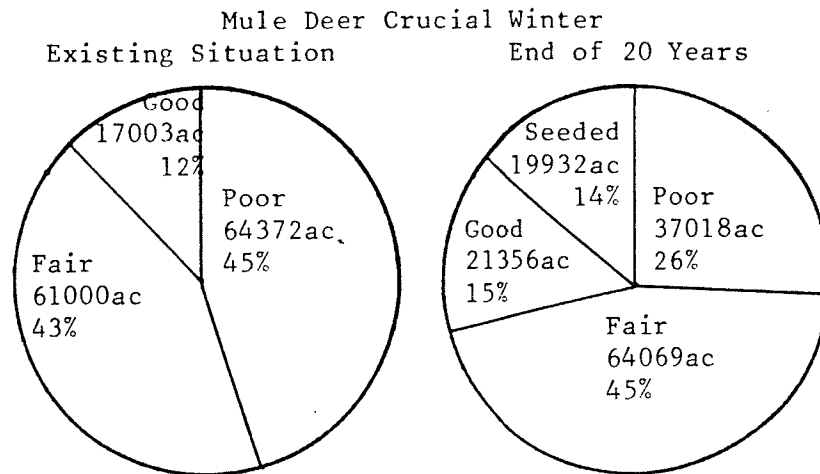
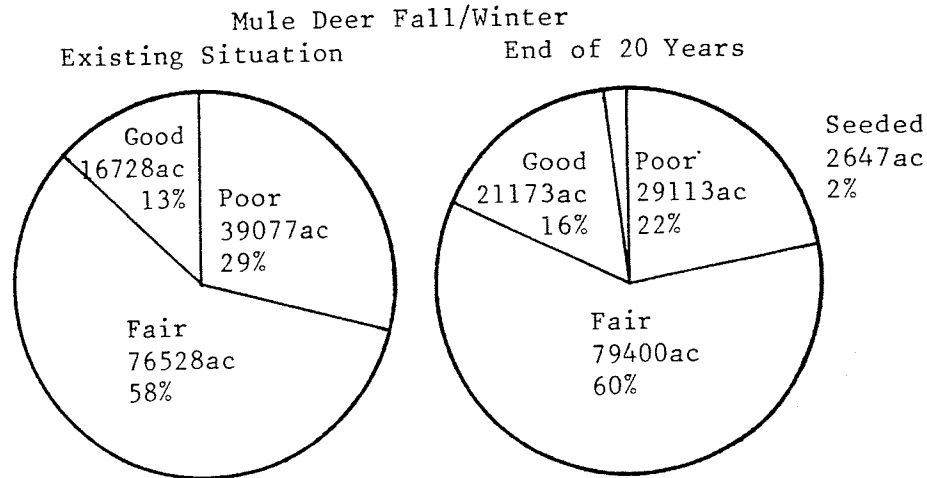


