad grades.
- Designate Buffalo Creek Canyons and Lower Smoke Creek as scenic and historic ACECs.

### Special Designations

#### Wild & Scenic Rivers (WSR)

- Recommend 10.6 miles of Upper Smoke Creek as suitable for designation as a Wild and Scenic River, with a 'Wild' classification.

### Special Designations

#### Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)

- Prioritize acquisition of land parcels within all WSAs on a willing-seller basis.
- Establish Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) 'Primitive' areas within all WSAs.
- Close 45 miles of selected routes within ROS core 'Primitive' areas.
- Construct 68 miles of non-motorized/non-mechanized routes within selected WSAs.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Travel Management

- Manage 1,656 miles of GPS-inventoried routes as the designated route network in the field office area.
- Routes closed or not designated through this RMP or subsequent amendments would be closed and rehabilitated.
- Implement designated route network modification criteria for changes in designation, new route construction, route realignment, route closures, rehabilitation, or obliteration.
- Vehicular travel would conform to the *Northeast California Resource Advisory Council Recommended Off-Highway-Vehicle Management Guidelines, 2000* (Appendix C).
- Permanently close 59 miles of routes, and implement seasonal closures at Cleghorn Access Road, Tablelands, and Horse Lake Areas.
- Assign off-highway vehicle (OHV) use area designations:
  - 'Open' 419 acres
  - 'Limited to designated routes' 760,837 acres
  - 'Closed' 261,511 acres
- Construct up to 15 miles of new motorized routes.
- Construct 264 miles of non-motorized routes in selected special management areas.
- Close the Bizz Johnson Trail to snowmobile travel except for emergency and administrative use. Allow snowmobile crossing of the trail at Devil's Corral area west of Highway 36.
- In addition, approximately 45 miles of routes within the ROS 'Primitive' areas would be 'Closed' to snowmobiles.
- Manage boating on Biscar Reservoir and the Susan River for human-powered watercraft only.
- Manage boating on Round Corral and Buckhorn Reservoirs for human-powered watercraft and low speed trolling motors.

### Vegetation

- Maintain 300,000 acres of vegetation alliances, associations, and ecological sites rated as 'Healthy'. Work toward restoring 335,000 acres rated as 'Healthy/Lacking Key Attributes' and 146,000 to 197,000 acres rated as 'Functioning at Risk'.
- Use mechanical treatments, prescribed fire, integrated weed management, and reseedling of native species aimed at restoring 21,000 to 28,000 acres of vegetation alliances rated as 'Unhealthy'.
- Vegetation communities encroached by invasive juniper would be treated using prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical, and manual treatments. Manage to conserve juniper on sites composed of woodland soils (21,000 acres).
- Manage livestock grazing in quaking aspen, California black oak, and buffalo berry sites primarily by controlling the timing and season of use by livestock. Construct exclosures at selected sites.
- Restore Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush ecosystems containing sage-grouse habitat by treating no more than 20% of the habitat acres during a 30-year period, to protect important habitat areas.
- Use locally gathered native seed when re-seeding, where possible.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Noxious Weeds & Invasive Species

- Implement Integrated Weed Management (IWM) procedures on all BLM lands. Review all project proposals to determine necessary IWM actions and coordinate treatment with local agencies.
- Conduct inventory of noxious weeds. Monitor treatment sites to determine effectiveness and effects on non-target species.
- Increase public understanding of noxious weeds and their effects through education.

### Riparian/Wetland Associations

- Achieve measurable progress toward 'Proper Functioning Condition' (PFC) or 'Desired Future Condition' (DFC) on 35 miles of perennial and intermittent streams and 33 acres of riparian/wetland areas.
- Continue riparian photo studies to document changes in vigor and function.
- Protect riparian areas from grazing damage through riparian management which includes constructing exclosures, fencing, developing alternative water sources, and modifying grazing season of use.

### Special Status Plants

- Manage all special status species habitats and populations so that BLM actions do not contribute to the need to federally list these species as threatened or endangered.
- Reduce or eliminate impacts to special status species and their habitat when conducting ground disturbing activities.
- Acquire lands from willing sellers that support unprotected populations of special status plants.
- Provide additional protection measures to 'special interest' species to prevent them from becoming listed as special status plants.

### Visual Resources

- Manage all wilderness study areas (WSAs) as VRM Class I, unless released from designation by Congress, whereby the VRM designation would be converted to a VRM class based on the management prescriptions assigned below.
- Assign VRM Class designations to all BLM-administered lands, and manage lands according to these class requirements, to protect scenic quality:

	Acres (All WSAs Managed as Class 1)	Acres (Should Congress release WSAs)
VRM Class I	380,359	0
VRM Class II	258,107	507,843
VRM Class III	318,059	442,028
VRM Class IV	66,242	72,896

### Water Resources

- Implement restorative measures to improve water quality and progress toward meeting state standards. Emphasize natural recovery processes, grazing exclosures, planting of woody riparian vegetation and construction of in-stream structures.
- Uses will not be restricted as long as they do not impede the restoration of state water quality standards or riparian health objectives.
- Prioritize restoration efforts on Smoke, Shoals, Cottonwood, and Red Rock Creeks.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### Water Resources (continued)

- Maintain existing water sources and manage to promote wildlife habitat, improve distribution of livestock and wild horses, and provide for recreational uses.
- Prioritize development of new water sources to extend seasonal water availability for wildlife, and to benefit desired ecosystems.
- Withdraw state-appropriated water rights on waters that are not “waters of the state”.
- Assert in-stream flow rights in Nevada and riparian rights in California on all perennial and important intermittent streams.
- Projects that involve inter-basin transfer of water would be coordinated with local and regional governments.

