

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - STEP 1
ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Name (MFP)

Activity
Wildlife

Objective Number
3

OBJECTIVE:

Manage the existing 77,000 acres of summer habitat and 26,000 acres of winter habitat in the Bennett Hills Planning Unit in order to provide adequate food and cover for 400 elk by 1990.

RATIONALE:

The PAA has identified the resident elk herds in the Bennett Hills Planning Unit as having moderate significance to local interests and these individuals feel that the transplant that took place in 1965 has been good for the area. By improving the elk habitat there would be a resultant effect of increasing numbers, thus enhancing the recreational hunting opportunities in the unit. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game elk policy plans for units 45 and 52 recognize a potential to increase the population by 160 and 150 percent respectively.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

B.H.

Name (MFP)	Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hill
Activity	Wildlife
Overlay Reference	Step 1 NO. 1 Step 3

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

WL 3.1

Intensively manage livestock grazing throughout elk summer and winter habitat in order to ensure that no more than 60 percent of the herbaceous vegetation and 40 percent of the current annual growth of shrubs are utilized by livestock on the summer and winter ranges respectively.

Food habit studies indicate that cattle and elk forage preference are very similar. Consequently, to provide additional forage for the expected increase in elk numbers, grazing management will need to be intensified in order to provide additional forage.

Multiple-Use Analysis

The recommendation is complementary to watershed recommendation W-1.3 and recreation recommendations R-4.1, 2 and 3. It could produce a minor conflict with the range management recommendation that deals with maximizing the grazing program. However, since the foraging habitat of both elk and cattle is similar the improvement practices and grazing systems used to enhance the vegetative resource for livestock should also prove beneficial for elk. It appears that the over-all public values, not only for wildlife but also watershed and recreation, will be enhanced by maintaining a residual cover of both herbaceous and browse vegetation throughout all pastures.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Accept the recommendation as stated above.

Refer to the above Multiple-Use Analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Reasons

Modify the Step 2 multiple use recommendation as follows:

To allow more flexibility in development of specific grazing systems and AMPs commensurate with related on-site needs.

Maximum allowable utilization by livestock in any pasture will be determined in the formulation of the AMP. The degree of utilization in any use pasture will not exceed the identified needs of wildlife (food and cover) and watershed protection.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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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. 1 Step 3

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

WL 3.2

Reduce the sagebrush cover by 40 to 60 percent on elk summer ranges where the canopy cover exceeds 25 percent.

RATIONALE

To meet the expected increase in elk number additional forage is required. The reduction in sagebrush and corresponding increases in herbaceous vegetation would help meet this increase.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation complements watershed recommendation W-1.4, recreation recommendations R-4.1, 2 and 3, and those range management recommendations dealing with brush removal. Although it is somewhat more restricted than the range management recommendations it is not considered as conflicting with them. Refer to the Multiple-Use Analysis in wildlife recommendations WL - 2.2 for additional detail concerning this recommendation's conflict with WL - 7.1.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Accept the recommendations as stated above.

Reasons

Refer to the above Multiple-Use Analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

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RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

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

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

WL 3.3

Establish studies to determine if inter-specific competition between deer and elk exists on the elk winter ranges.

As the deer and elk populations increase, it is possible that competition for forage will occur. This study will be necessary in order to make logical recommendations on how to eliminate such competition.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation does not conflict with other resource activity recommendations, nor will it present any adverse economic or social impacts.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Accept the recommendation as stated above.

Refer to the above Multiple-Use Analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

B.H.

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

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

WL 3.4

Determine the habitat requirements necessary for elk calving areas.

RATIONALE

No information is presently available that adequately describes elk calving areas in the sagebrush-bunchgrass environment. A radio telemetry study is now underway which should give us this information. If sagebrush is a requirement for calving it could have an impact on the recommendation concerning the reduction of sagebrush.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation does not conflict with other resource activity recommendations, nor does it present any adverse economic or social impacts.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Accept the recommendation as stated above.

Reasons

Refer to the above Multiple-Use analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

B.H.

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

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

WL 3.4

Determine the habitat requirements necessary for elk calving areas.

RATIONALE

No information is presently available that adequately describes elk calving areas in the sagebrush-bunchgrass environment. A radio telemetry study is now underway which should give us this information. If sagebrush is a requirement for calving it could have an impact on the recommendation concerning the reduction of sagebrush.

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation does not conflict with other resource activity recommendations, nor does it present any adverse economic or social impacts.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Accept the recommendation as stated above.

Reasons

Refer to the above Multiple-Use analysis and Rationale.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

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

ELK RANGE (e)

RECOMMENDATION

WL 3.5

Close the elk winter ranges to off-road vehicles between December 15 and March 31.

RATIONALE

Elk are under significant stress due to the winter conditions and low quality forage, and additional stress created by human disturbance could adversely impact the animals

Multiple-Use Analysis

This recommendation conflicts with recreation recommendation R-8.2 which recommends that the entire unit remain open to ORVs. However, this is not felt to constitute a major conflict since the critical elk winter range is restricted to only a small area which does not provide good snowmobile riding. Consequently, the recreation recommendation will be modified to exclude ORVs use on the elk winter range between December 15 and March 31.

Multiple-Use Recommendation

Accept the recommendation as stated above.

Reasons

The ORV closure will not significantly affect ORV uses but will provide an added measure of seclusion to winter elk.

Decision

Adopt the Step 2 multiple use recommendation.