

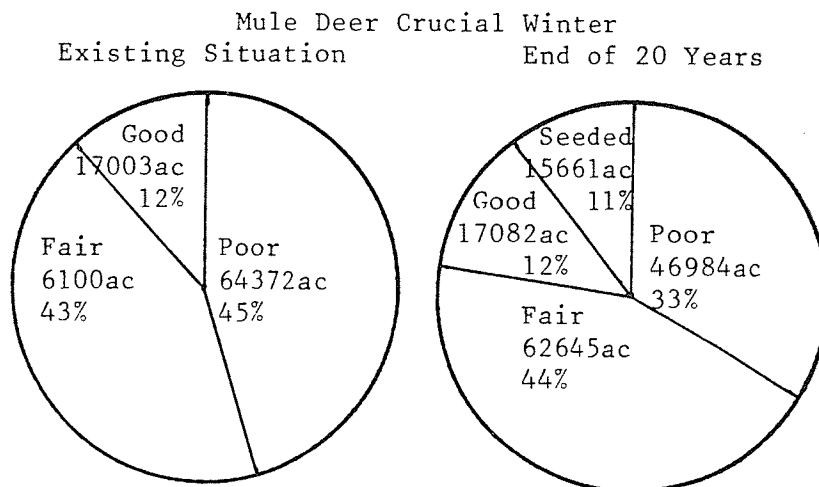
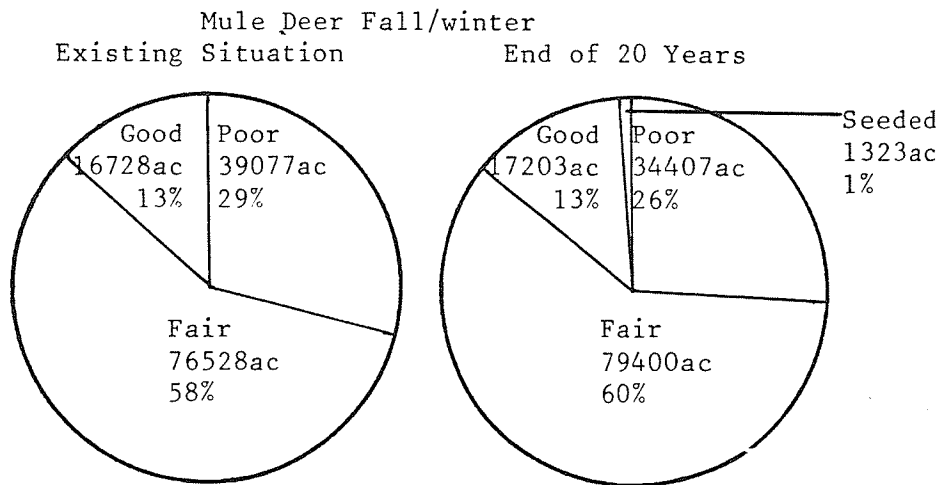
should be minimized by following Resource Management Guidelines. Negative impacts on local populations could occur by decreasing the available crucial habitat. The roads would open more areas and increase hunting pressure on local populations.

The proposed transfer through sale or exchange of 6,690 acres in crucial winter ranges would have negative impacts on local populations. This would decrease the available habitat over the resource area by 5%.

The 12,000 acre Boise Front ACEC would be managed as crucial mule deer winter range. Habitat improvement projects would help increase the carrying capacity of this crucial habitat.

Overall, due to fences, water developments, and pipelines for the livestock program, increased use of grazing systems, improved livestock management and increased carrying capacity of the ranges due to seedings, the habitat is predicted to be able to support at 25% increase over current populations. This would not meet the goals set for the habitat by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

The acreages and percentages of existing and 20-year projected habitat conditions are shown below.



