UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN – STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name *(MFP)*	
Activity	Wildlife
Objective Number	6

OBJECTIVE:

Improve 283,000 acres of sage grouse brood rearing habitat in the Bennett Hills and Timmerman Hills Planning Units in order to provide adequate food, cover, and water for a prehunting season population of 20,000 sage grouse by 1990.

RATIONALE:

Sage grouse are the most significant upland game bird throughout the two planning units and provide the greatest number of recreational bird hunting hours in the unit. An economic study conducted in 1972 indicated that approximately $65,000 is generated during the opening weekend of sage grouse season in the Timmerman and Bennett Hills Planning Units. The PAA indicates there is a public concern for sage grouse habitat by the fact that they feel livestock are competing with sage grouse for the available succulent forage. If the sage grouse populations are to be enhanced, the Bureau will have to intensively manage one of the most important segments of the sage grouse requirements, brood rearing habitat.

B.H. - T.H.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)
Bennett Hills- Timmerman Hil

Activity
Wildlife

Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

SAGE GROUSE SUMMER (Sgsu)

RECOMMENDATION

WL - 6.1

Selectively reduce sagebrush throughout the broodrearing habitat, in order to improve the vegetative forb composition.

RATIONALE

The reduction of sagebrush would reduce the competition for moisture, nutrients, and space, thus providing improved growing conditions for succulent forbs. The forbs would produce additional forage for the expected increase in sage grouse population: It must be noted that the broodrearing habitat is identical to the nesting habitat and in most cases winter habitat. Since sagebrush is a must for nesting and winteri sage grouse any brush removal proposals should be closely coordinated with sage grouse requirements for all periods of the year.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation is complementary to watershed recommendation W-1.4 and recreation recommendations R-4.1, 2 & 3, and the range management recommendations dealing with brush removal. It conflicts with wildlife recommendations WL-2.2 and WL 7.1 which deal with maintaining the existing brush on critical deer winter range and sage grouse nesting and wintering areas. Since the broodrearing areas are some times synonomous with sage grouse nesting and wintering, as well as deer wintering, certain brush removal projects could cause adverse environmental impacts. Consequently, this recommendation will be modified to exclude critical deer winter ranges and identified sage grouse winter areas, and the recommendation concerning nesting areas will be modified to the extent that brush removal will be allowed so long as sufficient brush is maintained for present and future sage grouse nesting populations.

Multiple-Use Recommendation

Selectively reduce sagebrush throughout those portions of sage grouse broodrearing habitat that does not encompass either critical deer winter range or winter sage grouse habitat.

Reason

Refer to the above Multiple-Use Analysis and Rationale.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

B.H. - T.H.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION–ANALYSIS–DECISION

Name *(MFP)*
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hil
Activity
Wildlife
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

WL - 6.1 (Continued)

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION–ANALYSIS–DECISION

B.H. - T.H.
Name (MFP)
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hil
Activity
Wildlife
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

SAGE GROUSE SUMMER (SGsu)

RECOMMENDATION

WL - 6.2

Exclude livestock and other non-compatible use from spring and wet-meadow areas as identified on the wildlife overlay.

RATIONALE

Livestock presently congregate along the water source areas reducing the existing vegetation that is essential to provide adequate forage for sage grouse broods.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation is complementary to watershed recommendation W 4.2 but does conflict with range management recommendations dealing with the free movement of livestock. It is not felt that the conflict with range management is a major one. Small areas would not be available to domestic animals, but in no instance would water become unavailable. It is presently unknown what the vegetative responses on wet meadows will be to the implementation of rest-rotation grazing systems. Since grazing systems are proposed for the majority of the areas containing wet meadows it appears foolhardy to propose a fencing program when perhaps the meadows will respond to a grazing system.

Multiple-Use Recommendation

Selectively fence spring areas, and monitor the response of wet meadows to the implemented grazing systems. Following one cycle of the systems examine the meadows and determine if the wildlife values have improved. If no improvement is shown begin a program to selectively fence the wet meadows.