### Wild Horses and Burros

- Manage wild horses and burros on one established herd management area (HMA) and wild horses on two established HMAs on 828,596 acres covering 81% of Eagle Lake RMP area.
- Conduct a regular aerial population census, at least every three years, in order to monitor habitat conditions and population levels.
- Prioritize selection of animals returned to BLM-administered lands after gathers based on historical traits.
- Maintain populations within established appropriate management levels (AMLs) by conducting regular gathers.
- Consider fertility control research in some or all HMAs.
- Develop facilities for public viewing, education, and wild horse adoptions.

### Wildlife and Fisheries

#### Federally Listed Species

##### *Carson Wandering Skipper*

- Conduct surveys to determine habitat suitability and cooperate as a partner in recovery plans.

##### *Bald Eagle (Note: see Changes Made to the Approved RMP)*

- Conduct population surveys and implement seasonal protection measures.
- Develop GIS information system for nesting, roosting, and foraging areas.
- Manage suitable forest habitat to retain potential nest trees.

##### *Lahontan Cutthroat Trout*

- Cooperate with California Department of Fish and Game on local planting of hatchery stock and related habitat issues.

##### *Yellow-Billed Cuckoo*

- Contribute to survey efforts and develop action plan if populations are found on BLM administered lands.



## RECORD OF DECISION

### **State- and BLM-Listed Sensitive Species**

- Cooperate with partners to obtain information on species occurrence, abundance, and distribution. Develop a GIS database to document and track information.
- Manage suitable habitat to retain forest characteristics for California spotted owls.
- Implement seasonal protection measures and buffer zones, as appropriate, for permitted activities.

### **Ungulates**

- Control cheatgrass, invasive juniper, and noxious weeds to improve habitat conditions.
- Use plantings, seedings, willow thinning, and other vegetation treatments to maintain and improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats.
- Develop a GIS system to manage information for habitat use areas, habitat management areas, and hunting zones.
- If Rocky Mountain elk populations become established in the field office area, coordinate with state wildlife agencies and other partners, including livestock operators, to develop and implement management plans.
- Voluntary changes or conversions of existing domestic sheep grazing permits from domestic sheep to cattle grazing permits would provide ELFO the opportunity to coordinate with state wildlife agencies and other cooperators in developing a reintroduction plan for California bighorn sheep prior to reintroduction efforts.

### **Sagebrush Ecosystems and Sagebrush Obligate/Associated Species**

- Implement actions from the 2006 *Conservation Strategy for Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystems within the Buffalo-Skedaddle Population Management Unit*.
- Reduce the encroachment of western juniper and noxious weeds in sagebrush communities.
- Implement seasonal protection measures and buffer zones for ground disturbing practices, to protect habitats.
- Implement timber and fuels treatments to maintain and improve habitat.
- Avoid practices that permanently convert sagebrush habitat to non-native grassland or agricultural land.

### **Other Native Wildlife Species**

- Manage migratory birds in accordance with the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* and Executive Order 13186, *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*.
- Follow BLM policy, guidelines, current conservation plans, memorandums of understanding and best management practices in the management of species and habitats.
- Coordinate reintroductions, augmentations, and translocations of native species with state wildlife agencies.
- Build brush piles for upland game birds where cover is insufficient.
- Develop opportunities for wildlife interpretive programs.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### ***Native and Non-Native Fish and Aquatic Species***

- Improve streams and springs not in 'Proper Functioning Condition' and maintain native fish-bearing streams in proper water quality and riparian function.
- Restore and rehabilitate streams by maintaining or improving minimum pool depths, increasing clean spawning gravels, and stabilizing stream banks.
- Coordinate with state agencies when implementing management actions, including the planting of fish in suitable waters.
- Coordinate with local county fish and game commissions and sportsmen's groups to determine management priorities and enhancement opportunities.

### ***Non-Native Terrestrial Species***

- Manage non-native species per BLM Manual 1745 and in cooperation with state plans and other applicable conservation plans.

## Protest and Appeal

The Eagle Lake Proposed RMP decisions were available for protest to the BLM Director for a 30 day period, between June 15, 2007, and July 16, 2007, in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2. Eleven protests were received. Resolutions to the protests did not result in the necessity for more analysis or repeat publication of the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/ Final EIS, or for additional public review and protest.

The decisions designating routes of travel for motorized vehicles, as described in Chapter 2.16 Travel Management of the RMP, are **implementation decisions** and are appealable under 43 CFR Part 4. The appeal procedures are summarized below. These travel management decisions are effective upon issuance of this Record of Decision, unless a stay of the decision is granted.

Public notice was provided for the land use plan in accordance with 43 CFR 8342.3(b) through publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* for the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/FEIS (Volume 72, Number 115, June 15, 2007) and for the Eagle Lake Record of Decision and Approved RMP.