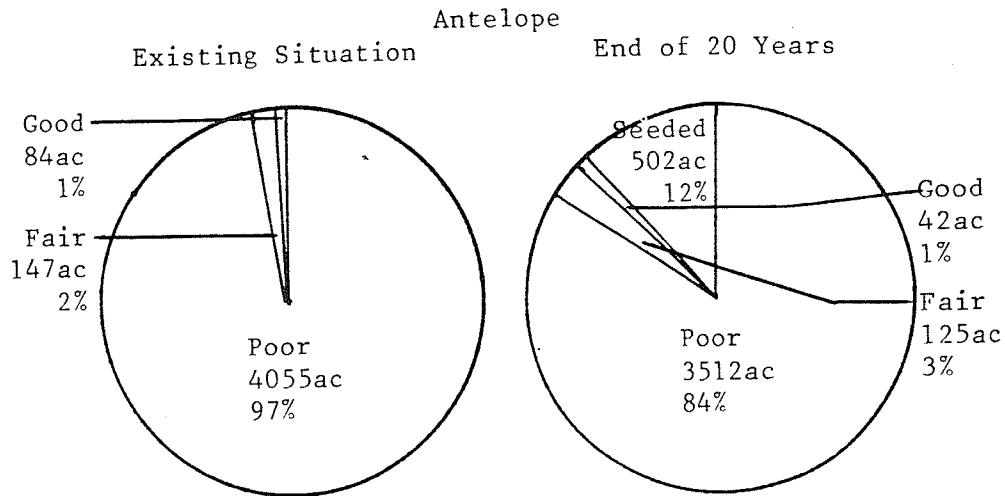
Environmental Consequences

Antelope

Crucial antelope winter ranges (4,400 acres) would not show any improvement in this alternative. Approximately 10% of this crucial habitat is proposed for sale or exchange. Negative impacts could occur due to this loss of habitat. Approximately 13% of the range would be seeded, which would improve the forage base of the local range. The remaining range would not be seeded due to reinfestation of medusahead wildrye. Seedings will emphasize shrub species to improve winter forage for the population.

Current population of the resource area is 50 animals. After improvements and livestock management including fences, water developments and pipelines, the habitat should support a population of 100 animals. This would not meet population goals set for the area by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

The acreages and percentages of existing and 20-year projected habitat conditions are shown below.



Sage Grouse

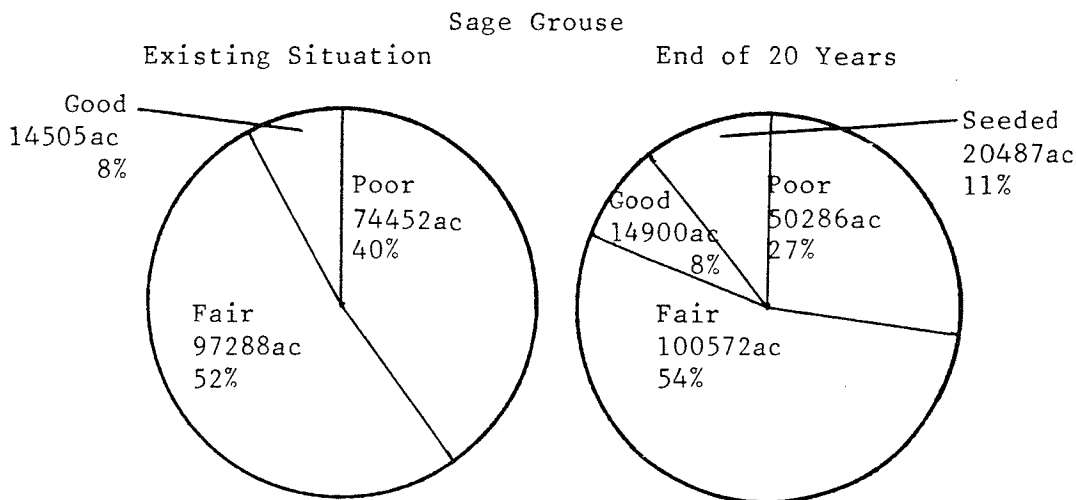
The habitat under this alternative is predicted to improve slightly. This would be due to livestock management and the initiation of grazing systems.

There are approximately 27,000 acres of range and wildlife seedings proposed. These seedings which would constitute 15% of the sage grouse habitat would improve nesting and brood-rearing habitat. Approximately 9,000 acres are in the crucial zone or 2 miles from a strutting ground. Disturbance of the area may have negative impacts to the breeding area.

There are 3,900 acres that are proposed to be offered for sale or exchange. Negative impacts could occur if these lands are within the 2 mile crucial zone of a strutting ground.

Seedings which do not include sagebrush would have little value to sage grouse. It would, however, relieve the pressure on local native ranges important to sage grouse.

The acreages and percentages of existing and 20-year projected habitat conditions are shown below.



Sensitive Animal Species

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse

Under this alternative, the habitat would show a slight improvement. This would be due to improvement in the range condition due to livestock management. These improvements would occur in the northern portions of the habitat in the higher precipitation zone.

