

Record of Decision Alturas Resource Management Plan



Alturas Field Office

April 2008



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United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:
CA-310 1610

April 1, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

I am pleased to announce that, after several years of collaborative effort, the Alturas Resource Management Plan (RMP) is complete. This document will provide guidance for the management of 503,045 acres of lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in northeast California.

The staff of the Alturas Field Office of the BLM has prepared the attached Record of Decision (ROD) and RMP in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The ROD links final land use plan decisions to the analysis presented in the Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Minor changes and points of clarification are described in the ROD, in response to staff review and issues raised in the public protest process.

The ROD serves as the final decision for **Land Use Planning Decisions** described in the Proposed RMP. The public had an opportunity to protest these decisions after the publication of the Proposed Alturas RMP/FEIS in June 2007. Two protests were received. Resolutions to the protests did not result in the necessity for more analysis or repeat publication of the Alturas Proposed RMP/ Final EIS, or for additional public review and protest.

The ROD also describes a set of **Implementation Level Decisions**. Those decisions will authorize the issuance of a travel route network. An appeal opportunity for these decisions is being provided at this time. The process is described in the ROD and the appeal period will close **30 days** from the date the Notice of Availability of the ROD/RMP appears in the Federal Register. This date will also be announced via local news releases. Please review the ROD carefully for a more detailed discussion of the appeal process.

Additional hard copies and CD-ROM versions of the RMP/ROD may be obtained at the address above. The document is available on the internet at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/alturas.html>.

We appreciate your help in this planning effort and look forward to your continued participation as the plan is implemented. For additional information or clarification regarding the attached document or the planning process, please contact Jeff Fontana at (530) 257-5332 or Sue Noggles (530) 252-5345, or by e-mail at rnoggles@ca.blm.gov.

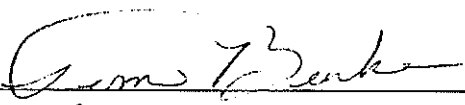
Sincerely,

Tim Burke
Field Manager
Alturas Field Office

Record of Decision Alturas Resource Management Plan

Manager's Recommendation

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated effects, and public input, I recommend adoption and implementation of the attached Alturas Resource Management Plan. This plan contains the decisions that will guide management of the lands and resources under the jurisdiction of the Alturas Field Office. The plan addresses all relevant issues raised during the planning process.



Tim Burke
Alturas Field Manager

4/17/2008
Date

State Director Approval

I approve the attached Alturas Resource Management Plan. This document meets the requirement of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act to develop a land use plan for public lands administered by the Alturas Field Office.



Mike Pool
California State Director

4/17/2008
Date

Decision

The decision is hereby made to adopt the Alturas Resource Management Plan (RMP) as the land use plan for the public lands and resources managed by the Alturas Field Office. The Alturas RMP was developed under regulations implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 to consider this decision. The Alturas RMP adopted here is nearly identical to the Alturas Proposed RMP presented for public review and protest on June 15, 2007.

Introduction

The Alturas Field Office includes approximately 503,045 BLM-managed surface acres in northeastern California. The geographic area includes BLM-administered lands within the counties of Modoc, Lassen, Shasta, and Siskiyou, California. The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands it manages for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Alturas RMP was developed in coordination with the Eagle Lake and Surprise Field Office RMPs to provide a consistent framework for managing public lands and resource uses in northeast California and northwest Nevada.

The Alturas RMP was prepared using the BLM's planning regulations and guidance issued under the FLPMA. An EIS is also included in this document to meet the requirements of NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), and requirements of the BLM's NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1.

The Alturas RMP includes two levels of decisions in accordance with the NEPA and BLM regulations. These are **land use planning decisions** and **implementation decisions**. Land use planning decisions were protestable during the June 15 2007 – July 16, 2007 protest period in accordance with BLM regulations 43 CFR 1610.5-2. Two protest letters were received. There are also implementation decisions made in the RMP (see below). These decisions may be appealed in accordance with the Department of the Interior regulations at 43 CFR 4 and 43 CFR 2450.

Alternatives Considered

MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN THE RMP

The underlying goal of developing alternatives was to explore the range of use options, protection options, and management tools that will achieve a balance between protection of the planning area's natural character, and a variety of resource uses and management issues. Alternatives must: meet the project purpose and need; be viable and reasonable; provide a mix of resource protection, management use, and development; be responsive to issues identified in scoping; and meet the established planning criteria, federal laws and regulations, and BLM planning policy.

RECORD OF DECISION

Five alternatives were developed for detailed analysis. The “No Action Alternative” was a continuation of current management, and was developed from existing planning decisions, policies, and guidance. Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 were developed with input from BLM internal and public scoping, public workshops, and collaborative work among the BLM interdisciplinary planning teams.

Of the management alternatives, Alternative 2 represented less intense management and/or use, emphasizing a greater utilization of natural processes wherever possible, and minimizing human impacts. This would result in lower levels of active involvement in resource restoration and management, as well as limited recreation use. In the middle of the spectrum, Alternative 3 provided a greater diversity of uses and approaches to management, with a broad mix of tools that would allow for moderate levels of use. Alternative 1 took a more active approach, allowing more intense management and/or use while still maintaining and enhancing resource conditions. It included the widest application of management tools and actions, and provided the highest level of recreation use. The Preferred Alternative and Proposed RMP were developed using decisions from each of the management alternatives. See the *Management Considerations* section for more detail.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE

Federal regulations (40CFR 1505.02(b)) require that an agency identify the “environmentally preferable” alternative(s) in the Record of Decision (ROD) for an EIS. The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that would result in the greatest beneficial impacts to the identified aspects of the environment. Compared to the other alternatives analyzed in the Alturas RMP, Alternative 2 and the Preferred Alternative best meet the national environmental goals identified above.

Alternative 2 provides the highest level of protection of natural and cultural resources, however it does not allow for a wide range of beneficial uses of the environment. The Preferred Alternative would enhance the ability of the BLM to achieve the purpose and need of the RMP, as outlined in Chapter 1 of the document, as well as meet desired future conditions, goals and objectives of specific resources as outlined in Chapter 2. The No Action Alternative, as well as Alternatives 1 and 3, do not contain sufficient management emphasis designed to protect native plant communities and restore degraded sagebrush steppe habitats, when compared to the Preferred Alternative. Portions of the field office area that are currently in a degraded condition can only be improved successfully with the scope of active restoration efforts that are provided for within the Preferred Alternative.

The Preferred Alternative would result in overall minor to moderate adverse impacts to resources, and these impacts would continue to be mitigated. Proposed management actions would result in moderate to major beneficial impacts to native vegetation communities and wildlife habitat from restoration efforts, and the removal of invasive juniper. Improvements to riparian areas, water bodies, and other special habitats would improve soil and water resources, and wildlife habitat. The designation of seven areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC), three wild and scenic river (WSR) segments, and an increased emphasis on cultural resource protection and management would have beneficial impacts to these important and unique resources.

Management Considerations/Decision Rationale

The approved management actions defining the Alturas RMP were selected by the BLM, with input from Tribes, State and county governments, other federal agencies, the Northeast California Resource Advisory Council (RAC), interested organizations, and the public. The BLM considers the Approved Alturas RMP as the best approach to meeting the purpose and need of this project, addressing the planning issues, and providing the optimal combination of flexibility and balance in managing both resources and uses of the lands in the planning area. Factors considered during this selection process include: environmental impacts; issues raised throughout the planning process; specific environmental values, resources, and resource uses; conflict resolution; public input; and laws and regulations.

The Approved Alturas RMP draws from the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and is nearly identical to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The FLPMA requires that the BLM manage the public lands according to land use plans (43 U.S.C. 1702; 43 U.S.C. 1732) in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in the natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use (43 U.S.C. 1701); and that will regulate the use, occupancy, and development of public lands (43 U.S.C. 1732). The Approved Alturas RMP is the land use plan that provides the framework to accomplish these mandates. Through implementation of the RMP and other actions that may become necessary, the BLM will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands it manages.