### APPEAL PROCEDURES

Any party adversely affected by the proposed travel management route designations may appeal within 30 days of receipt of this decision in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR Part 4.4. The publication of the Notice of Availability of this ROD and approved RMP will be considered the date the decision is received. The appeal should state the specific route(s), as identified in Chapter 2.16 Travel Management of the RMP, on which the decision is being appealed. The appeal must be filed with the Eagle Lake Field Manager, at the following address:

Bureau of Land Management  
Eagle Lake Field Office  
2950 Riverside Drive  
Susanville, CA 96130

## RECORD OF DECISION

You may include a statement of reasons when the notice of appeal is filed, or you may file the statement of reasons within 30 days after filing the appeal. A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents must also be sent to the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite E-1712, Sacramento, CA, 95825.

If the statement of reasons is filed separately, it must be sent to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203. It is suggested that any appeal be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

## REQUEST FOR STAY

If you wish to request a stay of the decision pending the outcome of the appeal, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer at the time the appeal is filed and must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

## Mitigation and Monitoring

The BLM has incorporated design features into proposed management actions that will avoid or reduce adverse impacts to resources. Design features include standard operating procedures and best management practices. For many resources, the environmental analysis has indicated that significant adverse impacts would not occur, or that their magnitude would be negligible. The BLM will employ all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm while still meeting the goals, purpose and need requirements of the Eagle Lake RMP. In addition, all implementation level projects will undergo a site specific environmental analysis. Mitigation measures will be incorporated as necessary to reduce adverse impacts identified in the environmental analysis.

This ROD approves monitoring programs that aid in managing and protecting the resource values of the planning area. The BLM will monitor biological resources in order to evaluate if desired outcomes (goals and objectives) as described in the RMP are being met as management actions are implemented. The Eagle Lake RMP Monitoring Plan is included in the ROD under Appendix A.

## Public Involvement

### SCOPING AND ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

The BLM officially initiated the planning process for the Eagle Lake Draft RMP with publication of a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on July 22, 2003 (Volume 68, Number 140). The BLM hosted six public scoping meetings in August and September 2003, with a total of 205 people attending these meetings. Four meetings were held within the planning area. Two others were held in Redding, California, and Reno,

## RECORD OF DECISION

Nevada, to ensure that the BLM heard the concerns of user groups residing outside the planning area. The BLM also conducted a scoping meeting in the field in August 2003. A community workshop was conducted to discuss economics and social values in December 2003.

Issues related to resource management in the Eagle Lake planning area were assembled during the scoping process, which consisted of public scoping meetings, field tours, socioeconomic workshops, and interactions with federal, state, tribal, and county collaborators. The scoping process generated 15 key issues to be addressed in the Eagle Lake RMP. These issues were used to develop alternatives and are addressed in other sections of the RMP (for example, effects on local economies).

## DRAFT RMP/DRAFT EIS AND PROPOSED RMP/FINAL EIS

The public comment period for the Eagle Lake Draft RMP/Draft EIS opened with publication of the NOA in the *Federal Register* on April 28, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 82). This NOA announced the publication of the Draft RMP/DEIS, and also solicited public comments and participation. The BLM distributed approximately 250 copies of the Eagle Lake Draft RMP/DEIS. The public had 90 days (until July 27, 2006) to submit comments on the Draft RMP/DEIS. To facilitate this process, the BLM held seven public comment meetings.

The public comment period generated approximately 7,253 submissions of one (nearly identical) form letter, 3 submissions of another form letter, and 49 additional unique comment letters from individuals and groups. The number of comments that the BLM analyzed and responded to was approximately 551. These comments and the BLM's responses to them are summarized in Appendix O of the RMP. Based on the comments and feedback received, the BLM prepared the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The BLM made several edits and clarifications regarding management decisions in the Proposed RMP. In addition, four substantive changes were made to management decisions:

1. Removal of 'no surface occupancy' restrictions from North Dry valley ACEC (10,156 acres) to allow for exploration and development of geothermal resources.
2. Designation of the potential California-Nevada (east-west) utility corridor as a right-of-way corridor, as defined in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, *Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the 11 Western States*, Department of Energy, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Department of Defense, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October 2007, and subsequent amendments.
3. Designation of the Empire Lateral of the Tuscarora natural gas pipeline as a right-of-way utility corridor.
4. Preferred Alternative has been changed to emphasize improvement of riparian conditions, as originally described in Alternative 2.

Public notice was provided for the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/FEIS through publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* (Volume 72, Number 115, June 15, 2007). The NOA also described public protest procedures. The BLM distributed approximately 300 paper copies and CDs of the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP/Final EIS to interested parties and made the document available on the web, at BLM offices, and at the Susanville public library.

## RECORD OF DECISION

### TRIBAL CONSULTATION

The Eagle Lake Field Office interacts with 4 federally recognized tribes represented by 6 tribal governments. Consultation with tribes regarding the Eagle Lake RMP began in July, 2003. On July 24, 2003, certified letters were sent to tribal offices containing a packet of information about resource management plans and the BLM planning process. The tribes were also formally invited to attend a scoping meeting set up especially to address their concerns and involvement with the Eagle Lake RMP. Consultation meetings were held during which the tribes provided input into plan development.

Tribal consultation continued during the alternative formulation process in 2004 to 2005. The Eagle Lake Draft RMP/DEIS was made available for public review in April of 2006, and copies of the document were sent to the tribes along with a letter informing the tribes to provide their written comments to the BLM by September 27, 2006. Each of the tribes provided comments on the Draft RMP/DEIS either in letters or during consultation meetings.