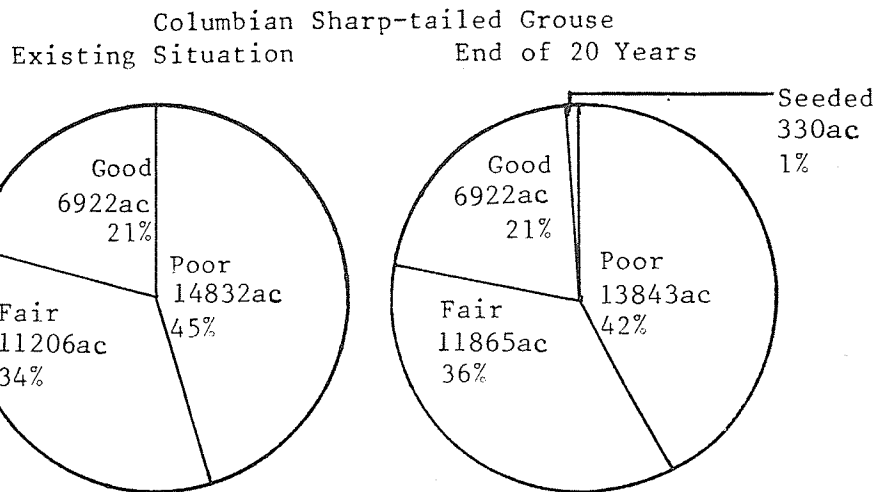
Approximately 330 acres of seedings are proposed for this habitat. Native seed mixtures would improve the nesting and brood-rearing cover of the area.

The proposed land transfer of 960 acres could have negative impacts if a local population is using the area or a dancing ground is located nearby.

Approximately 4,200 acres in the Sage Creek allotment would be designated and managed as an ACEC. The Sage Creek allotment would be inventoried for vegetative production and livestock use adjustments would be pursued and monitored to benefit sharp-tailed grouse. Livestock use adjustments would improve sharp-tailed grouse habitat and should stimulate population growth.

The acreages and percentages of existing and 20-year projected habitat conditions are shown below.

Environmental Consequences



Long-billed Curlew

The proposed seedings for both range and wildlife would have negative impacts on all curlew habitat. Most species of grasses grow too high for the area to be used as nesting habitat.

Approximately 3,750 acres of curlew habitat is proposed for sale or exchange. These areas would have to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis format to assess impacts to the habitat.

The 61,000 acre Black Canyon Curlew Area would be designated and managed as an ACEC. The proposed management of the area would protect the habitat for nesting curlews.

Birds of Prey

This alternative would generally improve habitat conditions for raptors in the Birds of Prey area through ORV restrictions.

Livestock

Under this alternative livestock forage levels would decrease by 6,216 AUMs due to land transfers. In the short term (5 years) with 6,000 acres seeded producing approximately 2,000 AUMs of forage, the resulting available livestock forage (with above mentioned losses) would be 61,872 AUMs. This would be a 7% decrease from the present five year average license use of 66,424 AUMs.

Over the long term (20 years) additional seedings of 17,000 acres would produce 5,700 AUMs. New water developments, fencing and increased livestock management on approximately 55,000 acres of native range would increase forage production an additional 2,869 AUMs.

Total forage production would reach 71,076 AUMs. This would be a 7% increase from the present five year average license use.

The largest single impact to the livestock program would be from land transfer out of federal ownership. In this alternative 38,548 allotted acres would be transferred by sale, exchange or desert land entry.

Special designation, historic and cultural areas of 915 acres would remove an additional 162 AUMs from current, available forage.

In both the short and long term analysis of range improvements and land treatment, AUMs lost to transfers and other special designation areas were considered removed prior to addition of new forage generated.

Impacts are allotment specific and resulting AUM levels are shown in Appendix F.

Trend information is not available at present. Monitoring studies will be used to adjust stocking levels on allotments. Data presented in Appendix E will be used as baseline information in prioritizing management and monitoring efforts to improve range condition where needed.

Annual grass ranges (medusahead/cheatgrass) would receive high priority land treatment efforts to restore perennial grasses.

Stock driveways would be eliminated on 22,237 acres, continued on 40,763 acres and added on 627 acres for a total of 41,390 acres available.

Wild Horses

Under this alternative the West Crane wild horse herd would be removed.

The Four-Mile wild horse herd would be maintained at 10-25 head. Livestock voluntary non-use of 424 AUMs for maintenance of range condition which has occurred since 1977 would continue.

LANDS AND REALTY RESOURCES

Lands

Land transfer would consist of 563 acres for sale, 33,409 acres for sale or exchange, 5,957 acres for exchange, and 560 acres for Desert Land Entry for a total of 40,489 acres.