Environmental Consequences



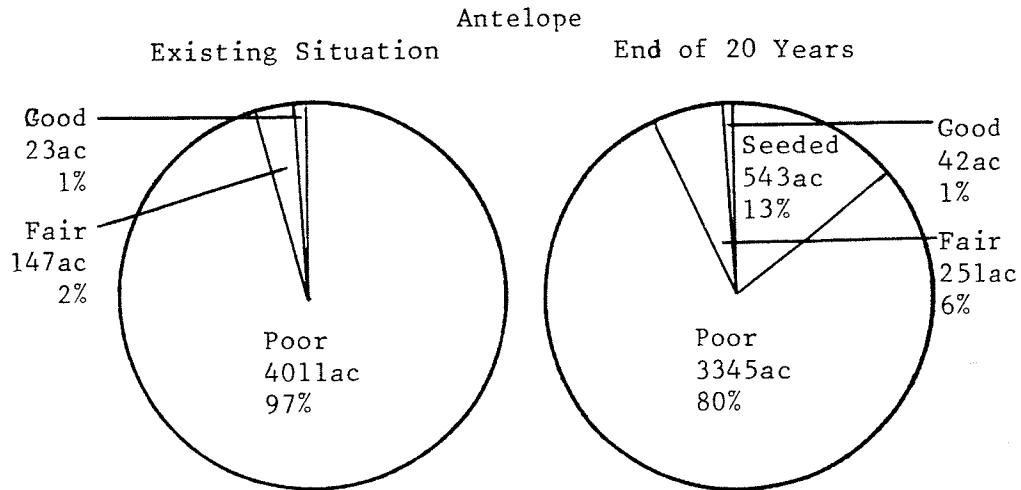
Antelope

Crucial antelope winter ranges will show a slight improvement over current conditions. Approximately 12% of the range would be seeded to improve the carrying capacity of the habitat.

The 19% decrease in livestock AUMs, fences, water developments and pipelines for livestock, and improved livestock management and wildlife seedings would provide sufficient forage to support 200 animals. Seedings will emphasize the shrub component of the habitat.

This would exceed 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.

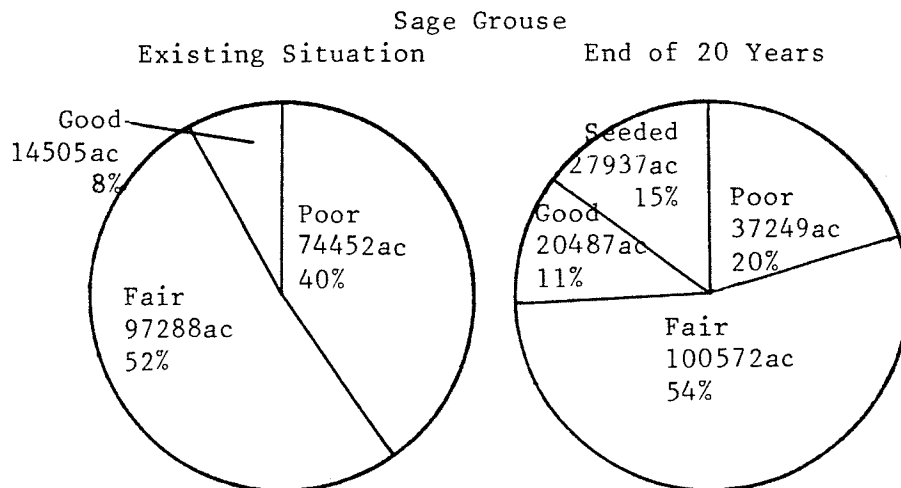


Sage Grouse

Overall, sage grouse habitat would show an improvement under this alternative. The 19,616 acres of range and wildlife seedings and the 19% reduction in available AUMs would improve the density of vegetation needed for nesting and brood-rearing habitat.

Seedings which do not include sagebrush would not increase the forage factor for sage grouse. It would, however, relieve the pressure on local native ranges.