Changing Land Use Plan Decisions

Land use plan decisions can be changed through a plan amendment. Plan amendments change one or more of the terms, conditions or decisions of an approved plan including resource restrictions. Plan amendments are often prompted by the need to consider a proposal or application for a land use that does not conform to the RMP, or to respond to new or intensified interest in uses on public land.

When an applicant requests that the BLM amend the land use plan to allow an otherwise nonconforming proposal, BLM regulations (43 CFR 1600) and CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1500) guide preparation of plan amendments. The plan amendment process involves and encourages meaningful public participation. This process begins with the publication of a Notice of Intent to amend a land use plan in the Federal Register and local newspapers.

Changes Made To the Approved RMP

This Record of Decision adopts the Alturas Proposed RMP/Final EIS (May 2007) as the Approved Alturas RMP, with a few minor clarifications to the decision, as listed below. No substantive changes have been made to the land use plan decisions. Based on changed circumstances and protests the BLM received on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, the following modifications were made to the Approved RMP:

RECORD OF DECISION

1. The Approved RMP adopts management guidance from and tiers to the impacts analysis section of the *Final Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development on BLM Administered Lands in the Western United States* (Wind Energy PEIS), BLM, 2005, and subsequent amendments. The BLM will follow guidance from BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2006-216, and subsequent BLM policy, in processing right-of-way applications for wind energy projects. In order to reduce adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat the BLM will implement best management practices for wind energy projects in accordance with the Wind Energy PEIS.

Due to the changing energy goals at the national level and particularly here in California, renewable energy production on BLM public lands is growing in importance. While renewable energy such as geothermal and wind are already established uses in some parts of the State, new geothermal and wind proposals as well as new solar proposals are emerging new public land uses in other parts of California.

Placement of these facilities depends on a number of factors that cannot always be anticipated in the BLM's land use plans such as economics, relationship to the State's energy grid, project design, current technology and potential resource impacts. However, BLM land use plans can always be amended through the public process to accommodate such uses when necessary. In addition to renewable energy, other unforeseen public needs and demands often arise outside of the planning cycle and plans are amended according to the process outlined in *Changing Land Use Plan Decisions*.

2. The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), has recently been removed from the federal list of threatened and endangered (T&E) species. At the time of the BLM's request to initiate formal consultation on T&E species with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the Draft and Proposed Alturas RMP/EIS, the bald eagle was federally listed as threatened. On June 28, 2007, the Secretary of the Interior announced that the bald eagle was being removed from the federal list of T&E species. The final rule delisting the bald eagle was published on July 9, 2007, and became effective on August 8, 2007 (USFWS, 2007). After delisting, bald eagles will continue to be protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The USFWS has encouraged the BLM to continue managing bald eagles as stated in the Biological Assessment (BLM 2007a), which implements management actions from the Preferred Alternative in the Alturas PRMP/FEIS (Biological Opinion on the Proposed Resource Management Plan for the Alturas Field Office, Alturas, California, USFWS, 2007). The BLM has agreed to manage bald eagles as requested by USFWS, and according to management actions within the Alturas PRMP/FEIS (Sec. 2.24.2.4, p. 2-121). However, the BLM will no longer consider the bald eagle a "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act.

3. In 2007 the California State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO), in coordination with the California BLM, and the Nevada SHPO, revised the State Protocol Agreement regarding cultural resources. The revised protocol suspends the requirement that all unevaluated cultural resources will be allocated to "use categories", as described in Section 2.2.3.2 (p. 2-8) of the Alturas PRMP/FEIS.

The Approved RMP has been changed by deleting the following paragraph:

“Known and newly identified archaeological sites would be evaluated and placed in one of six use categories (as specified in Department of Interior Information Bulletin [DOI IB] No. 2002-101). Categories and management actions are as follows (in Table 2.2-1).”

The Approved RMP now states:

“The BLM may allocate evaluated archaeological sites to one of six uses as outlined in USDI-IB No. 2002-101 “Cultural Resource Considerations in Resource Management Plans”, and Table 2.2-1 below.”

4. The Approved RMP adopts the visual resources management (VRM) classes listed for all lands in the Proposed RMP, Chapter 2.20 Visual Resources Management, as the official VRM Management Classes.
5. The *Draft Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy* (Modoc National Forest, Alturas BLM, and Modoc County) was completed and published in August 2007. The Approved RMP will incorporate recommendations contained in this document, once it is final, to manage for the improved health of plant communities, and to reduce the encroachment of western juniper.
6. The Approved RMP adopts and tiers to the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Programmatic Environmental Report, *Vegetation Treatments using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States*, BLM, September 2007; and the Environmental Assessment, *Integrated Weed Management Program and Record of Decision, BLM, Alturas, Eagle Lake, and Surprise Field Offices*, EA # CA320-07-14, CA350-07-07, CA370-07-04, June 2007.
7. The BLM will designate energy corridors, perform environmental reviews required to complete corridor designation, and incorporate designated corridors into relevant agency land use plans, as defined in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, *Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the 11 Western States*, Department of Energy, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Department of Defense, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October 2007, and subsequent amendments.

Approved RMP Executive Summary

The Alturas RMP provides a detailed description of management actions for 24 resource subjects. The desired future condition, goals, objectives, and management actions for each major resource and use are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the Proposed/Approved RMP. The highlights of management actions for each resource subject are listed below. Please note that this Executive Summary is designed to provide only an overview of some of the proposed management actions within the Alturas RMP. The table below contains an abbreviated version of the management actions for each subject, and is not a complete listing of all management actions within the RMP.

RECORD OF DECISION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Air Quality

- Manage prescribed fire on 75 to 10,000 acres/year, and wildland fire use to reduce impacts on air quality.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Cultural Resource Management Plans (CRMPs) will be developed for Rocky Prairie/South Graves, Tule Mountain, Likely Tablelands/Yankee Jim Ranch, and Beaver Creek, and the three interpretive sites.
- Designate one archaeological area of critical environmental concern (ACEC): Likely Tablelands/Yankee Jim/Fitzhugh Creek (1,400 acres).
- Nominate Yankee Jim Ranch to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
- Develop 3 cultural resource interpretive sites: Descent into Goose Lake, Bayley Reservoir, and Coyote Ridge.
- Exclosure fences (2,750 total acres) would be used (in consultation with permittees and tribes) to protect important cultural sites from damage by off-highway vehicles (OHVs) and livestock.

Energy & Minerals

- Manage 445,997 acres as 'Open' to mineral leasing under standard terms and conditions.
- Manage 470,052 acres as 'Open' to locatable mineral development.
- Manage 435,385 acres as 'Open' to saleable mineral development (i.e., mineral material pit establishment & decorative rock collecting).
- Manage 435,385 acres as 'Open' to renewable energy development.
- Adopt management guidance for wind energy development from the Final Programmatic EIS on *Wind Energy Development on BLM Administered Lands in the Western United States* (Wind Energy PEIS), 2005, and subsequent amendments. Environmental analyses for wind energy development will tier to the impacts analysis section of the Wind Energy PEIS.
- Implement best management practices for wind energy projects in accordance with the Wind Energy PEIS in order to reduce adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat.

Fire Management

- The NorCal Fire Management Plan identifies aggressive, full suppression as the appropriate management response (AMR) under conditions of severe fire intensity, especially in the wildland urban interface. However, exceptions may be made where resource objectives could be safely achieved.
- Under conditions of low fire intensity, a less aggressive AMR (typically containment) would be implemented, according to resource management objectives for the area.
- Manage wildland fires using AMR according to the following guidelines:
 - Full range of AMR options on 486,047 acres
 - Wildland fire use on 16,998 acres

RECORD OF DECISION

Forestry Resources

- Manage 13,800 acres of commercial and low-site forests for multiple-use objectives using appropriate methods of silviculture.
- Manage 40% of commercial timberlands as late-succession forests and maintain a substantial area of late-succession forests on low-site forestlands.
- Timber harvesting would not be allowed in commercial forestland on Mount Dome to preserve a bald eagle roosting area.
- Implement fuel reduction and stand improvement using prescribed fire on 13,800 acres.
- Implement timber production and mechanical harvest of commercial and low-site forestlands on 12,000 acres.
- Implement reforestation of 8,000 acres.
- Authorize 10 miles of new permanent roads and 50 miles of temporary roads for timber management and harvesting activities.