A briefing was held on the Eagle Lake Draft RMP/DEIS with the California State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO) on April 5, 2006 and with the Nevada SHPO on March 30, 2006. Planning and process procedures were discussed in addition to discussions about outreach and coordination efforts of the Eagle Lake Field Office. Each of the tribes was also consulted with on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

### COUNTY, STATE, AND FEDERAL PARTICIPATION

During the planning process Lassen and Washoe Counties requested more specific information regarding certain aspects of the RMP of interest to them, such as land tenure, special designations, recreation management, access, and energy development. In each instance, the Eagle Lake Field Manager and representatives from the Eagle Lake BLM staff met personally and or talked by telephone with local county officials and discussed their issues and how the RMP would address their concerns.

The following state agencies have been provided with information and have participated in the RMP process: California and Nevada SHPO, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Water Resources, and Nevada Department of Wildlife. The Eagle Lake Proposed RMP was submitted to the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, for review by appropriate agencies. The Eagle Lake Field Manager received a notification of consistency with the State of California for the RMP on September 17, 2007.

The BLM initiated formal consultation on the Proposed RMP by submitting a Biological Assessment to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as described below.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) CONSULTATION

The BLM has determined that two federally listed threatened and endangered wildlife species, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and the Carson Wandering skipper (*Pseudocopaeodes eunus obscurus*) are of concern in the Eagle Lake planning area. Pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA, the BLM initiated formal consultation on the effects of the Proposed RMP by submitting a Biological Assessment to the US Fish and Wildlife Service on these two species. The USFWS issued a Biological Opinion for the Eagle Lake Proposed RMP on August 21, 2007, which concurs with the BLM's effects analysis.

## RECORD OF DECISION

At the time of the BLM's request to initiate formal consultation, the bald eagle was federally listed as threatened. For additional information, see *Changes Made to the Approved RMP*.

## NORTHEAST CALIFORNIA RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)

The Northeast California RAC members were kept involved with the process through briefings provided during the regular council meetings, and through workshops designed to gather and disseminate key information and data.

## ADVERTISEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

News media press releases were issued or posted to notify the public of the project, to announce public meetings and workshops, to request public comments, and to provide contact information. Press releases were sent to local and major northern California and Nevada newspapers, radio stations and TV stations, and meeting announcements were published in several local and regional newspapers. These include the *Lassen County Times*, Susanville; the *Reno Gazette Journal*, Reno; the *Modoc County Record*, Alturas; *Mountain Echo*, Fall River Mills; *Inter Mountain News*, Burney; *Butte Valley Star*, Dorris; *Herald and News*, Klamath Falls; and the *Modoc Independent News*, Cedarville. Announcements were also broadcast by the news department at Sierra Radio Network, Susanville, which airs news on two regional radio stations. All announcements were posted on the BLM's news release website, and carried in the BLM's *News.bytes* electronic newsletter, which circulates to more than 30,000 readers inside and outside of the BLM. Stories were printed in at least two local newspapers on the RMP development at different points in the process.

## PROJECT WEBSITE

An informational website, <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/eaglelake.html> has been available to the public throughout the planning process. It provides background information on the Eagle Lake Field Office, downloadable version of documents, including the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and Record of Decision.

## PLANNING UPDATE MAILERS

The BLM produced four special Planning Update mailers: one to announce public scoping and alternative development meetings, and to announce the publication of the Draft RMP/DEIS. These were sent via direct mail to the Eagle Lake mailing list and were also distributed at public meetings. The Planning Updates included background information on the Eagle Lake Field Office's lands, a description and timeline for the upcoming planning process, dates and locations of the public scoping meetings, and contact information for getting public comments to the BLM.

