

**UPPER SNAKE RIVER DISTRICT  
POCATELLO FIELD OFFICE  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**SEPTEMBER 2003**

**PLANNING CRITERIA BY PLANNING TOPIC**

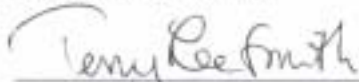
**INTRODUCTION**

This document identifies and describes the planning criteria and topics for the proposed Pocatello Resource Management Plan. These criteria will set the side boards for focused planning and will guide decision making by topic. They will ensure that efforts are tailored to pertinent issues and that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided.

Preliminary planning criteria were introduced to the public for review in May and June 2003 at five (5) public scoping meetings. The public was encouraged to comment on, and suggest additions to, these criteria in person at the meetings and through written correspondence. Comments on the preliminary planning criteria were collected through June 30, 2003.

BLM regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require that planning criteria be approved by the District Manager. Having reviewed and incorporated public comments, where appropriate, the Pocatello Resource Management Plan Interdisciplinary Team recommends approval of this document.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Terry Lee Smith, Project Manager

15 Sept. 03  
Date

**CONCURRENCE:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
for Philip Damon, Field Office Manager

9/15/03  
Date

**APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Kraayenbrink, Acting Upper Snake River District Manager

9/17/03  
Date

## POCATELLO RMP PLANNING CRITERIA

Planning Criteria are prepared to ensure decision-making is tailored to the issues pertinent to the planning effort and to ensure BLM avoids unnecessary data collection and analyses. These criteria set the side boards for focused planning and guide decision making by topic. Planning criteria are finalized based upon public comment and then approved by the District Manager.

Planning Topics help guide the planning process. Land use issues and conflicts that need to be resolved are identified during the scoping process. These issues may stem from such things as new information or changed circumstances, the need to address environmental concerns, or a need to reassess the appropriate mix of allowable uses based on new information obtained through the assessment process.

### **Air Quality:**

Air quality, on public lands near Pocatello and Soda Springs designated as non-attainment areas, is often impacted by pollutants from local industry and urban sprawl. With an increased emphasis on the use of prescribed fire, management activities will have an increased risk of impacting air quality. While most Bureau programs in the planning area have little effect on air quality, both wild and prescribed fire can result in significant effects on a short-term basis.

How will management activities be conducted to meet or exceed air quality standards?

#### **Planning Criteria**

- **All lands within the planning unit will be managed in compliance with applicable local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, statutes, regulations, standards and implementation plans. This includes applicable "conformity" regulations for BLM initiated or authorized activities within designated non-attainment or maintenance areas.**

### **Water Quality:**

Several Idaho Section 303(d) listed streams occurring within the planning area are affected by management activities. The highly fragmented ownership pattern of these public lands makes meaningful protection and/or improvement of water quality difficult where pollution sources often originate on neighboring, non-public lands.

How will uses and activities be managed to meet or exceed water quality standards?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Idaho Non-Point Source Management Program Plans and relevant state water quality standards.**
- **Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program and other water quality programs.**
- **Incorporate program and Best Management Practices (BMPs) where applicable.**
- **Consider recommendations consistent with the Blackfoot and Portneuf Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) and other approved TMDLs.**

### **Soils:**

Management activities such as road construction, mining, grazing, off-highway (OHV) vehicle use, and prescribed fire contribute to soil erosion. Maintaining the long-term productivity of soils is at the core of sound land management practices and the Bureau's responsibility.

How will uses and activities be managed to protect and maintain soil productivity?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Incorporate program and activity Best Management Practices (BMP) as appropriate.**
- **Incorporate Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Incorporate guidance from scientific findings of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan.**

### **Vegetation:**

#### **a. Riparian:**

Inventory shows many of the riparian habitats on public lands are not in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC). Livestock grazing, road construction, mining, timber harvest, and recreation are the primary activities that impact riparian areas. Riparian and wetland habitats are of critical importance to fish and wildlife in the planning area. They generally comprise less than 10% of the landscape, yet provide habitat for a significant proportion of the fish and wildlife species. Riparian/wetland areas include streams, springs, seeps, and wetlands.