Fuels Management

- Implement fuels treatments using prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and biological methods to reduce hazardous fuel accumulation, provide fuel breaks, and create defensible space around at-risk communities according to the following schedule:
 - Prescribed fire: 75–10,000 acres/year
 - Mechanical treatment: 75–10,000 acres/year
 - Biological treatment: 0–1,250 acres/year
 - Chemical treatment: 50–2,000 acres/year
- Create fuel breaks and defensible space around the wildland urban interface and communities. Fuels treatments would be prioritized on degraded forest and rangeland (especially where encroached by western juniper), important wildlife habitats, and important archaeological or historic sites.

Lands and Realty

- The 2002 Alturas Land Tenure Adjustment Plan (LTAP) would be the basis for future land tenure adjustments (but modified to include conservation easement projects and the Madeline retention/acquisition area).
- A priority list of land tenure adjustments would be developed from the LTAP and this RMP.
- Public access would be secured to BLM-administered lands, resources, and facilities—including road construction around private lands where access is desirable and easement acquisition isn't feasible.
- All areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs), research natural areas (RNAs), and wild and scenic river (WSR) segments (a total of 32,993 acres) would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry.

Rights-of-Way

- Continue authorization of current rights-of-way (ROWs) and communication sites. Any new development would be restricted to existing corridors and sites wherever feasible.
- Identify lands potentially available for telecommunications sites and utility ROWs on 435,385 acres.

RECORD OF DECISION

Rights-of-Way (continued)

- New utility corridors, pipelines or electrical transmission lines, or communication sites would not be permitted in any designated ACEC, in wilderness study areas (WSAs), or in the (proposed) Lower Pit River WSR corridor (excluded areas total 67,660 acres).
- Utility corridors would not exceed 500 feet in width.
- Additional utility corridors may be designated as future needs dictate, subject to on-site environmental reviews and clearances, in accordance with the BLM Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, *Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the 11 Western States*, September 2007, and subsequent amendments.

Livestock Grazing

- Maintain 145 grazing allotments for livestock use with 454,649 acres available to grazing.
- Initial active animal unit month (AUM) levels would be set at 54,881 AUMs. This level could be adjusted based on land health considerations. Additional AUMs may be available in the future as vegetation treatments are accelerated under the *Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy* (Modoc National Forest, Alturas BLM, and Modoc County, Draft, August 2007).
- Grazing practices will be modified to achieve compliance on allotments failing to meet land health standards.
- Decisions to resume livestock grazing on areas that have been mechanically treated or burned by wild or prescribed fire would be based on assessment of monitoring data. Generally, grazing would not resume for a minimum of two growing seasons. Mechanically treated areas may be assessed for potential resumption of livestock grazing following one growing season of rest.
- Maintain the long-term health and productivity of rangelands when dealing with drought through implementation of the *BLM Drought Management Policy for the Alturas and Surprise Field Offices*.
- Establish forage reserves in cooperation with other federal, state, and private entities.
- Implement rangeland improvements to benefit wildlife and watersheds, in addition to livestock.
- Livestock salting would not be allowed within ¼ mile of springs, meadows, NRHP-quality archaeological sites, streams, and aspen areas. Location of salting stations would be determined by the BLM in consultation with livestock permittees.

Recreation and Visitor Services

- Manage lands not designated as special recreation management areas (SRMAs), WSAs, or ACECs as extensive recreation areas.
- Designate the Infernal Caverns/Rocky Prairie SRMA and the Pit River SRMA to improve visitor services.
- Limit camping to 14 consecutive days at a single location and 28 days annually, and prohibit camping within 200 feet of creeks, springs, rivers, lakes and reservoirs unless posted otherwise.
- Issue special recreation permits to meet demand while ensuring protection of natural and cultural resources and operating within reasonable public safety parameters.
- Acquire from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) segments of the Pit River (13 total miles) that support significant coldwater and warmwater fisheries. Also acquire a 5-mile stretch of Hat Creek (also from PG&E) to preserve world-class trout fishing.
- Designate Pit River (i.e. a 16-mile stretch in the Pit River SRMA) for non-motorized boating. Designate Delta Lake, Moon Lake, Nelson Corral and Bayley Reservoirs in the Infernal Caverns/Rocky Prairie SRMA for limited motorized boating.

RECORD OF DECISION

Recreation and Visitor Services (continued)

- Develop 7 to 9 improved parking areas in recreational sites for improved visitor services.
- Apply recreation opportunity spectrum classes to all lands in order to provide a diversity of recreational experiences:
 - 'Primitive' 55,594 acres
 - 'Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized' 63,472 acres
 - 'Semi-Primitive Motorized' 273,539 acres
 - 'Roaded Natural' 110,440 acres

Soil Resources

- Implement measures to achieve recovery of 10,154 acres of degraded upland soils.
- Ensure that management activities do not result in a net loss of soil productivity or productive potential.
- Minimize management activities within perennial and intermittent drainages where watershed function would be adversely affected.
- Employ bio-engineering projects to improve soil condition and achieve 'Proper Functioning Condition' on 200 acres of degraded soils.
- Apply sediment intrusion buffer zones of 50 feet around sensitive resources, as indicated.
- Prevent damage to high shrink-swell soils by limiting compacting activities (livestock grazing and OHVs) to periods when soils are sufficiently dried to resist compaction.
- Treat invasive plants and noxious weeds (or modify management) on sites where soil function and integrity are compromised.

Special Designations:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

- Designate seven ACECs (30,493 total acres):
 - Ash Valley—1,322 acres
 - Timbered Crater—17,896 acres
 - Emigrant Trails—1,750 acres
 - Mountain Peaks—3,500 acres
 - Old-Growth Juniper—3,115 acres
 - Mount Dome—1,510 acres
 - Likely Tablelands/Yankee Jim/Fitzhugh Creek—1,400 acres
- Manage the Baker Cypress Natural Area (1,448 acres) as part of the Timbered Crater ACEC.
- Livestock grazing would be managed according to permit stipulations, allotment management plans, and ACEC management plans.
- Noxious weeds would be aggressively controlled in ACECs.
- ACECs would be 'Closed' or restricted to no surface occupancy restrictions for leasable energy development; ACECs would be 'Closed' to locatable and salable mineral development. Where ACECs overlap WSAs, further constraints on mineral activities apply under the Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review, 1995 (Wilderness IMP).
- All ACECs would be ROW exclusion zones.

RECORD OF DECISION

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (continued)

- ACECs would be managed under visual resource management (VRM) Class II criteria, or Class I criteria where subject to regulations for WSAs.

Special Designations: *National Historic Trails*

- Protect and maintain approximately 29 miles of national historic emigrant trails.
- Develop a “Historic Sites Scenic Byway” with off-site interpretive locations.
- Develop recreation development packages for 7 or 8 sites of historic significance.
- Designate the Emigrant Trails ACEC to protect and intensively manage 1,750 acres of historic trail remnants and associated historical artifacts.

Special Designations: *Scenic Byways*

- Designate and manage the following proposed scenic byways:
 - U.S. Highway 395 - Alturas to Reno 190 miles
 - State Highway 139 - Canby to Susanville 90 miles
 - State Highway 299 - Adin to Redding 110 miles
 - State Highway 139/Canby to U.S. Highway 395/Nevada state line 170 miles
 - Total 560 miles
- Continue work to add additional segments and interpretive locations to the Emigrant Trails Scenic Byway (U.S. Highway 395 and State Highways 299 and 139).
- Cooperate with the Northern California Resource Center for interpretive planning and development on the Applegate and Lassen National Historic Emigrant Trails, and at the Descent into Goose Lake. Develop a 0.25-mile interpretive walking trail, and a 1-mile hiking trail.
- Designate the Clark’s Valley Road Driving Route for 21 miles.

Special Designations: *Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR)*

- Recommend 13 miles of Upper Pit River as suitable for WSR designation, with a ‘Wild’ classification.
- Recommend 3 miles of Lower Horse Creek Canyon as suitable for WSR designation, with a ‘Wild’ classification.
- Recommend 2.5 miles of Lower Pit River Canyon as suitable for WSR designation, with a ‘Scenic’ classification.