**APPENDIX A**

**EAGLE LAKE FIELD  
OFFICE**

**MONITORING PLAN**



## Eagle Lake Approved RMP –Monitoring Plan

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<b>Cultural and Paleontological Resources</b>	The BLM Eagle Lake Field Office would seek to protect and preserve significant cultural and paleontological resources and ensure that these resources are available to present and future generations for appropriate uses. Manage legitimate activities in a manner that will ensure preservation and provide public benefits through education, interpretation, research, public uses and conservation for future generations. Locate, evaluate and classify paleontological resources and protect them where appropriate.	<p>Continue on-the-ground monitoring of identified sites to determine condition, impacts, deterioration, and use of such sites. Priority for site monitoring will be based on: 1) site significance or site's potential to yield significant information to determine its eligibility to the National Register, 2) the severity of threat to a site, 3) the immediacy of threat to a site.</p> <p>Visit cultural resource sites within the planning area on a periodic basis, at a minimum of 10 sites annually. Monitor the condition of the site and document any disturbance or deterioration of the site, and enter information into the cultural resource database. If a disturbed site is considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places initiate appropriate consultation to determine the appropriate action to stop site deterioration or apply mitigation measures.</p> <p>When able, coordinate with BLM Law Enforcement to monitor sensitive cultural resource areas.</p> <p>Meet with communities, groups, and educational institutions to evaluate effectiveness of educational and interpretive information.</p> <p>Inventory newly identified geographic areas for cultural and paleontological resources. Record and document new sites and any disturbances.</p>
<b>Fire Management</b>	Areas with a history of wildland fire-under conditions showing little potential for spreading—should be considered for wildland fire use, monitoring, or a containment-and-confinement strategy.	Document wildland fire use areas; record event and monitor fire activity.
<b>Fire Rehabilitation and Stabilization</b>	Wildland fire emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ES&R) projects will be completed in a manner that ensures ecosystem health. Natural regeneration for site-rehabilitation will be used following fire—where this appears adequate and would not lead to proliferation of weeds. Where assessment shows a need, re-seed with native vegetation, if possible.	Monitoring is required on all Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation plans. Monitoring methods may include photo points, density, cover, gap intercept, frequency plots, ocular estimates, and soil erosion within each eco-region and plant community. The elements of a defensible monitoring program applicable to ES&R and BAER projects are objectives, stratification, control areas, random sampling, data quality, and statistical analysis.
	Provide appropriate levels of rest or deferment from grazing after a wildfire to meet emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation goals and objectives.	Livestock are to be excluded from burned areas until monitoring results, documented in writing, show emergency stabilization and rehabilitation objectives have been met. Objectives must be clearly defined in the Emergency Stabilization and/or Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan.
<b>Forestry</b>	Create healthy forest ecosystems in all seral stages that are ecologically stable, support natural watershed function, and supply the needs of wildlife. Conditions would be such that wildfires are controllable (i.e. forests would	<p>Stand composition, productivity and structure will be documented and maintained within the Forvis Database.</p> <p>Record accomplishments for providing wood products in the Timber Sale Information System database and MIS reporting.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
	approximate original, natural conditions) and human needs for recreation, wood products, and other objectives are adequately addressed.	
<b>Fuels Management</b>	Fuels treatment projects would be prioritized in the wildland urban interface of communities, in sagebrush-steppe ecosystems invaded by western juniper, important wildlife habitats, and areas with sensitive cultural resources. Long-range fuels treatment projects would be developed and implemented to improve forest and rangeland ecosystems, enhance the quality of recreation or improve opportunities, increase the quantity and quality of livestock forage.	Measure density of fuel loads (biomass) before and after treatment, through truck weight records or estimation of biomass. Conduct photo trend monitoring pretreatment, post treatment and periodic intervals or other methodologies after treatment.
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>	Provide a sustainable level of livestock forage that is consistent with achieving BLM land health standards, objectives for other resources, and multiple-use management of public lands.	Collect actual use reports from grazing permittees (report includes livestock numbers, pasture use, turnout and gather dates) on intensively managed allotments or as required. Long-term monitoring will be conducted on priority allotments. This long-term data will be incorporated with compliance data and analyzed for use in gauging the effectiveness of current management and in the establishment of future management objectives. Allotment management plans will be developed on identified allotments or as required based upon analysis of all monitoring data and future management objectives. Monitor “I and M” category allotments as required or when issues are identified such as when land health standards are not being met or progress is not being made. Monitoring may include but not limited to trend, land health and riparian reassessment, photo studies, and any existing monitoring to determine if allotment goals and objectives are being met. On a periodic basis, evaluate allotments that have been identified as needing further assessment and/or re-assessment using the “Healthy Rangelands Standards and Guidelines” to determine if progress is being made.
	Allotments will be managed in compliance with standards set forth in the Approved Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing (2000).	Use the rangeland health assessment process prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM, 2000b), Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines (USDI-BLM, 1997), and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p><b>Livestock Grazing (continued)</b></p>	<p>Work cooperatively with ranchers and other stakeholders to implement treatments to reduce juniper encroachment in sagebrush/grassland communities, with the goal of restoring sagebrush communities to a healthy condition, and thereby maintaining (or potentially increasing) forage production of native grasses, forbs, and shrubs.</p>	<p>Conduct periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity, as well as measurement of the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter. Monitor herbaceous or woody utilization, actual use, and climatic conditions to determine the effectiveness of established tools in meeting objectives. Monitoring of existing condition of vegetation may include (but is not limited to) identifying ecological sites, determining ecological status, determining soil types, vegetation mapping, baseline inventory, and assembling existing basic information. Procedures used (and frequency of use) would be primarily those in BLM Technical References 1734-7 and 4400-5.</p>
<p><b>Recreation and Visitor Services</b></p>	<p>Provide and enhance public recreational opportunities, of a developed and undeveloped nature. Ensure that quality customer service is provided, resources are protected, and user conflicts minimized.</p> <p>Provide a full range of recreational experiences emphasizing self-sufficient exploration and recreation based on the recreation opportunity spectrum.</p> <p>Use public education and environmental awareness programs (e.g. “leave no trace” and “tread lightly”) to reduce adverse impacts from thoughtless or destructive camping practices.</p> <p>In cooperation with Lassen, Modoc and Washoe Counties, designate and manage four Scenic or Backcountry Byways through public lands for scenic driving and sightseeing experiences on existing dirt and gravel roads managed by BLM, Lassen, Modoc and Washoe Counties. Also work with Lassen, Modoc and Washoe Counties to designate and manage three Scenic Byways on paved roads in conjunction with Lassen County and Caltrans.</p>	<p>Conduct regular patrols of developed recreation facilities (campgrounds, trailheads, improved day use areas, etc) and periodic patrols of popular undeveloped use areas where recreation use is concentrated. Patrols are to monitor visitor use, check facility and natural resource conditions, determine maintenance needs, support volunteer hosts where present and plan project work where needed. Coordinate patrols by BLM law enforcement rangers and local Sheriff deputies when and where needed to ensure visitor compliance with rules and regulations.</p> <p>Focus field monitoring on visitation levels, compliance with rules, regulations, and permit stipulations for specific sites, dispersed uses, and prescribed standards and guidelines. Use visitor surveys, traffic counters, documentation of user conflicts, and photo documentation of the changes in resource conditions over time.