How will uses and activities be managed to maintain or improve riparian habitat to achieve Proper Functioning Condition?

**Planning Criteria**

- **Comply with Executive Order 11990.**
- **Maintain, improve and restore natural functions to benefit water storage, groundwater recharge, water quality, and fish and wildlife values.**
- **Design Best Management Practices (BMP) to maintain or improve resource integrity.**
- **Incorporate Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Apply BLM Idaho Riparian Policy guidance as applicable.**
- **Incorporate Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan.**
- **Incorporate Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications.**

b. Uplands:

Management activities continue to impact the natural function and condition of upland vegetation communities. Structurally diverse and healthy upland plant communities provide habitat for wildlife, soil stabilization, increased infiltration of precipitation, and for moving clean water to adjacent streams.

How will uses and activities be managed to maintain or obtain healthy upland plant communities?

**Planning Criteria**

- **Incorporate Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Provide for the protection and restoration of native species.**
- **Provide for multiple use and sustained yield of forage for wildlife and domestic livestock.**
- **In consultation with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game assure wildlife habitat is sustained.**

c. Invasive/Noxious Species:

Invasive species and noxious weeds impact indigenous plant species, special status plants, wildlife habitat, and soils. The BLM is responsible for controlling noxious weeds, as identified

by the State of Idaho, on public lands and coordinating with county, state, and private landowners and reducing the establishment of undesirable species. Some species are so wide spread that eradication is no longer feasible. Management objectives are limited to reduce numbers and rate of spread through the use of mechanical, chemical or biological control agents. Recently introduced species can be eradicated if detected early. Effective management will require an increase in inventory and participation in cooperative efforts to educate the public.

What actions and or restrictions will be needed to maintain or improve natural resource values impacted by undesirable species and noxious weeds?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Integrate weed management guidelines and design features identified in the "Vegetation Treatment on BLM Land in the 13 Western States EIS" and the "Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program EIS."**
- **Protect non-target and special status plant species during treatment(s).**
- **Incorporate Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Consider availability of alternatives to mix or combine control methods to increase effectiveness of application techniques.**
- **Laws and executive orders requiring control of invasive species on Federal land.**
- **Comply with Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species (Feb. 1999).**

### **Cultural Resources:**

The planning area contains many significant prehistoric, historic, and traditional cultural sites. Less than 20% of the entire area has been inventoried for historic and prehistoric resources. Traditional cultural resources are only beginning to be understood and identified. Recreation activities, accidental trespass, theft and vandalism are all sources of cultural resource degradation. Protection of cultural resource sites includes identification, stabilization, and enhancement.

How will cultural resources be protected?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Consultation with Tribal Government(s) and State Historical Preservation Office.**
- **Identification and protection of historical and cultural places.**
- **Protect, preserve and enhance sites listed in the National Historic Register.**

### **Visual Resource Management:**

Unregulated OHV traffic, particularly along the urban/rural interface, and the increasing need for communication site facilities to accommodate new technologies are the primary issues affecting visual resources. BLM is responsible for ensuring that the scenic values of public lands are considered in all proposed actions that may affect visual quality. BLM manages the visual resource by identifying visual resource values, establishing objectives for managing those values, and taking action to achieve the visual management objectives

Where are the different visual resource values within the planning unit and to what degree should they be protected?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Guidance described in BLM Manual Section 8400 - Visual Resource Management.**

### **Special Status Species:**

Special status species are plant and animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act as threatened or endangered, and/or BLM's sensitive species list. The planning area supports habitat for a number of federally listed and BLM sensitive species. Habitat(s) for special status species are affected by wildfire, grazing, off-highway vehicle use, and rural/urban development on neighboring private lands (fragmentation of habitat).

