

3. Disposal of such parcel will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development which cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land and which outweigh other public objectives and values. These include, but are not limited to, wildlife, grazing, recreation, cultural, paleontologic, and scenic values which would be served by maintaining such parcel in Federal ownership.

Sales may be made through (1) competitive bidding, (2) modified competitive bidding wherein some individual(s) may be given the opportunity to match the high bid, and (3) direct sale wherein the tract is sold at fair market value to a predetermined buyer. All sales must be made at no less than fair market value as determined by the approved procedure (a BLM appraisal).

Land Use Authorizations

Land use permits under Section 302 of FLPMA may be used after trespass settlement as an interim management measure for resolving unauthorized use problems prior to a final land use/status determination, and for one time uses of short duration. Leases may be used as a longer term (5 to 10 years) interim management tool, particularly where future disposal or dedication to another particular land use is contemplated. The latter may allow for agricultural use on a site that may be needed in the future for communication purposes, materials source, or community expansion.

Land use permits (LUPs) for irrigated agricultural use of public land will be used sparingly and be restricted to resolve situations where other alternatives prove to be impractical, such as: 1) small areas of public land isolated between a farmed field and a canal, ditch, or road; and 2) renewal for an existing circular pivot already authorized by a LUP until the land is removed from agricultural production and rehabilitated or until the land is transferred from public ownership. In cases where a pivot must cross public land, the lands are to remain unfarmed and a LUP will be issued only for the crossing pivot.

Rights-of-way, under Title V of FLPMA, will be considered in the Cascade Resource Area except where specifically identified in the RMP for avoidance. Future locations for ROWs will be encouraged within or adjacent to existing ROWs as much as possible. New sites will be considered if there is a demonstrated need and the resource conflicts are low or can be mitigated.

Cooperative agreements are to be used with other Federal entities for uses which are not appropriately covered by a right-of-way or a withdrawal. Flood control and aquifer recharge areas may be most appropriately covered by cooperative agreements.

Airport leases are considered only when a definite need has been shown, supported by a specific development and management plan, and a showing of financial capability to carry out the project.

Proposed Resource Management Plan

Each action would require a site-specific examination. An environmental assessment would be prepared on the proposal with special emphasis placed upon identification and mitigation of adverse effects upon resource values such as rare, endangered, threatened, or sensitive species, cultural or paleontologic resources, wetland/riparian zones, and flood plains.

Access

The Boise District will continue its ongoing program of identifying and obtaining BLM access across non-bureau lands where needed to accomplish bureau objectives.

Unauthorized Use

It is BLM policy to identify, abate, and prevent unauthorized use of public lands. Trespass settlement is geared to recover at least fair market value for the unauthorized use and to require rehabilitation of the land and resource damaged by the unauthorized action. Settlements may be made through administrative action or through civil or criminal court proceedings.

Soil erosion which occurs on public lands as a result of excess irrigation flows from private agricultural lands will be treated as a trespass in order to stop the erosion and to rehabilitate the damage to public land.

Soil, Water, and Air

Soils

Soils will be managed to maintain productivity and to minimize erosion.

Project level planning will consider the sensitivity of soil, water, and air resources in the affected area on a site specific basis. Stipulations will ensure project compatibility with soil, water, and air resource management. All construction of management facilities and land treatments will be designed to minimize adverse impacts to the soil, water, and air resources. Areas disturbed during project construction will be reseeded with a mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs when necessary.

Air

Under the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977), BLM-administered lands were given Class II air quality classification, which allows moderate deterioration associated with moderate, well-controlled industrial and population growth. BLM will manage all public lands as Class II unless they are reclassified by the State as a result of the procedures prescribed in the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977). Administrative actions on the public lands will comply with the air quality classifications for that specific area.

Water

A variety of methods may be employed to maintain, improve, protect, and restore watershed conditions. Priority will be given to meeting emergency watershed needs due to flooding, severe drought, or fire.

Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with State and Federal standards. State agencies will be consulted on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality.

Facilities and structures designed to maintain or improve existing water sources, provide new water sources, control water level or flow characteristics, or maintain or improve water quality may be developed. BLM will work closely with the Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other local, state, and federal agencies to determine appropriate location and designs for such projects.

Management actions within floodplains and wetlands will include measures to preserve, protect, or restore their natural functions of water storage, groundwater recharge, fish and wildlife values, and water quality.

Water rights are administered by the Idaho Department of Water Resources. The Bureau complies with all State of Idaho water laws.

Mitigation measures implemented because of Resource Management Guidelines or site specific analysis will be monitored for their effectiveness.

Range Resources

Allotment Categorization

All grazing allotments in the resource area have been assigned to one of three management categories based on present resource conditions and the potential for improvement (Appendix E). The "M" allotments generally will be managed to maintain resource conditions (improvements may be done); "I" allotments generally will be managed to improve resource conditions; and "C" allotments will receive custodial management to prevent resource deterioration (improvements generally will not be made).

Allotment-Specific Objectives for the Improvement Category

Multiple-use management objectives will be developed by multiple use area. Future management actions, including approval of allotment management plans, will be tailored to meet these objectives.

Rangeland Management

Grazing Preference - Within each grazing allotment a grazing preference will be established at a level that will ensure that adequate forage is also available for wildlife and where present, wild horses. Sufficient vegetation is reserved for purposes of maintaining plant vigor, stabilizing soil, providing cover for wildlife, and other nonconsumptive uses.

Proposed Resource Management Plan

Grazing decisions or agreements will be made for those allotments where adequate information exists. In the other allotments where there is inadequate information, additional data will be collected to provide an adequate basis to begin implementation of any additional decisions needed. An initial stocking rate will also be established, which may be adjusted upwards or downwards in the final decision as a result of monitoring. All grazing decisions will be issued in accordance with applicable BLM regulations.

Implementing Changes in Allotment Management

Activity plans, Allotment Management Plans or Coordinated Resource Management Plans (AMPs or CRMPs) are commonly used to present, in detail, the types of changes required in an allotment, and to establish a schedule for implementation. Actions set forth under the plan that affect the environment will be analyzed and compared to alternative actions. During the analysis, the proposal may be altered to mitigate adverse impacts. The following sections contain discussions of the types of changes likely to be recommended in an activity plan and the guidance that applies to these administrative actions.

Existing AMPs will be reviewed in one year to determine if they need updating or revision. Those AMPs determined to be satisfactory as written will continue to be implemented and managed as written and reviewed again in 5 years. Those AMPs needing updating (minor changes) will be updated within 1 year of review. Those AMPs requiring revision will have new AMPs prepared within 3 years of review.

Livestock Use Adjustments

Livestock use adjustments are most often made by changing one or more of the following: the kind or class of livestock grazing an allotment, the season of use, the stocking rate, or the pattern of grazing.

Forage use levels made from best estimates of forage available now and in 20 years (Appendix E and F) are guidelines to be used for the development of AMPs and CRMPs, and for monitoring prioritization. Adjustments, up or down, from these estimates may be made as a result of monitoring.

Initial stocking rates will be based on the five year average for each allotment. Those allotments with significant areas of poor condition range directly attributable to grazing will receive priority for monitoring programs. If sufficient data is available to determine that grazing levels are too high, adjustments will be made during the third and fifth years of a five year monitoring program. Allotments currently under an allotment management plan or a coordinated resource management plan will be stocked at the five year average and monitored to insure that stocking levels are consistent with other resource capabilities and needs. In those allotments where substantial nonuse has occurred in the past, and the five year average is lower than the preference, the indicated stocking level will be based on the 5-year average plus any forage increases through improvements in range condition and/or seedings.