</p> <p>Monitoring may also include collection of data from visitor comments and complaint or information request calls or emails. Use monitoring data to manage visitor use, develop plans and projects to reduce visitor impacts, and to provide appropriate facility or transportation system design.</p> <p>In areas where visitor use is causing or may lead to adverse impacts to natural and cultural resources, determine if studies are needed to establish baseline data and observation points to determine current impacts from recreational use. Where studies are needed, design and conduct studies that provide data necessary to help make decisions to resolve problems caused by recreational use(s).</p> <p>Annually, drive, ride or hike each Scenic Byway, Backcountry Byway or other type of sightseeing route that becomes designated as a result of this RMP. Visual assessments will include a review of road conditions, unauthorized uses along the scenic routes, impacts to scenic values along the routes, and will identify actions that may be needed to meet the objectives of these routes. Document monitoring trip results in files established for monitoring of each byway.</p> <p>Monitor impacts to scenic resources along the byways by using the NEPA process to evaluate impacts of proposed projects on scenic Byways and Vista Points and seek ways to meet VRM objectives established in this RMP for public lands along those scenic travel routes and as viewed from those vista points.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<b>Soil Resources</b>	Soils would be protected where they meet land health standards. Site stability and/or soil productivity would be substantially improved where soils do not currently meet these standards.	Use the rangeland health assessment process, particularly the health standard for soil, prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM, 2000b), Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines (USDI-BLM, 1997), and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.
<b>Special Designations – Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)</b>	<p>Manage seven ACECs within the Eagle Lake Field Office jurisdiction encompassing 89,397 acres. This includes 160 acres of the previously designated Pine Dunes Research Natural Area.</p> <p>Determine condition and trends of the “relevance and importance” values that served as the basis for designation of each ACEC.</p>	<p>Each ACEC will have a management plan prepared that will include a monitoring component. Monitoring will be carried out using methods appropriate for monitoring the conditions of the relevant and important values that each ACEC was established to protect and preserve. Monitoring results will be documented in the ACEC file to show whether or not the ACEC management objectives are being met. Where objectives of protecting an ACEC’s relevant and important values are not being met, management actions will be evaluated to determine which actions are needed to meet the management objectives for that ACEC. Appropriate actions will then be taken to protect the ACEC’s relevant and important values.</p> <p>ACEC monitoring will occur at a minimum once every two years or more often if determined necessary in the individual management plans developed for each ACEC to be completed following final completion of this RMP.</p> <p>For the Pine Dune Research Natural Area, monitor to determine if the management objectives established in the existing Pine Dunes Management Plan and the additional objectives and planned actions specified in this new RMP are being met.</p>
<b>Special Designations – Historic trails</b>	<p>Manage the Nobles Emigrant Trail to preserve and protect trail traces and trail settings. Protect other historic trail traces and settings to retain their historic value for present and future generations to experience and enjoy.</p>	<p>Monitor site specific locations on the Nobles Emigrant Trail to document conditions of the trail traces. If adverse impacts are occurring, implement actions to protect the trail traces where feasible.</p> <p>Review all projects proposed along the Nobles Trail to assure that the VRM objectives for public lands seen along the trail are met (most foreground- middle ground areas within 3 to 5 miles of the trail are VRM Class II).</p> <p>Monitor condition of all other historic trails within the Eagle Lake Field Office as shown on the Historic Trails Map in the RMP. If new information shows other historic trail alignments not identified in the RMP, take actions to identify and protect those historic trails segments.</p> <p>Monitor progress in developing and distributing interpretive information about historic trails within the Eagle Lake Field Office.</p>
<b>Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR)</b>	<p>Manage Upper Smoke Creek (10.6 miles) and its associated uplands, so as not to impair the creek’s suitability for WSR designation. If designated, ensure that future planning, projects, and management actions maintain the free-flowing character and outstandingly remarkable values of this recommended suitable WSR. Provide reasonable public access and encourage low-impact recreation.</p>	<p>Develop and implement a monitoring plan to assure that Upper Smoke Creek’s outstandingly remarkable values are protected through BLM management. Coordinate monitoring with all resource specialists responsible for management of the outstandingly remarkable values within the WSR corridor. Monitoring is to include periodic patrols to check conditions of natural and cultural resources, livestock enclosure fences, signing, and visitor use levels. Review all projects to maintain the WSR’s outstandingly remarkable values in compliance with provisions of the Wild and Scenic River’s Act.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<b>Special Designations – Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)</b>	Manage seven WSAs so as not to impair their suitability for wilderness designation.	Follow direction within the existing policy for WSAs (USDI-BLM 1995). Monitor 380,359 acres of WSAs during the months these areas are accessible by the public, or more frequently if necessary because of potential use activities or other resource conflicts. Use aerial surveillance, on-the-ground surveillance, visitor contact, permit compliance checks, and other methods as appropriate.
<b>Travel Management</b>	Routes would be maintained, modified, created, or obliterated in order to meet land health standards, water quality standards, wildlife habitat needs, and changing public needs and desires.	Focus monitoring on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- compliance with travel designation requirements that all motor vehicles remain on designated roads and trails unless otherwise authorized,</li> <li>- meeting land health standards for Off Highway Vehicles as established by BLM's Northeast CA Resource Advisory Council,</li> <li>- maintained travel routes to determine condition and identify maintenance needs,</li> <li>- known problem areas where soil conditions, visitor use impacts or other factors have caused problems that require monitoring and/or corrective actions,</li> <li>- reported problem areas that require field checks to determine conditions,</li> <li>- high use routes where impacts may occur from high use levels, and</li> <li>- areas where pioneering of new routes is reported or is likely to occur.</li> </ul>
	Improve quality-of-life for local residents through a system of non-motorized trails. Trails would provide access to public lands for physical fitness, recreation, and environmental/cultural education.  Create high-quality, trail-related recreational destinations that attracts visitors to the scenic landscapes of Lassen County and northwestern Washoe County.	Hike or ride non-motorized trails to monitor trail conditions to determine trail maintenance needs, assess types and amounts of visitor use and evaluate user satisfaction with trails. Evaluate trail impacts on natural resources through visual inspections, photo at problem areas (erosion, users short cutting, etc). Use trail traffic counters where appropriate to determine visitor use levels. Involve volunteers to assist in trail monitoring where appropriate and feasible.  Monitor implementation effectiveness to determine if proposed trails are being built and if not, determine what is impeding implementation of the trails component of this RMP and seek means to remedy that problem so that the trails component of this RMP is achieved.
<b>Vegetation – Native Plant Communities</b>	Vegetation would achieve and maintain its capacity to support natural function and biotic integrity within the context of normal variability. Therefore, plant communities would be sufficiently resilient to resist loss of structure and function resulting from disturbance and adequately recover following such events.	Measure trends in areas where issues have been identified or where progress toward land health is not being made. Techniques and methods may include vegetative production, structure, and composition, soil/site stability, watershed function, and integrity of biotic community. Use the rangeland health assessment process prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM, 2000b), Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines (USDI-BLM, 1997), and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.  Conduct periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity, as well as measurement of the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter. Monitor herbaceous or woody utilization, actual use, and climatic conditions to determine the effectiveness of established tools in meeting objectives.