How will uses and activities be managed to promote recovery of listed species and prevent listing of additional species?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Incorporate as applicable, Interior Columbia Basin Science Assessment guidance.**
- **Applicable Conservation Agreement and Strategy plans (i.e. Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, Canada Lynx, and Sage Grouse).**
- **Management actions that do not jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed threatened or endangered plant or animal species, or result in the destruction or modification of critical habitat.**
- **Incorporate Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Management actions that protect State sensitive species and do not contribute to the listing of species proposed for Federal listing (candidate species).**

### **Fish and Wildlife:**

The planning unit contains a diversity of important habitats (i.e. winter habitat) for a variety of fish and wildlife species. Habitat quality is in decline as a result of wildfire, grazing, and the growing rural/urban development of neighboring lands. Where public lands ownership patterns are highly fragmented, meaningful protection and/or improvement of fish and wildlife habitats is difficult. The key to maintaining fish and wildlife habitats is maintaining diverse, healthy vegetation and plant communities.

How will uses and activities be managed to enhance fish and wildlife habitat(s)?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Incorporate as applicable, Interior Columbia Basin Science Assessment guidance.**
- **Protect and preserve genetic integrity.**
- **Consider risks associated with Federal listing of fish species.**
- **Protect and maintain the intrinsic and recreational values associated with native and appropriate non-native species.**
- **Habitat needs identified in consultation with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.**
- **Protect critical deer and elk winter range and big game habitat.**

## **Fire Management:**

A separate fire management planning process is being undertaken for the entire BLM, Upper Snake River District. This planning process will develop fire management direction which will meet regulatory needs for the Pocatello RMP planning effort.

## **Forestry:**

The planning area contains over 100,000 acres of forests and woodlands. Wooded areas provide habitat for wildlife, watershed protection, recreational and aesthetic values, and forest products. Fire suppression activities of the past century and prolonged drought throughout the last decade have changed the pre-settlement character of tree species composition and stand densities, thereby increasing the risk of wildfire and the biological opportunities for forest insects and disease. Encroachment of juniper into rangelands formerly dominated by sagebrush is causing loss of forage, loss of habitat for many wildlife species, and accelerated soil erosion.

How will forest and woodland health be maintained or restored? What areas are available and have the capacity for planned, sustained-yield timber harvest or special forest product harvest?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Guidance and criteria contained in the Pocatello Field Office Programmatic Forestry Environmental Assessment, Dec. 2000.**
- **The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project: Scientific Assessment, September 1999, and guidance contained in BLM Manual 5400/5000-12-a1.**
- **Standards for Rangeland Health.**
- **Need to enhance/protect wildlife habitat(s).**
- **Consider pre-European settlement stand composition.**
- **Availability of access.**
- **Native American treaty rights within the ceded Fort Hall Reservation boundaries.**
- **Public demand for forest products.**
- **Continuing effects of drought, insects, and disease.**
- **Inventory of Timber Production and Capability Classifications (TPCC).**



## **Livestock Grazing:**

Properly managed livestock grazing can reduce conflicts with other uses and maintain or improve rangelands to desired conditions. Improper livestock grazing is detrimental to important ecological functions (i.e. water quality, soil stability) and plant community structure/diversity, (i.e. riparian areas). The Pocatello planning area currently authorizes livestock grazing on 467 grazing allotments.

What lands are or are not available to livestock grazing? How will livestock grazing be managed to reduce user conflicts and meet standards for rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing management?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Conformance with existing laws, regulations and BLM policy pertaining to livestock grazing on public lands.**
- **Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.**
- **Consider ecological site inventory information.**
- **Need to protect important biological resource functions that provide for soil stability, water quality, and healthy riparian and uplands vegetation communities, and maintain conditions for desired plant communities.**
- **Authorize use to minimize environmental impacts under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.**

## **Recreation Management:**

### a) Recreation Opportunities

Outdoor recreation use for developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities is increasing rapidly and there increasing demand for commercially permitted activities. Increasing demand creates user conflicts and an increasing demand for facilities, user information, and access.