Of the lands identified for sale, 80 acres would be a sanitary landfill for Ada County, 320 acres for a sanitary landfill site for Canyon County, and 160 acres already under R&PP lease to the Parma Rod and Gun Club would be patented. The remaining three acres are scattered occupancy and agricultural trespass parcels that have been surveyed and lotted. Transfer of land by sale would generate approximately \$38,000 based on current appraisal for the 80 acres to be sold to Ada County, estimates of the value for the 320 acre parcel to Canyon County, the small parcels that total 3 acres, and the 160 acres for the Parma Rod and Gun Club.

Environmental Consequences

The lands proposed for transfer by sale or exchange are generally small isolated parcels that appear to meet the disposal criteria in Section 203(a)(1) of FLPMA. Their disposal would reduce problem management areas and/or consolidate land ownership patterns, thereby improving management and reducing management costs. The larger parcels would be examined for exchange possibilities before sale is considered, although any parcel would be available for exchange.

There are three exchange proposals pending in the resource area being considered by this plan. They are referred to as the Brownlee, Little and Henggeler exchanges. The Brownlee exchange is a State proposal to acquire 6,251 acres of public land for 6,171 acres of State land, however, it is proposed to retain 497 acres of the selected public land for timber production. This would result in a corresponding decrease in the number of acres to be acquired from the State. The exchange would consolidate State and public lands and would improve management efficiency for both governments.

The Little exchange is a private proposal to acquire 120 acres of public land for 160 acres of private land. The offered private land is identified for acquisition in the Boise Front MFP to facilitate watershed and grazing management. Action on this proposal has been initiated and will continue through development of this RMP.

The Henggeler proposal is to exchange 14 acres of private land for 83 acres of public land. The acquisition of the private land would provide access to the Snake River in an area with virtually no public access and would place the remainder of Crow Island in public ownership.

Land transfer for agricultural use (Desert Land Entry) would result in a few additional trespass cases, but because of the limited number of acres to be transferred under this category, it would not be a significant increase. The average administrative cost for a trespass case is \$1,250, resulting in increased costs of approximately \$5,000 on an estimated four trespass cases.

Rights-of-Ways

Overhead, surface and/or subsurface rights-of-way would be restricted on 6,886 acres of public land due to conflicts with candidate or sensitive plants, significant cultural or recreation sites, and on the portion of the Payette River recommended for Wild and Scenic River study - 8 miles of the South Fork Payette River. The areas precluded or restricted are generally small acreages and there would be few conflicts with major utility rights-of-way since rights-of-way could be rerouted slightly to avoid these areas. Hydroelectric development would be precluded on 8 miles of the South Fork Payette River.

Withdrawals

Of the lands presently withdrawn for livestock driveways (approximately 63,000 acres), 22,237 acres would be revoked from the withdrawals, 40,763 acres would continue, and 627 acres would be added.

There is only one C&MU classification in the resource area encompassing 37.31 acres. This parcel was acquired under a Section 8 (Taylor Grazing Act) exchange. When the order opening the lands to the administration of the public land laws was published, a C&MU classification was placed on it at the same time, precluding disposal. This parcel contains no unique resources and revoking the classification would put it in the same status of general retention as the other public lands adjacent to it.

Additional withdrawals may be forthcoming if Congress designates the Payette River as a Wild and Scenic River. The final acreage withdrawn may be more or less than that proposed in this plan.

CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGIC RESOURCES

Cultural Resources

Cultural resource sites in critical need of special management (Grey's Creek, Indian Creek, Mill Creek, Cabin Creek, Mineral, Quartzburg, Centerville and Placerville) would continue to be protected by BLM standard operating procedures and would receive additional protection through nomination and acceptance to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The effects of livestock trampling would be mitigated through the installation of protective fencing and the effects of erosion would be diminished by the removal of livestock from the immediate site area, and the improvement of riparian habitat.

Cultural Resource Management Plans (CRMP) prepared for these sites will detail additional inventory needs and monitoring schedules to determine the rate of deterioration, impacts of vandalism, etc.

Paleontologic Resources

The impacts from this alternative can not be fully analyzed since the paleontologic inventory for the resource area is not complete. The greatest possible impacts would be on the 41,415 acres proposed for transfer from federal ownership. Even with paleontologic clearances, unknown scientifically significant fossils could be lost or destroyed or closed off from scientific study.

RECREATION RESOURCES

Recreation

There would be 339,552 acres open to ORV use, 147,329 acres limited and 585 acres closed.

Impacts from managing the Boise Front as an ACEC would be the same as those discussed under Alternative A for the Boise Front SRMA.

An additional designation of 22,700 acres would seasonally limit ORV use to existing roads and trails in the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse habitat area and on 640 acres in the Birds of Prey Natural Area. The impacts of this restriction would not be significant due to the current and projected low use in this area.