Reasons

The wildlife recommendation concerning wet meadows has been modified at this time in order to study the vegetative response of a wet meadow under an intensively managed grazing system.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

Reasons

Based on specific grazing system design and allotment location, trend or change may not become apparent until after more than one grazing cycle.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

B. H. - T.H.
Name (MFP)
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hil
Activity
Wildlife
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

SAGE GROUSE SUMMER (SGsu)

RECOMMENDATION	RATIONALE
WL - 6.3 Establish livestock grazing systems that will enhance the reproduction and forage availability of forbs.	Livestock grazing systems offer us one metho by which to improve sage grouse brood rearir habitat. However, the system in order to improve forbs must be based upon their physiological requirements.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation does not conflict with any other resource activity recommendation; however, it will place some constraints on the development and implementation of AMPs. Specific forbs, valuable to grouse, will need to be identified and their physiological requirements taken into consideration when developing the AMP.

Multiple-Use Recommendations	Reason
Accept the recommendation as stated above.	Refer to the above Multiple-Use Analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

B.H. - T.H.

UNITED STATES
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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN – STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)	Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hill
Activity	Wildlife
Objective Number	7

OBJECTIVE:

Manage the existing sagebrush on 283,000 acres of nesting habitat and 38,000 acres of winter habitat in order to provide the necessary nesting cover and winter forage and cover for a prehunting season population of 20,000 sage grouse in the two planning units.

RATIONALE:

In addition to the rationale presented in objective 6, sage grouse are almost solely dependent upon sagebrush for nesting cover and winter forage. Recent Idaho research has shown that 90 percent of the nesting hens nest within a two-mile radius of their breeding grounds. Guidelines for Habitat Protection in Sage Grouse Range states "the breeding complex (strutting grounds and nesting areas) will be considered as all lands within a two-mile radius of occupied strutting grounds. Vegetatal control will not be undertaken within two miles of strutting grounds or on nesting and other special use areas". (e.g. wintering areas.)

UNITED STATES
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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

B.H. - T.H.
Name (MFP)
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hil
Activity
Wildlife
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

SAGE GROUSE WINTER (n)

RECOMMENDATION

WL 7-1

Maintain the existing sagebrush within a 2-mile radius of sage grouse strutting grounds and on all identified sage grouse wintering areas.

RATIONALE

Sage grouse are almost solely depending upo sagebrush for nesting, and recent Idaho research has shown that 90 percent of the nesting hens nest within two miles of the grounds. In addition, sagebrush makes up between 95 to 100 percent of the grouse's winter diet. Therefore, in order to provide adequate nesting habitat and winter forage for the expected increase in grouse numbers sufficient brush must be retained on the nesting and wintering areas.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation conflicts with the wildlife recommendations WL-1.2, 3.2, 6.1, watershed recommendation W-1.4, and the range management recommendations dealing with the removal of sagebrush. In areas where critical deer winter range overlaps with sage grouse nesting and winter habitat, the above recommendation is complementary to wildlife recommendation WL-2.2.

The unrestrained removal of sagebrush adjacent to sage grouse strutting grounds could and would have a catastrophic impact on sage grouse populations. However, in instanc where brush is not limiting, a well designed and implemented sagebrush control project would not adversely impact nesting grouse, and in fact could prove beneficial in those areas where broodrearing and nesting habitat overlap. Sage grouse are solely dependent upon sagebrush during the winter months and it appears that any brush control on such concentrated wintering areas would adversely impact grouse.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Selectively control sagebrush within a 2-mile radius of strutting grounds in a manner that will not adversely impact present and future nesting sage grouse populations. No brush control projects will be proposed on sage grouse wintering areas.

Reasons

The recommendation was modified because it was felt that selective control would not adversely impact nesting grouse and would be beneficial for other resource activities

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

B.H. - T. H.

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION–ANALYSIS–DECISION

Name *(MFP)*
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hil
Activity
Wildlife
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 2 Step 3

WL 7-1 (Continued)

Decision

Adopt Step 2 multiple use recommendation with the following modification:

Selective brush control may be under taken on sage grouse wintering areas only after careful consideration that remaining sagebrush habitat will be adequate for projected sage grouse populations.

Reason

(See Appendix I and II of the Range Management section).

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)