Within the planning area there currently are two Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), the Pocatello (City) Front and the Blackfoot River.

How should recreation opportunities be managed to meet demand, and what areas are suitable for Special Recreation Management designation?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Consider availability of law enforcement.**
- **Consider need to provide for and enhance recreation opportunities to accommodate use and reduce impacts to resources.**
- **Consider lands identified as special recreation management areas and those areas subject to special measures to protect resources or reduce conflicts among uses.**
- **Consider need to ensure existing recreation facilities can be properly maintained prior to proposals and construction of new facilities.**
- **Consider need to provide and enhance recreation opportunities to accommodate use and reduce impacts to resources.**
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#### b. Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management:

OHV use in the planning area is a popular form of recreation. OHV use can impact wildlife habitat, soil stability, landscapes, and create conflicts with residential development and other user groups. The proliferation of roads and trails in the planning area is extensive, particularly on or near the Pocatello urban interface. Approximately half of the planning area ( 400,000 acres) is currently "open" to motorized vehicle use or has no designated areas where vehicles are required to remain on roads and trails.

How will OHV use be managed to protect resources, reduce user conflicts, and provide motorized recreation opportunities for users?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Public safety.**
- **Consider need to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, and other resources.**
- **Consider need to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats.**
- **Consider need to minimize conflicts between OHV use and other existing or proposed recreational uses.**
- **Ensure compatibility of OHV designations with designations and conditions on neighboring federal, state, county, and municipal subdivisions, taking into account safety, noise and other related factors.**
- **Comply with BLM, National Off-Highway Vehicle Management Strategy.**
- **Comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989.**

## **Lands and Realty:**

### **a. Rights-of-Way Corridors**

The planning area contains a number of utility, transportation, and communication rights-of-ways. The locations of some of these existing rights-of-ways may or may not be suitable for expansion or development into corridors. It is important to identify those public lands that are suitable for above and/or below ground rights-of-way corridors that provide for common public need.

What lands will be available for right-of-way corridors, and what are the limitations on further development of existing utility, transportation, and communication rights-of-way?

#### **Planning Criteria**

- **1992 Western Regional Corridor Study prepared by the Western Utility Group.**
- **Comply with Section 503, FLPMA.**
- **The need to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-ways.**
- **Utilize existing/common rights-of-ways to the extent possible.**
- **Identify public lands with existing rights-of-way corridors that may or may not be suitable for additional rights-of-ways.**
- **Identify areas where corridors are not permitted.**
- **Identify conflicts with existing or potential resource values and uses.**
- **Consider Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications.**

### **b. Public Access:**

Many tracts of public lands, large and small, within the planning area have no legal access for the public. Population growth, rural/urban development, and increasing recreational activity has resulted in an increased need for access to public lands. If landowners are willing and money is available, the BLM can negotiate and purchase easements for public access.

Where is there a need for access to public lands?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Consider the type and need for existing or proposed facility.**
- **Consider conflicts with existing or potential resource values and uses.**
- **Comply with Section 205 of FLPMA.**
- **Consider cost and benefits.**
- **Consider the duration and assurance of title.**

#### c. Land Tenure Adjustment:

The burden and cost, per acre, to manage public land within the planning area is very high due to fragmented ownership. Many parcels of public lands are less than 180 acres and have no legal access. Land tenure adjustments provide opportunities that can reduce these burdens and costs and provide for more effective management of consolidated parcels.