Special Designations: *Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)*

- Four WSAs and one instant study area (ISA) would continue to be governed by the BLM Interim Management Policy (IMP) for Lands under Wilderness Review (July 1995) until such time as Congress makes a determination regarding wilderness designation. These include:
 - Pit River Canyon WSA 10,984 acres
 - Lava WSA 10,770 acres
 - Timbered Crater WSA and Baker Cypress ISA 17,896 acres
 - Tule Mountain WSA 16,998 acres

RECORD OF DECISION

Travel Management

- Off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel would be 'Limited to Existing Roads and Trails' year-round, except where further restrictions are specifically assigned (e.g., 'Open,' 'Closed,' 'Seasonally Closed,' or 'Limited to Designated Routes').
- Where travel on an existing road is creating sufficient adverse impacts, the road may be closed (on a temporary or permanent basis) through plan maintenance.
- Travel restrictions on the Nelson Corral Reservoir Road would be 'Limited to Existing Roads and Trails' year-round.
- The Cinder Cone OHV Management Area (80 acres) would be 'Open' to year-round OHV travel. However, organized off-highway vehicle events would only be permitted in this location or on designated routes in other specially approved locations.
- Assign OHV use area designations:
 - 'Open' 80 acres
 - 'Limited to Existing or Designated Routes' 498,140 acres
 - 'Closed' 4,825 acres
- Manage three areas, and certain routes, specifically for recreational driving:
 - Cinder Cone OHV Management Area (near Cassel),
 - Fall River Trail (near Fall River Mills), and
 - Barnes Grade/Crowder Flat OHV Management Area (near Alturas).
- Construct approximately 66 miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails, including the 40-mile stretch of the abandoned Modoc Line rail bed.
- Vehicular travel would conform to the *Northeast California Resource Advisory Council Recommended Off-Highway-Vehicle Management Guidelines, 2000* (Appendix C).
- Motorized boating would be unrestricted on West Valley Reservoir.
- On Delta Lake and the Nelson Corral Reservoir (in the Infernal Caverns/Rocky Prairie SRMA), only electric trolling motors and non-motorized use would be allowed.
- Propulsion on Bayley Reservoir would be limited to small outboards (i.e., 4-cycle engines [phased in by 2012], electric trolling motors, or non-motorized craft).
- A special recreation permit would be required for commercial sport-fishing and whitewater rafting in the lower Pit River Canyon area.
- There would be no restrictions on motorized snow travel to the Nelson Corral high-country or the Dead Horse Loop area.
- Implement annual road maintenance, using a priority system, on 28 miles of routes.

Vegetation

- Employ natural disturbance processes—particularly prescribed fire and wildland fire use—as the preferred method of restoring shrub communities, along with thinning (using mechanical and manual methods) to stimulate seeding and sprouting.
- Designate Timbered Crater, Mount Dome, Mountain Peaks, and Old-Growth Juniper ACECs (26,021 total acres) also as research natural areas to protect unique plant species and communities.
- Incorporate recommendations developed in the Draft and Final *Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy*, Modoc National Forest, Alturas BLM, and Modoc County (Draft, 2007) to manage juniper encroachment.

RECORD OF DECISION

Vegetation (continued)

- Prioritize restoration treatment methods for removal of invasive juniper in shrub–steppe communities:
 - Prescribed fire/ Wildland fire use 75–10,000 acres
 - Manual 50–5,000 acres
 - Biological 75–2,000 acres
 - Chemical 50–2,000 acres
 - Mechanical 75–10,000 acres
 - Seeding 50–10,000 acres
- Construct 10 miles of permanent roads and 50 miles of temporary roads to facilitate juniper reduction and forestry treatments.
- Protect 38,000 acres of old-growth western juniper from timber harvesting and firewood cutting.
- Incorporate guidelines from the *Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy* to restore sage-grouse habitat in Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush ecosystems.
- Implement management actions to create healthy, multi-aged stands of bitterbrush, on up to 500 acres per year.
- Exclude livestock from aspen stands using:
 - Permanent fencing - 200 acres
 - Temporary fencing - 300 acres
- Locate livestock salting sites ¼ mile from aspen stands to discourage damage by livestock.
- Rejuvenate or maintain stands of curlleaf mountain mahogany through selected treatments on up to 1,000 acres per year.
- Rejuvenate or maintain oak woodlands with abundant saplings and in mixed age classes through selected treatments on up to 5,000 acres per year.

Riparian/Wetland Associations

- Assess riparian areas for 'Proper Functioning Condition', existing, or potential natural community, and ecological site description.
- Implement measures to make progress toward 'Proper Functioning Condition' on 15 miles of streams, 22 acres of springs, and 46 acres of wetlands.
- Protect riparian areas from grazing using exclosure fencing (up to 500 acres) and alternative water sources.
- Use bio-engineering projects, such as planting riparian vegetation for streambank stabilization.
- Locate livestock salting sites ¼ mile from riparian areas to discourage damage by livestock.
- Re-route roads through Little Buck Meadows and Big Buck Meadows; rehabilitate existing roads with native herbaceous vegetation.

Noxious Weeds & Invasive Species

- Implement integrated weed management (IWM) procedures on BLM lands. Review project proposals to determine necessary IWM actions and coordinate treatment with local agencies.
- Conduct periodic inventory of noxious weeds to detect new infestations and monitor the condition of existing infestations. The highest priority for noxious weed inventory would be critical wildlife habitat, at-risk plant communities, high-use areas, and recreation sites.
- Monitor treated sites to determine treatment effectiveness and impacts on non-target vegetation.

RECORD OF DECISION

Noxious Weeds & Invasive Species (continued)

- Educate the public regarding noxious weed infestation and introduce practical measures to minimize infestations through public awareness and cooperation.
- Hay, straw, and mulch used for any purpose must be certified noxious weed free.

Special Status Plants

- Manage habitats for special status plants so that BLM actions do not contribute to the need to 'list' these species (as threatened or endangered) under federal law.
- Reduce or eliminate adverse impacts on special status plants (and their habitats) during ground-disturbing activities.
- Acquire lands (from willing sellers) that support unprotected populations of special status plants.
- Protect 'special interest' plants (and their habitats) to prevent them from becoming special status plants.
- Off-highway vehicles would be 'Limited to Designated Routes' in the Ash Valley ACEC/RNA and the Westside Grazing Allotment to protect special status plants.

Visual Resources

- Manage wilderness study areas as VRM Class I.
- Assign VRM Class designations to BLM-administered lands and manage according to class requirements in order to protect scenic quality:
 - VRM Class I 56,648 acres
 - VRM Class II 157,177 acres
 - VRM Class III 104,006 acres
 - VRM Class IV 185,214 acres
- Areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs), wild and scenic river segments (WSRs), historic trails, or other special designations would be managed as VRM Class II, unless the area is managed as VRM Class I under other management guidance.
- All developments, land alterations, and vegetation manipulations would be designed to minimize visual impacts. All projects would be designed to maximize scenic quality while minimizing scenic intrusions.

Water Resources

- Establish 'Proper Functioning Condition' on 15 miles of streams, 22 acres of springs, and 46 acres of wetlands. Achieve state water quality standards and the needs of beneficial users on 17 miles of streams.
- Implement bioengineering practices on 25 miles of perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams to improve streambank stabilization.
- Implement restorative measures to improve water quality and make significant progress toward achieving state standards. Emphasize natural recovery processes, livestock exclusions, planting of woody riparian vegetation, and construction of in-stream structures.
- Maintain existing and develop 75 new water sources to improve livestock distribution and extend seasonal availability for wildlife.
- Consider withdrawal of state-appropriated water rights on waters that are not "waters of the state". Assert riparian rights on all perennial and important intermittent streams.
- Coordinate projects that involve inter-basin transfer of water with local and regional governments.