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<b>Vegetation – Native Plant Communities (continued)</b>		Monitoring of existing condition of vegetation would consist of identifying ecological sites, determining ecological status, determining soil types, vegetation mapping, baseline inventory, and assembling existing basic information. Procedures used (and frequency of use) would be primarily those in BLM Technical References 1734-7 and 4400-5.
	Restoration of degraded or decadent shrub-steppe communities will be prioritized in areas that will quickly recover to the desired plant community, and in areas where restoration would enhance important wildlife habitat (i.e. riparian areas, pronghorn kidding grounds, and sage-grouse brood rearing sites).	Conduct periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity, as well as measurement of the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter in areas that have been identified as needing further assessment or where a re-assessment would prove useful. Monitor herbaceous or woody utilization, actual use, and climatic conditions to determine the effectiveness of established tools in meeting objectives.
	Assess the distribution and density of rare plant communities, including quaking aspen, curlleaf mountain mahogany, and black oak. These communities will be managed for a diversity of species and for mixed age-classes.	Monitor for seedling establishment, seedling and sapling survival, and understory herbaceous plant diversity in areas identified as needing further assessment. Monitor for effectiveness of treatments in rare plant communities that receive restoration treatments or conifer removal. Effective monitoring methods should be used (e.g., Sampling Vegetation Attributes Technical Reference TR-1734-4, or Herrick, J.E., et al, 2005, Monitoring Manual for Grassland, Shrubland, and Savanna Ecosystems).
<b>Vegetation – Riparian/Wetlands</b>	Maintain, restore, or improve riparian vegetation, habitat diversity, and hydrologic stability to achieve healthy, productive riparian areas and wetlands.	Conduct Proper Functioning Condition Assessment TR 1737-9 and TR 1737-15 (assessment for streams) and TR 1737-11 and TR 1737-16 (assessments for lakes/wetlands) to assess the functionality of riparian and wetland areas in areas identified as needing further assessment.  The primary monitoring technique will be reassessing condition based on Assessing Proper Functioning Condition (referenced in TR 1737-9 [BLM 1993] and 1737-11 [Lentic Riparian-Wetland Area Proper Functioning Condition Work Group 1998.]) Ongoing riparian photo studies will be continued within grazing allotments to document changes.  Monitor the amount and distribution of plants across a channel cross-section and streambank in areas with a downward trend or as identified using riparian transects; document visual changes over time on the condition of the stream corridor using photo points.
<b>Special Status Plants</b>	Protect habitats and populations of special status plants and maintain their reproductive viability so that BLM actions do not contribute to the need for future “listing” under the Endangered Species Act.	Visual reconnaissance would be used to obtain general information on the habitats of special status plants. Individual special status plant species populations and habitats would be monitored on a periodic basis and a CDFG native species field survey form filled out.  Conduct surveys to identify suspected and unknown populations/occurrences of SSPs.
<b>Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species</b>	Eliminate or control noxious weeds, invasive species, and poisonous plants to preserve or improve wildlife habitat, forest and rangeland productivity, and land health generally.	Known infestations will be evaluated annually and integrated weed management techniques will be applied as necessary.  Monitor treatment sites to determine effects on the target species, effects on non-target species, and assess recovery or invasion by other species.