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



Environmental Consequences

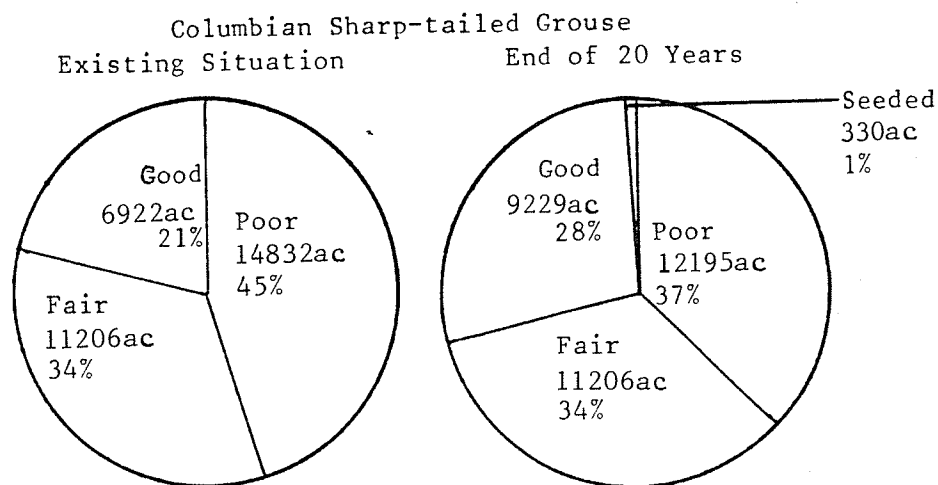
Sensitive Animal Species

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse

Sharp-tailed grouse habitat would show a 7% improvement over current condition class. This would be due to the decrease in livestock AUMs and improved livestock management. The 330 acres of proposed seedings would also help improve nesting and brood-rearing cover.

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 habitat and should stimulate population growth.

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



Long-billed Curlew

The 61,000 acre Black Canyon Curlew Area would be designated and managed as an area of environmental concern (ACEC). The proposed management would protect the habitat to maintain the current population of 1,000 nesting pairs.

Range and wildlife seeding proposed under this alternative in the remaining areas would have negative impacts on nesting curlews. Most species of grasses are too tall to be used as nesting habitat.

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 short and long term (5-year and 20-year) livestock forage levels would be reduced 27% for wildlife, watershed, and range condition improvement. This reduction would be a decrease of approximately 18,000 AUMs. With this planned reduction those native ranges that contain perennial/annual grass mixtures would show improvement, especially in density and vigor of perennials. Native shrubs would increase in size and occurrence.

Ranges containing predominantly annual grasses (medusahead/cheatgrass) may experience an increase in perennial grasses. In many areas however, the medusa "problem" would remain a problem.

Reducing the amount of forage utilized by livestock in the fall on many allotments (spring/fall ranges) would result in increased available forage for wintering deer and elk. Priority would be given to allotments in which major mule deer and elk winter ranges occur.

A loss of 9,200 acres of forest lands to exchange would further reduce livestock forage 277 AUMs.

Special designation/historic and cultural withdrawals of 1,015 acres would remove 183 AUMs, and transfers of 5,962 acres out of federal ownership would remove an additional 900 AUMs from current available livestock forage. With planned seedings of 3,000 acres generating approximately 1,000 AUMs, along with the above mentioned losses, AUM levels are projected in the short term (5 years) at 47,345 AUMs. This would be a 29% reduction from the five year average license use.

Over the long term (20 years) an additional 9,600 acres of seedings would produce an additional 3,000 AUMs. Increased livestock management practices on 64,000 acres of native range would increase forage production 3,287 AUMs. With these increases and the projected AUM losses, the overall AUM level over the long term is projected at 53,643 AUMs, which would be a 19% reduction from the five year average license use.

Under this alternative all 63,000 acres of stock driveways would be eliminated. Ranchers would be required to truck their livestock.

Wild Horses

Under this alternative both the West Crane Creek and Four Mile wild horse herds would be maintained.

Maximum numbers would be maintained in the West Crane Creek herd of 30 head, while the Four Mile herd would be maintained at 20 head.

LANDS AND REALTY RESOURCES

Lands

Land transfer would consist of 243 acres for sale, 5,775 acres for exchange, and 11,306 acres for special exchange only for a total of 17,324 acres.

Of the lands identified for sale, 80 acres would be a sanitary landfill for Ada 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 \$21,600 based on current appraisal for the 80 acres to be sold to Ada County, estimates of the value of the small parcels that total 3 acres, and the 160 acres for the Parma Rod and Gun Club.

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 680 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 lands proposed for transfer by sale or exchange are generally small isolated parcels that appear to meet the disposal criterion 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.

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.

The 11,306 acres identified for special exchange would be used for exchanges with the State to acquire nationally significant lands, such as State inholdings in wilderness areas, wild and scenic river corridors, crucial wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species habitat, or other commercial forest lands of equal or better value (blocking of ownership pattern).