RECORD OF DECISION

Wild Horses

- Continue to protect and manage wild horses within the Red Rock Lakes herd management area (HMA) at the established appropriate management level (AML) of 16 to 25 horses. Horses would be periodically removed to maintain the AML.
- Cooperate with the US Forest Service in periodic removal, adoption, and holding of animals from the Devil's Garden Wild Horse Territory to keep horse numbers within the AML for the Emigrant HMA.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Federally Listed Species

Bald Eagle (Note: see Changes Made to the Approved RMP)

- Conduct nesting and population surveys and implement seasonal protective measures and buffer zones for permitted activities.
- Develop habitat management plans for the Conrad Ranch and Timbered Crater nesting areas, as well as the Juniper Creek roosting site.
- Manage suitable forest habitat to retain potential nest trees.

Northern Spotted Owl

- Northern spotted owl and its habitat (where and when found) will be managed per existing terms and conditions contained in plan and program-level biological opinions.

Modoc, Shortnose, and Lost River Suckers, and Shasta Crayfish

- These species and their habitats (where and when found) will be managed according to existing recovery plans and the terms and conditions of plan and program-level biological opinion.

Yellow-Billed Cuckoo and Oregon Spotted Frog

- These species have not been found in the management area. However, the AFO will contribute to appropriate survey efforts and – if a population of either species is discovered – would develop conservation and action plans.

State- and BLM-Listed Sensitive Species

- Cooperate with partners to obtain information on occurrence, abundance and distribution. Develop a geographic information system database to document and track information.
- Use seasonal protective measures and buffer zones for permitted activities in critical habitats for these species.
- Restore critical habitats of state-listed and BLM sensitive species in degraded sagebrush associations.

Ungulates

- Focus management on priority habitat areas for mule deer and black-tailed deer on 128,000 acres to maintain and improve ecological conditions.
- Prioritize management areas for improvements to pronghorn habitat by maintaining healthy low sagebrush habitat. Focus management on priority habitat areas (60,145 acres) and identified high quality habitat (130,000 acres).
- Construct exclosures and fences to protect important ungulate habitats: aspen, bitterbrush, oaks, mahogany, riparian areas, and springs, on up to 1,000 acres.
- Control invasive juniper and noxious weeds to improve or reestablish native habitats.

RECORD OF DECISION

Ungulates (continued)

- Use seeding, planting, and other vegetation treatments to improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats.
- Assign OHV designations to protect wintering ungulates. Assign seasonal road closures to protect wintering ungulates on the following areas:
 - Likely Tablelands
 - Barnes Grade
 - Day Bench
- If Rocky Mountain elk become established in the management area, coordinate with state wildlife agencies and other stakeholders, including livestock owners, to develop and implement a management plan.
- Coordinate with California Department of Fish and Game in the development of a management plan prior to reintroduction of California bighorn sheep.
- Provide artificial water sources (e.g., guzzlers) in areas with high wildlife potential, especially where natural sources are depleted or limited.

Sagebrush Ecosystems and Sagebrush-Obligate/Associated Species

- Implement juniper reduction to enhance sagebrush ecosystems; focus on providing diversity in shrub age class and composition and healthy understory vegetation.
- Restore natural disturbance processes (such as fire) by implementing fuels treatments, including prescribed fire and thinning projects, in accordance with Conservation Strategies for Sage-grouse, etc.
- Avoid practices that convert sagebrush habitats to non-native grassland or agricultural land.

Sage-Grouse

- Implement locally developed strategies found in *Conservation Strategies for Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystems within the Buffalo-Skedaddle, Likely Tablelands/Rocky Prairie and Devil's Garden/Clear Lake Population Management Units*. Utilize translocation to augment low populations in conjunction with habitat management projects.

Burrowing Owl

- Inventory and map suitable habitat. Develop a conservation strategy to protect identified nesting burrows and other seasonal habitats.

Pygmy Rabbit

- Inventory and map suitable habitat and determine species abundance. Develop a conservation strategy to protect occupied habitat.

Other Sagebrush-Obligate and Associated Species

- Survey to determine use of sagebrush habitats by sagebrush-obligate and associated species. Determine demographic trends and habitat utilization for these species for utilization in medium and large-scale area, regional, and national strategies for managing sagebrush-obligate species.

RECORD OF DECISION

Other Native Wildlife Species

- Coordinate reintroductions, augmentations, and translocations of native species with state wildlife agencies.
- Create brush piles and water sources for upland game birds and small mammals in important habitats where cover or water is depleted or unreliable.
- Maintain waterfowl nesting islands on 12 reservoirs and create additional islands on 26 reservoirs. Construct island or reservoir fences on 31 reservoirs.
- Current meadow and riparian habitat enhancement projects will continue, and an additional 500 acres of riparian habitat will be fenced. Permanent fencing will protect 200 acres of high-risk aspen and 300 additional acres will be protected with temporary fencing.

Native and Non-Native Fish and Other Aquatic Species

- Restore proper functioning condition to springs and streams by installing and maintaining riparian fencing, maintaining or improving minimum pool depths, augmenting clean spawning gravels, and stabilizing stream banks.
- Coordinate with state agencies when implementing management actions--especially proposed stocking of fish.
- Implement habitat improvements for warm-water fish at the following reservoirs: Iverson, Lower Roberts, Coyote, Romero, Little Juniper, Knox Gulch, Popcorn #1, Antelope, West Valley and Moon Reservoirs.

Non-Native Terrestrial Species

- Manage to reduce or eliminate populations of non-native or invasive species that are impacting native species and/or habitats in a manner consistent with state and federal policies, procedures, and regulations.

Protest and Appeal

The Alturas Proposed RMP decisions were available for protest to the BLM Director for a 30 day period, between June 15, 2007, and July 16, 2007, in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2. Two protests were received. Resolutions to the protests did not result in the necessity for more analysis or repeat publication of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS for additional public review and protest.

The decisions designating routes of travel for motorized vehicles are **implementation decisions** and are appealable under 43 CFR Part 4. The appeal procedures are summarized below. These travel management decisions, as described in Chapter 2.16 Travel Management of the RMP, are effective upon issuance of this Record of Decision, unless a stay of the decision is granted.

Public notice was provided for the land use plan in accordance with 43 CFR 8342.3(b) through publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* for the Alturas Proposed RMP/FEIS (Volume 72, Number 115, June 15, 2007) and for the Alturas Record of Decision and Approved RMP.

RECORD OF DECISION

APPEAL PROCEDURES

Any party adversely affected by the proposed travel route designations as identified in Chapter 2.16 Travel Management of the RMP, may appeal within 30 days of receipt of this decision in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR Part 4.4. The publication of the NOA of this ROD and Approved RMP will be considered the date the decision is received. The appeal should state the specific route(s), as identified in Chapter 2.16 Travel Management, on which the decision is being appealed. The appeal must be filed with the Alturas Field Manager, at the following address:

Bureau of Land Management
Alturas Field Office
708 West 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101

You may include a statement of reasons when the notice of appeal is filed, or you may file the statement of reasons within 30 days after filing the appeal. A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents must also be sent to the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite E-1712, Sacramento, CA, 95825.

If the statement of reasons is filed separately, it must be sent to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203. It is suggested that any appeal be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

REQUEST FOR STAY

If you wish to request a stay of the decision pending the outcome of the appeal, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer at the time the appeal is filed and must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Mitigation and Monitoring

The BLM has incorporated design features into proposed management actions that will avoid or reduce adverse impacts to resources. Design features include standard operating procedures and best management practices. For many resources, the environmental analysis has indicated that significant adverse impacts would not occur, or that their magnitude would be negligible. The BLM will employ all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm while still meeting the goals, purpose and need requirements of the Alturas RMP. In addition, all implementation level projects will undergo a site specific environmental analysis. Mitigation measures will be incorporated as necessary to reduce adverse impacts identified in the environmental analysis.

RECORD OF DECISION

This ROD approves monitoring programs that aid in managing and protecting the resources and uses of the planning area. The BLM will monitor biological resources in order to evaluate if desired outcomes (goals and objectives) as described in the RMP are being met as management actions are implemented. The Alturas RMP Monitoring Plan is included in the ROD under Appendix A.