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p><b>Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species (continued)</b></p>		<p>Conduct annual monitoring for new noxious weeds, concentrating in areas where ground disturbing activities have occurred, and where the public or agency personnel have reported sightings. Visit known noxious weed sites which are identified for treatment, and evaluate for effectiveness of control (annually). For all known sites and any newly discovered sites, record with a global positioning system (GPS) unit, photograph, measure, and determine the need for future treatment.</p>
<p><b>Visual Resource Management</b></p>	<p>Designate (BLM) visual resource management classes for all lands under the jurisdiction of the Eagle Lake Field Office. Manage these lands according to their respective VRM class objectives.</p>	<p>Monitor compliance with meeting the objectives of the VRM Classes established in the RMP by evaluating the visual impacts of all proposed projects through the NEPA process. Where projects have potential for high visual contrast or are in visually sensitive areas, use BLM's visual contrast rating system as part of the NEPA process to evaluate visual impacts of proposed projects.</p>
<p><b>Water Resources</b></p>	<p>Ensure that the natural hydrologic function of uplands, springs, riparian areas, streams, and wetlands is achieved (or preserved) so that requirements of beneficial uses and state water quality standards are met.</p>	<p>Use the rangeland health assessment process, particularly the health standards 2 (stream health), 3 (water quality) and 4 (riparian and wetland sites), prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM, 2000b), Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines (USDI-BLM, 1997), and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.</p> <p>Water quality monitoring would be conducted at the established water quality sampling stations on a priority basis using the following indicators that were chosen based on the standards contained in the Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (BLM 1999). These indicators are temperature, nutrients, fecal coliform, turbidity, sediment, dissolved oxygen, and stream channel condition. The protocol is outlined in the USDI - BLM National Field Manual for the Collection of Water Quality Data and the Susanville District Bioregional Assessment Water Quality Inventory Statement of Work.</p> <p>Best Management Practices are developed and implemented to protect and restore the quality and beneficial uses of water at the project level. BMPs will be monitored and evaluated on implementation and effectiveness as part of the project or activity plan.</p>
	<p>Determine in-stream flow requirements necessary to support healthy aquatic and riparian habitats. Acquire and maintain water rights needed to protect federal investments by ensuring an adequate and reliable water supply for BLM programs.</p>	<p>Conduct Proper Functioning Condition Assessment TR 1737-9 and TR 1737-15 (assessment for lotic systems) and TR 1737-11 and TR 1737-16 (assessments for lentic systems) to assess the functionality of riparian and wetland areas.</p> <p>Additional stream Habitat Condition Surveys and macro-invertebrate sampling would be conducted as needed to assess functionality of streams for fish and other aquatic resources. Completion of the Water Source Inventory and maintenance of water rights data base would provide needed information to assert federal water rights, especially Public Water Reserves to protect federal investments and to ensure a reliable water supply for beneficial uses of public lands.</p>



Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<b>Wild Horses and Burros</b>	Manage wild horses and burros within designated “herd management areas” at population levels that protect vegetation, wildlife, livestock, and other resources to ensure maintenance of a thriving ecological balance.	<p>On a periodic basis, evaluate every herd management area using the “Healthy Rangelands Standards and Guidelines”. Field data collection includes using the rangeland health and riparian functional assessment process, as prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM, 2000b), Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines (USDI-BLM, 1997), and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards. Currently, periodic evaluate is expected to occur about once every 10 years, or when changes in resource conditions are apparent.</p> <p>Herd population monitoring and distribution data collection would occur periodically. Aerial census would be preferably completed at 3-year intervals.</p>
<b>Wildlife and Fisheries</b>	<p>Habitats of federally listed (endangered, threatened, or candidate), state-listed and BLM sensitive wildlife will be protected, restored, and maintained so that species populations are maintained, or increased in size and stability, and occupy available habitats.</p> <p>The Eagle Lake Field Office will provide diverse and healthy habitats for native wildlife species. Habitats will conform to land health standards, guidelines for livestock grazing, and other BLM policies and guidelines. Habitat conditions will demonstrate fulfillment of life-cycle requirements for native species and their reproductive success.</p>	<p>Monitor BLM proposed and authorized actions to ensure they are consistent with the Bureau’s Special Status Species Management Policy, BLM Manual 6840, and to ensure they are consistent with the objectives and guidelines outlined in the RMP.</p> <p>In conjunction with other federal, state, or private agencies, continue to monitor wildlife populations in the planning area. Do this for individual species such as bald and golden eagles, sage-grouse, deer, and pronghorn; and groups of species associated with source habitats such as sagebrush-steppe, juniper, and mixed conifer forest.</p> <p>Periodically determine the adequacy of existing data (i.e. species, habitats, etc.) for supporting management decisions.</p> <p>Periodically assess the effectiveness of a sampling of different vegetation treatments and disturbance actions to determine effectiveness of management decisions.</p>
	Aquatic ecosystems (and associated riparian and wetland habitats) will be maintained, restored, enhanced, and protected from degradation, so that native (and desirable non-native) fish and other aquatic species will thrive.	Monitor riparian habitat condition on an allotment basis during allotment evaluations or during rangeland health assessments as part of determining properly functioning condition (PFC).

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Eagle Lake Field Office  
2950 Riverside Drive  
Susanville, CA 96130

---

OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

First Class Mail  
Postage and Fees Paid  
Bureau of Land Management  
Permit No. G-76

*News* bytes

**Subscribe to News.bytes a FREE  
Weekly email Newsletter  
[www.blm.gov/ca](http://www.blm.gov/ca)**