Rights-of-Ways

Overhead, surface and/or subsurface rights-of-way would be restricted on 10,326 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 - 6 miles of the North Fork and 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, with perhaps the exception of the proposed expanded Payette River wild and scenic river designation. Rights-of-way could be rerouted slightly to avoid the smaller areas.

Hydroelectric development would be precluded on Box Creek and on the 6 mile and 8 mile segments of the North and South Fork Payette River.

Withdrawals

All of the lands presently withdrawn for livestock driveways (approximately 63,000 acres) would be revoked from the withdrawals.

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.

Environmental Consequences

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 17,324 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 3,276 acres open to ORV use, 481,620 acres limited and 2,570 acres closed. The additional closed acres include candidate and sensitive plant sites (1,545) and Box Canyon ONA (440). There would be little expected impacts on recreational ORV use.

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.

A projected increase of 35% in big game numbers through improved habitat is expected to increase big game hunting opportunity by the same amount. Opportunities for non-consumptive uses would also increase as a result.

The effects of the Pickles Butte DLE would be the same as discussed in Alternative A.

Lands available for dispersed recreation would be reduced by the 17,323 acres identified for disposal.

Construction of 20 miles of timber harvest access roads (1 mile annually) would increase recreational access potential to the same degree as Alternative A, but generally less than in Alternative B. Some of these roads would be closed after harvesting is completed.

Eight miles and a 2,600 acre corridor of BLM land along the South Fork of the Payette River and six miles and 1,900 BLM acres along the North Fork of the Payette River would be proposed for Wild and Scenic Rivers study.

Identification of special designation areas would cause a slight increase in hiking, sightseeing, and other casual visitor uses.

Visual

The positive effects of an intensively managed Boise Front ACEC would be the same as discussed in Alternative A.

Improved riparian habitat on 151 miles of rivers and streams would improve the visual resource in these locations.

Harvesting approximately 0.5 million board feet of timber and the resulting access roads may negatively impact the visual resource. Less obtrusive selective cutting would be the primary harvest method, although some clearcuts, not to exceed 40 acres each, may be proposed. All timber sales would be guided by the appropriate VRM class guidelines. Impacts from timber harvests would be minimal.

Wildlife improvement projects such as fences, guzzlers and vegetation manipulation could negatively impact the visual resource. With the use of standard mitigation measures on these projects, no significant adverse impacts would be expected.

Project development in the range program could negatively impact the visual resource. Fences, reservoirs, pipelines and vegetative manipulations are proposed, and have been discussed in Alternative A. Impacts would not be significant.

Transferring 17,323 acres of land from public ownership could result in impacts on the visual resource. See discussion in Alternative B.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Leasables

Oil and Gas

The proposed 4,500 acre withdrawals along the Payette River include 2,600 acres covered by existing power site and Bureau of Reclamation withdrawals and 1,900 additional acres currently open. None of these areas are classified as prospectively valuable for oil and gas. The impacts of the withdrawal would be insignificant. About 93% of the area would remain open for oil and gas leasing.

No surface occupancy stipulations under this alternative total 7,726 acres. The lands involved are generally small and are not identified as prospectively valuable for oil and gas. The 500 acre Pickles Butte Play Area and the 3,000 acre Little Gem Cycle Park area no surface occupancy restrictions may be a significant adverse impact on oil and gas exploration and development in the areas involved.

The effects of time stipulations on oil and gas exploration are consistent throughout this plan. Those effects are considered insignificant. See Alternative A for the analysis of their impacts.

Since the lands identified for transfer would have oil and gas reserved in areas classified as prospectively valuable for oil and gas, the impact of land transfers would be insignificant.

Based on the lack of any commercial oil or gas wells in Idaho, the 35 dry holes in the resource area, the low potential of the area, and the above