Public Involvement and Cooperating Agencies

SCOPING AND ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

The BLM officially initiated the planning process for the Draft Alturas RMP with publication of a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on July 22, 2003 (Volume 68, Number 140). Issues related to resource management in the Alturas planning area were assembled during the scoping process consisting of public scoping meetings, field tours, socioeconomic workshops, and interactions with federal, state, tribal, and county collaborators. The BLM hosted six public scoping meetings in August and September 2003, with a total of 205 people attending these meetings. Four meetings were held within the planning area. Two others were held in Redding, California, and Reno, Nevada, to ensure that the BLM heard the concerns of user groups residing outside the planning area. The BLM also conducted a scoping meeting in the field in August 2003. A community workshop was conducted to discuss economics and social values in December 2003.

The scoping process generated 15 key issues to be addressed in the Alturas RMP. These issues were used to develop alternatives and are addressed in other sections of the resource management plan (for example, effects on local economies).

DRAFT RMP/DRAFT EIS AND PROPOSED RMP/FINAL EIS

The public comment period for the Alturas Draft RMP/Draft EIS opened with publication of the NOA in the *Federal Register* on April 28, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 82). This NOA announced the publication of the Draft RMP/DEIS, and also solicited public comments and participation. The BLM distributed approximately 250 copies of the Draft Alturas RMP/DEIS. The public had 90 days (until July 27, 2006) to submit comments on the Draft RMP/DEIS. To facilitate this process, the BLM held seven public comment meetings.

The public comment period generated approximately 4,997 submissions of one (nearly identical) form letter, and 33 additional unique comment letters from individuals and groups. The number of comments that the BLM analyzed and responded to was approximately 402. These comments and the BLM's responses to them are summarized in Appendix R of the PRMP/FEIS. Based on the comments and feedback received, the BLM prepared the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The BLM made several edits and clarifications regarding management decisions in the Proposed RMP. In addition, five substantive changes were made to management decisions:

1. Retain the Red Rock Wild Horse Herd Management Area as it currently exists.
2. Change of recreational boating restrictions - Nelson Corral Reservoir and Delta Lake: electric trolling or nonmotorized; Moon Lake: 2 & 4 cycle outboard. Bayley Reservoir: small 4 cycle outboard (implemented in 2012).

RECORD OF DECISION

3. Removal of snowmobile restrictions within 8,000 acres of Nelson Corral routes, December 1- March 15th.
4. Expansion of maximum width of utility corridors to 500 feet.
5. Designation of the potential California-Nevada (east-west) utility corridor as a right-of-way corridor, as defined in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, *Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Lands in the 11 Western States*, Department of Energy, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Department of Defense, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October 2007, and subsequent amendments.

Public notice was provided for the Alturas Proposed RMP/FEIS through publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* (Volume 72, Number 115, June 15, 2007). The NOA also described public protest procedures. The BLM distributed approximately 300 paper copies and CDs of the Alturas Proposed RMP/Final EIS to interested parties and made the document available on the web, at BLM offices, and at the Alturas public library.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION

The Alturas Field Office interacts with three federally recognized tribes. Consultation with tribes regarding the Alturas RMP began in July, 2003. On July 24, 2003, certified letters were sent to tribal offices containing a packet of information about RMPs and the BLM planning process. The tribes were also formally invited to attend a scoping meeting set up especially to address their concerns and involvement with the Alturas RMP. Several consultation meetings were held during which the tribes provided input into plan development.

Tribal consultation continued during the alternative formulation process in 2004 to 2005. The Draft Alturas RMP/DEIS was made available for public review in April of 2006, and copies of the document were sent to the tribes along with a letter informing the tribes to provide their written comments to the BLM by September 27, 2006. Each of the tribes provided extensive comments on the Draft RMP/DEIS either in letters or during consultation meetings.

A briefing was held on the Alturas Draft RMP/DEIS with the California State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO) on April 5, 2006. Planning and process procedures were discussed in addition to discussions about outreach and coordination efforts of the Alturas Field Office. Each of the tribes was also consulted with on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

COUNTY, STATE, AND FEDERAL PARTICIPATION

During the planning process Modoc, Lassen, Shasta, and Siskiyou Counties requested specific information regarding certain aspects of the Alturas RMP of interest to them, such as land tenure, special designations, recreation management, access, and energy development. In each instance, the Alturas Field Manager and representatives from the Alturas BLM staff met personally and or talked by telephone with local county officials and discussed their issues and how the RMP would address their concerns.

The following state agencies have been provided with information and have participated in the RMP process: California SHPO, California Department of Fish and Game, and

RECORD OF DECISION

California Department of Water Resources. The Alturas Proposed RMP was submitted to the California Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, for review by appropriate agencies. The Alturas Field Manager received a notification of consistency with the State of California for the RMP on September 17, 2007.

The BLM initiated formal consultation on the Proposed RMP by submitting a Biological Assessment to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as described below.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) CONSULTATION

The BLM has determined that two federally listed threatened wildlife species, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) are of concern in the Alturas planning area. In addition, four federally listed endangered wildlife species, Modoc sucker (*Catostomus microps*), shortnose sucker (*Chasmistes brevirostris*), Lost River sucker (*Deltistes luxatus*), and Shasta crayfish (*Pacifastacus fortis*) occur in the AFO planning area. Two federal candidate species, yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) and Oregon spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*) also occur. Two plant species, Slender Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*) a federally listed threatened species, and Soldier Meadow cinquefoil (*Potentilla basaltica*) a federally listed candidate species, occur in the planning area.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA, the BLM initiated formal consultation on the effects of the Proposed RMP by submitting a Biological Assessment to the USFWS on these ten species. The USFWS issued a Biological Opinion for the Alturas Proposed RMP on May 3, 2007, which concurs with the BLM's effects analysis.

At the time of the BLM's request to initiate formal consultation, the bald eagle was federally listed as threatened. For additional information, see *Changes Made to the Approved RMP*.

NORTHEAST CALIFORNIA RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)

The Northeast California RAC members were kept involved with the planning process through briefings provided during their regular council meetings, and through workshops designed to gather and disseminate key information and data.

ADVERTISEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

News media press releases were issued or posted to notify the public of the project, to announce public meetings and workshops, to request public comments, and to provide contact information. Press releases were sent to local and major northern California and Nevada newspapers, radio stations and TV stations, and meeting announcements were published in several local and regional newspapers. These include the *Lassen County Times*, Susanville; the *Reno Gazette Journal*, Reno; the *Modoc County Record*, Alturas; *Mountain Echo*, Fall River Mills; *Inter Mountain News*, Burney; *Butte Valley Star*, Dorris; *Herald and News*, Klamath Falls; and the *Modoc Independent News*, Cedarville. Announcements were also broadcast by the news department at Sierra Radio Network, Susanville, which airs news on two regional radio stations. All announcements were posted on the BLM's news release website, and carried in the BLM's *News.bytes* electronic newsletter, which circulates to more than 30,000 readers inside and outside of

RECORD OF DECISION

the BLM. News articles were printed in at least two local newspapers on RMP development at different points in the planning process.

PROJECT WEBSITE

An informational website, <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/alturas.html> has been available to the public throughout the planning process. It provides background information on the Alturas Field Office, and downloadable versions of documents, including the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and Record of Decision.

PLANNING UPDATE MAILERS

The BLM produced four special Planning Update mailers to announce public scoping and alternative development meetings, and to announce the publication of the Draft RMP/DEIS. These were sent via direct mail to the Alturas mailing list and were also distributed at public meetings. The Planning Updates included background information on the Alturas Field Office's lands, a description and timeline for the upcoming planning process, dates and locations of the public scoping meetings, and contact information for getting public comments to the BLM.