What values are associated with isolated tracts and opportunities exist to make adjustments to public land ownership to improve efficiency of management and increase public use benefits?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Comply with Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act of 2000.**
- **Comply with Section 203 and 206 of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).**
- **The need to facilitate access to public lands and resources.**
- **The need to maintain or enhance important resource values uses.**
- **Consider maintaining or enhancing local social and economic values.**
- **Improve management efficiency through the elimination of isolated tracts and consolidation of public lands.**

#### **Minerals and Energy Management/Development:**

The planning area has potential for the discovery of additional phosphate deposits, geothermal energy, oil and gas, hardrock, and locatable minerals. Mineral and energy development activities can impact visual quality, fish and wildlife habitat, forage availability, and soil stability. These impacts are eliminated or reduced through carefully developed, site-specific stipulations e.g., reclamation, containment of hazardous materials associated with mine spoils, control of development methods, and avoiding critical wildlife habitats.

How will mineral and energy development activities be managed to provide for products while protecting other natural resources?

**Planning Criteria**

- **Consider the need to make public lands available for the orderly and efficient development of energy and mineral resources.**
- **Identify areas that are managed specifically to protect resource values.**

**Special Designations:**

The planning area contains a number of Special Designations that serve to protect a variety of unique resource values e.g., Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's), Research Natural Areas/Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (RNA/ACEC's), Oregon and California National Historic Trails, and eligible river corridor segments under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

What areas are suitable or require special designations to protect unique resource values?

**Planning Criteria**

- **Comply with FLPMA, Sections 201, 202.**
- **Comply with Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review, BLM Handbook 8550-1.**
- **Rivers and streams will be analyzed for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in accordance with BLM Manual 8351 Wild and Scenic Rivers Policy.**
- **Comply with the Wilderness Inventory and Procedures Handbook (H-6310-1).**

**American Indian Concerns:**

Because of the proximity of the Shoshone-Bannock reservation to the planning area, there is a high probability of the existence of sacred sites, landscapes, traditional cultural use areas and other significant historical areas. While some of these are known, there are doubtless others that have not been identified for protection (only 20% of the planning area inventoried), This will require inventory, protection, and interpretation to meet Section 110 responsibilities.

How can sacred sites, landscapes, traditional cultural use areas and significant tribal historical areas be protected?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Manage to retain values that make cultural resources/areas significant to tribal members.**
- **Protect cultural use areas in cooperation with Tribal Government(s).**
- **Comply with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 and Amendments (post 1987) to the National Historic Preservation Act.**

### **Treaty Rights:**

Federally recognized tribes retain special legal rights to use public land. These rights may preclude or eliminate other recognized land uses. Cooperative management is the key to achieving management goals for both the Tribes and BLM.

How can treaty rights and Federal trust responsibilities best be met?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Recognize Fort Bridger Treaty rights with all associated management activities and uses.**

### **Social and Economic Sustainability (Local Communities):**

Leasing for mineral development on public lands is an important part of southeastern Idaho's economy. Mineral processing industries employ over 1500 people in the planning area. Livestock production on public lands also makes a considerable contribution to the health of local and rural economies. Population growth continues to increase and shift the demand on public lands for many uses e.g., recreation opportunities. This demand and shift in the kinds of uses of public lands may contribute to changes in the economies of the 7 counties and communities within the planning area.

How will public land uses affect the social and economic resiliency and sustainability of local economies?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **The need to promote social and economic diversification and resiliency in Southeastern Idaho.**
- **Recognize increasing demand for outdoor recreational opportunities.**
- **Recognize that local community economies are dependant on goods and services from public lands.**

### **Agriculture Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Wildlife Services (WS) Coordination:**

The BLM routinely cooperates with APHIS in the control of grasshoppers and crickets, and with Wildlife Services (WS) in the control of predators. Aphis and WS prepare Environmental Assessments (EA) for control activities, and these EAs are reviewed and approved by the BLM when the control activities occur on public lands within the planning unit.

What restrictions should be placed on planning area insect and predator control activities?

### **Planning Criteria**

- **Consultation and coordination with APHIS and WS on all proposed insect and predator control activities.**