Range Improvements and Treatments

A variety of range improvements, grazing systems, and other range management practices may be considered in conjunction with livestock management on individual allotments. Such practices will be based on the range management category (maintain, improve, custodial) in which the allotment has been placed and will be formulated in consultation, coordination, and cooperation with livestock operators, and other interested parties.

The extent, location, and timing of improvements will be based on the allotment specific management objectives adopted through the resource management planning process, interdisciplinary development and review of proposed actions, operator contributions, and BLM funding capability.

Range improvement proposals are shown by allotment rather than specific location. Further site specific impact assessment will be necessary in many of the range developments when actual project layout and design has occurred. Cattleguards will be considered a part of the fence and will be installed as deemed necessary. Existing range improvements will be maintained in a current working condition as long as they are deemed necessary to management in all allotments. Existing fences in big game habitat and not meeting current design standards, will be modified to allow big game passage.

Interseeding and reseeding projects with objectives to improve range condition to benefit wildlife or wildlife and livestock will use shrub, forb and grass seed mixtures that are normally found in that ecological zone.

All allotments in which range improvement funds are to be spent will be subjected to an economic analysis. The analysis will be used to develop a final priority ranking of allotments for the commitment of the range improvement funds that are needed to implement activity plans. The highest priority for implementation generally will be assigned to those improvements for which the total anticipated benefits exceed costs.

Grazing Systems

There are existing grazing systems on seven AMPs. Additional grazing systems will be implemented. The type of system to be implemented will be based on consideration of the following factors:

- allotment-specific management objectives;
- resource characteristics including vegetation potential and water availability;
- operator needs; and
- implementation costs.
- resource values including wildlife, riparian and aquatic habitat, soils, etc.

Grazing systems available for consideration include rest rotation, deferred grazing, deferred rotation, and alternate grazing.

Proposed Resource Management Plan

Wild Horses

A viable, healthy population of wild horses will be maintained in accordance with federal law. Where levels are to be adjusted, sufficient forage will be provided by adjusting livestock AUMs. Animals being collected for adoption or removed by other appropriate means will receive care and attention. Adopted animals will be monitored in accordance with BLM policy until title for the animal is issued.

Threatened, Endangered, Candidate and Sensitive Plants

There are three sensitive and three candidate (for threatened or endangered listing status) plants in the CRA currently listed. Projects proposed in areas with known sensitive plants will include mitigating measures to protect the plants. If necessary, adjustments to grazing (numbers, rotations, season-of-use or other management techniques) will be used to protect plants.

Wildlife Resources

Priority for habitat improvement or maintenance will be given to Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted with on any action that may affect a federally listed, proposed or candidate species. Proposed actions which may adversely affect sensitive species will be modified to avoid adverse impacts or will provide mitigation for unavoidable adverse impacts.

Habitat to support viable populations of all native and desirable exotic wildlife species present in the resource area will be maintained.

The BLM is responsible for managing wildlife habitat on public lands. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) is responsible for managing wildlife populations. Consequently, the BLM will continue to coordinate its activities and actions with the IDFG. The IDFG will be given the opportunity to review and comment on any proposed land disposal or vegetation manipulation (logging, prescribed burn, spray, plow, chain, etc.) at least one full year in advance of the planned action. Habitat Management Plans (HMP's) and cooperative agreements with the IDFG as authorized by the Sikes Act will be the primary vehicles to implement major fish and wildlife management programs on public lands.

ORV recreation activity may be limited in crucial wildlife habitat. Closures to ORV activity will be implemented if the BLM or the Idaho Department of Fish and Game determines harassment to wildlife is occurring.

In crucial wildlife habitats (winter ranges, raptor nest sites, strutting grounds, fawning habitat, etc.), major construction and maintenance work will be scheduled to avoid or minimize disturbance to wildlife. The area and time stipulations are shown in Table 1. Occupancy for oil and gas activities will also be restricted in crucial wildlife habitats as shown in Table 1.