RECORD OF DECISION

APPENDIX A

**ALTURAS FIELD
OFFICE**

MONITORING PLAN

Alturas Approved RMP – Monitoring Plan

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Cultural and Paleontological Resources</p>	<p>Preserve and protect significant cultural and paleontological resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and Executive orders.</p> <p>Reduce imminent threats to cultural resources from natural or human caused deterioration or potential conflicts with other resource uses by identifying priority geographic areas for future inventory of cultural resources.</p> <p>Increase the public's knowledge of, appreciation for and sensitivity to cultural resources, Native American issues, and paleontological resources.</p> <p>Through consultation with Tribes, provide for Native American use of culturally significant resources and properties. Nominate as traditional cultural properties those areas that qualify.</p>	<p>A representative sample of significant cultural sites will be monitored at least once every three years (1-3 years), and a mitigation plan based on the results of the monitoring will be developed if necessary. Selected archaeological sites within Emigrant Trails, Timbered Crater, Mountain Peaks, Old Growth Juniper, Mount Dome, Likely Tablelands/Yankee Jim/Fitzhugh Creek and Ash Valley ACECs, will be carefully monitored annually for vandalism, recreation, OHV, fire suppression, and livestock impacts. Additional areas subject to monitoring as outlined above are: Juniper Creek, Tule Mountain, Red Rock Lakes, Crooks Canyon, Dill Field and Rocky Prairie. A minimum of thirty sites within the resource area will be monitored every year. If the monitoring program reveals significant impacts to cultural sites in any of these areas, emergency closures or limitations for ORV or other uses will be imposed.</p> <p>Cultural resources will be protected through the use of patrols and law enforcement agents during heavy public use periods to protect resources from vandalism. Periodic ground patrols will be used year-round to reduce or prevent pothunting. Major sites will be periodically inspected to document any damage and identify future stabilization needs.</p> <p>Avoidance or mitigation of specimens will be the standard when there are surface disturbances within areas of known paleontological deposits. Management plans will be developed for significant properties requiring protection or stabilization when identified. Assistance to institutions doing research or collection of specimens will be encouraged. Monitoring and recording of specimen locations will continue.</p> <p>The BLM will continue to conduct inventories for compliance with Section 110 of the NHPA to find and document cultural properties that qualify for the National Register. This will include the continued evaluation of grazing allotments per agreement with the CA-SHPO under the Rangeland Amendment. These surveys will be directed toward areas where prior data indicates a possible need for active resource management to protect important sites, such as Category 1 allotments. A minimum of 500 acres not related to Section 106 compliance will be surveyed for cultural resources every year. The BLM may also acquire scientifically or historically valuable sites through land exchanges, when such a goal is determined to be in the public interest.</p> <p>Cultural resources will continue to be inventoried and evaluated as part of project level planning to achieve the objective of protecting significant properties from impact by proposed federally funded or authorized actions. This inventory and evaluation includes application of the National Register criteria to cultural properties and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Governments, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, as appropriate per current regulations, policy, and the CA-BLM-SHPO Protocol Agreement.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
Fire Management	Document management response to wildland fires.	Document instances of use of heavy equipment for fire suppression in ACECs, WSAs, RNAs, and whether such equipment was restricted to existing roads and trails. The Field Office Manager assigns a Resource Advisor to the fire who documents fire suppression impacts to resources. Resource Advisor supervises and documents (written and photographs) rehabilitation of suppression activities (i.e. dozer lines, safety zones, staging areas, etc).
Fire Rehabilitation and Stabilization	Burned areas would be stabilized and rehabilitated to minimize threats to life and property and to mitigate the adverse effects of wildland fires on soils, vegetation, and waterways.	Monitoring is required on all Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) plans. Monitoring and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of ES&R treatments will be funded for up to three years following containment of a wildfire. The monitoring plan will contain provisions for monitoring and evaluation of treatments and activities (including criteria for measuring a successful treatment or activity), techniques, and a procedure for collecting, archiving, and disseminating results. The monitoring plan must have clearly stated and measurable goals and objectives. Photographs are strongly encouraged at all monitoring sites. Monitoring methods may include photo points, density, cover, gap intercept, frequency plots, ocular estimates, and soil erosion within each eco-region and plant community. The elements of a defensible monitoring program applicable to ES&R and burned area emergency response (BAER) projects that most of these manuals have in common are objectives, stratification, control areas, random sampling, data quality, and statistical analysis.
	Provide appropriate levels of rest or deferment from grazing after a wildfire to meet emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation goals and objectives.	Livestock are to be excluded from burned areas until monitoring results, documented in writing, show emergency stabilization and rehabilitation objectives have been met. Objectives must be clearly defined in the Emergency Stabilization and/or Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan.
Forestry	Enhance and maintain the health and resilience of forests and woodlands and reduce their vulnerability to wildfires.	Stand composition, productivity, and structure will be documented and maintained within the Forvis database. Record accomplishments for providing wood products in the Timber Sale Information System database and MIS reporting.
Fuels Management	Fuel treatments would prioritize wildland/urban interface areas of communities situated in the midst of juniper-invaded sagebrush-steppe. Projects would also be designed to enhance important wildlife habitats and protect cultural resources.	Measure density of fuel loads (biomass) before and after treatment, using the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Stereo Photo Series for Quantifying Natural Fuels and other fuel load density methods. Fire effects studies using current fire monitoring protocols will be conducted on prescribed burns.

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Livestock Grazing</p>	<p>Allotments will be managed in compliance with standards set forth in the Approved Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing.</p>	<p>Use the rangeland health assessment process prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health, Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines, and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.</p>
	<p>Assess resource conditions on all priority (Category 1) allotments, followed by lower category allotments. Allotment management plans would be developed based upon analysis of Rangeland Health Assessments, all monitoring data and current management objectives and/or concerns.</p>	<p>Assess Rangeland Health (qualitative) on Category 1 allotments, with an interdisciplinary team, every 10 years or at the time of permit renewal or permit transfer. Report acres moving toward or away from meeting standards as part of meeting RMP objectives.</p> <p>Actual Use: Animal Unit Month (AUM) numbers reported 15 days after completing authorized grazing use on those allotments that qualify for actual use reporting. Forage consumed by livestock would be reported based on number of livestock and length of grazing use. Numbers would potentially be reduced when allotments are not meeting or progressing towards meeting standards due to livestock grazing.</p> <p>Photo points: Taken at repeatable locations showing changes over time.</p> <p>Climate monitoring: Compiling precipitation and temperature information from 6 remote weather stations throughout the field office.</p>
<p>Vegetation – Native Plant Communities</p>	<p>Determine changes in health, diversity, and productivity of native plant communities.</p>	<p>Measure trends in vegetative production, structure, and composition, soil/site stability, watershed function, and integrity of biotic community. Use the rangeland health assessment process prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health, Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines, and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1 guiding implementation of the rangeland health standards.</p> <p>Conduct periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity, as well as the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter. Monitoring of existing condition of vegetation would consist of identifying ecological sites, determining ecological status, determining soil types, vegetation mapping, baseline inventory, and assembling existing basic information. Procedures used (and frequency of use) would be primarily those in BLM Technical References 1734-7, 4400-5, Sampling Vegetation Attributes Technical Reference TR-1734-4, Herrick, J.E., et al, 2005, Monitoring Manual for Grassland, Shrubland, and Savanna Ecosystems, or Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations, Elzinga, Salzar, & Willoughby, 1998.</p>
	<p>Rehabilitate or restore shrub and shrub/grassland communities that are not meeting desired future condition due to invasion by western juniper, other decadent woody species, and exotic annual grasses or noxious weeds/undesirable species.</p>	<p>Conduct periodic measurements of plant composition, vigor, and productivity, as well as measurement of the amount and distribution of plant cover and litter. Monitor herbaceous or woody utilization, actual use, and climatic conditions to determine the effectiveness of established tools in meeting objectives.</p> <p>Fire effects studies using current fire monitoring protocols will be conducted on prescribed burns.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
Vegetation – Native Plant Communities (continued)	Assess the distribution and density of rare plant communities, including quaking aspen, curlleaf mountain mahogany, Oregon white oak, and blue oak stands. Achieve mixed age-classes.	Monitor for seedling establishment, seedling and sapling survival, and understory herbaceous plant diversity. Monitor for effectiveness of treatments in rare plant communities that receive restoration treatments or conifer removal. Effective monitoring methods should be used (e.g., Sampling Vegetation Attributes Technical Reference TR-1734-4, or Herrick, J.E., et al, 2005, Monitoring Manual for Grassland, Shrubland, and Savanna Ecosystems).
	Rehabilitate native juniper woodlands to maintain a mixed age class with a cover of no more than 25%.	Establish canopy cover transects.
Special Status Plants	Known occurrences/populations of special status plants will be monitored to determine the health of the plants and associated plant communities. BLM will continue to survey for the presence of additional occurrences/ populations of special status plants.	Long-term monitoring would be conducted using permanent vegetation transects read according to the method chosen. Visual reconnaissance would be used to obtain general information on the habitats of special status plants. Individual special status plant species populations and habitats would be monitored annually or bi-annually and a CDFG native species field survey form filled out. Effective monitoring methods should be used (e.g., Sampling Vegetation Attributes Technical Reference TR-1734-4 and Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations, Elzinga, Salzar, & Willoughby, 1998. Establish a long-term monitoring plot for Soldier Meadows cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla basaltica</i>), a federal candidate species, in the Ash Valley ACEC/RNA.
	Continue monitoring the “Green Place” vernal pool which is critical habitat for slender orcutt grass, <i>Orcuttia tenuis</i> (federally listed as threatened).	Conduct monitoring jointly with Lassen National Forest for all vernal pools in northeastern Shasta County. Work on a revision of the <i>Orcuttia tenuis</i> Species Management Guide with the Lassen and Modoc National Forests.
Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species	Document changes in presence and abundance of noxious weeds and other undesirable invasive plants, particularly in areas where ground disturbances have occurred.	Implement adaptive management monitoring for noxious weed and non-indigenous plant species treatments/control. Conduct annual monitoring for new noxious weeds, concentrating in areas where ground disturbing activities have occurred, and where the public or agency personnel have reported sightings. Visit known noxious weed sites that are identified for treatment, and evaluate for effectiveness of control (annually). Monitor for both invasiveness and impacts. Monitor for new satellite populations of noxious weeds beyond existing noxious weed infestations/populations. Visit known sites not identified for treatment on a rotational basis over three years. For all known sites and any newly discovered sites, locate with a global positioning system (GPS) unit, photograph, measure, and determine the need for future treatment. Survey all burned areas (natural and prescribed) over 20 acres for noxious weeds for three years following the burn.

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Vegetation – Riparian/ Wetlands</p>	<p>Improve, restore, and/or maintain riparian vegetation, especially in terms of habitat diversity and hydrologic function to achieve healthy and abundantly productive riparian areas and wetlands.</p>	<p>Conduct Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessment per TR 1737-9 and TR 1737-15 (assessment for streams) and TR 1737-11 and TR 1737-16 (assessments for lakes/wetlands) to assess the functionality of riparian and wetland areas.</p> <p>Concurrent with assessment of PFC, determine existing or potential natural community for all riparian and wetland sites, according to guidelines specified in Riparian Area Management, Greenline-Riparian-Wetland Monitoring, Technical Reference 1737-8, (1993.) An ecological site inventory would also be conducted for riparian-wetland sites as specified in Riparian Area Management, <i>Procedures for Ecological Site Inventory—with Special Reference to Riparian-Wetland Sites</i>, (Steve Leonard, et al; BLM Technical Reference 1737-7, 1992.)</p> <p>Measure the amount and distribution of plants across a channel cross-section using riparian transects; document visual changes over time on the condition of the stream corridor using photo points.</p>
<p>Recreation and Visitor Services</p>	<p>Support a broad range of appropriate and sustainable recreational opportunities and minimize potential conflicts between user groups.</p> <p>Ensure that recreational facilities and recreational activities do not degrade ecosystems, natural and cultural resources, or scenic values.</p>	<p>Conduct monitoring on a bi-weekly basis at developed recreation sites (campgrounds, trailheads, improved day use areas, etc.). Conduct periodic patrols of popular undeveloped use areas where recreation use is concentrated. Include patrols to check boundaries, signing, and visitor use; ensure visitor compliance with rules and regulations; establish baseline data and observation points to determine current impacts from recreational use; and develop studies to help determine appropriate levels and patterns of recreational use and the influences of other resource uses.</p> <p>Focus field monitoring on visitation levels, compliance with rules, regulations, and permit stipulations for specific sites, dispersed uses, and prescribed standards and guidelines. Permits issued to commercial guides for hunting and fishing services will be monitored for compliance of permit stipulations and post-use requirements. Use visitor surveys, traffic counters, surveillance at developed recreation sites, documentation of user conflicts, and photo documentation of the changes in resource conditions over time.</p> <p>Monitoring may also include collection of data from visitor comments and complaints, or information request calls or emails. Use monitoring data to manage visitor use, develop plans and projects to reduce visitor impacts, and to provide appropriate facility or transportation system design.</p> <p>Annually, drive, ride, or hike each scenic byway, backcountry byway, or other sightseeing routes and vista points. Monitor unauthorized uses, conditions, trends, changes, or impacts to scenic values. Record results or changes and establish a file for monitoring of each byway.</p> <p>Monitor impacts of proposed projects to scenic resources along scenic byways and vista points. Manage to meet VRM objectives established in this RMP for public lands along those scenic travel routes and as viewed from those vista points. Utilize the 3-mile buffer zone to prevent visual intrusions to highways, vistas, and recreation sites.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Special Designations – Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)</p>	<p>Designate ACECs where the “relevance and importance” criteria are met, and implement management actions to protect recognized values.</p> <p>Identify and protect all sites and resources that meet the relevance and importance criteria. Where necessary, take immediate steps to prevent irreparable damage to resources and natural systems. Promote safety and protect human life where natural hazards exist. Evaluate and consider designation for all areas that meet ACEC requirements. Formulate and implement management plans for designated ACECs.</p>	<p>Each ACEC will have a management plan prepared for the ACEC that will include a monitoring component.</p> <p>Each of the seven ACECs or ACEC/RNAs will be monitored for the values which they were established at a minimum of once per year. This includes 29,171 acres of the six new ACECs and 1322 acres of the previously designated Ash Valley ACEC/RNA.</p> <p>Periodically monitor the impacts of management actions on resource values, threatened wildlife populations, and the health of RNA plant community cells. This will be done using such techniques as photo points, line intercept transects, ocular surveillance, study plots, and value points. Plant population monitoring techniques will be established upon completion of the management plan for each ACEC/RNA.</p> <p>A representative sample of significant cultural sites will be monitored at least once every three years, and a mitigation plan will be developed based on the results of the monitoring, if necessary. Specific archaeological sites within Emigrant Trails, Timbered Crater, Mountain Peaks, Old Growth Juniper, Mt. Dome, Likely Tablelands/Yankee Jim/Fitzhugh Creek and Ash Valley ACECs will be monitored annually for vandalism, recreation, OHV, fire suppression, and livestock impacts. Methods will include photos, line transects, and frames. If the monitoring program reveals significant impacts to cultural sites, emergency closures or limitations to OHV or other uses will be imposed.</p> <p>Collate existing base information and develop additional baseline inventories of plant communities following “Research Natural Areas: Baseline Monitoring and Management” (USDA-FS, 1984). Periodically monitor the impacts of management actions on resource values, including the health of RNA plant community cells. Monitoring of vegetation will follow methods outlined under <i>Vegetation – Native Plant Communities and Special Status Plants, and Technical References 1734-7, 4400-5, Sampling Vegetation Attributes</i> Technical Reference TR-1734-4, Herrick, J.E., et al, 2005, <i>Monitoring Manual for Grassland, Shrubland, and Savanna Ecosystems</i>, or <i>Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations</i>, Elzinga, Salzar, & Willoughby, 1998. This will be done using such techniques as photo points, line intercept transects, ocular surveillance, study plots, and value points.</p>
<p>Special Designations – Historic trails</p>	<p>Provide or enhance history-based recreational opportunities related to historic trails, where appropriate. Ensure that history-related facilities and increased visitation will not threaten other resources.</p> <p>Protect historically important settings, including the physical traces and visual integrity of historic trail sites.</p> <p>Provide a range of recreational opportunities that encourage visitors to learn about and experience emigrant trails, military patrol routes, and trail-related historical sites.</p>	<p>Monitor site specific locations with trail traces at three locations at a minimum of once per year: Descent into Goose Lake, Pit River-Round Barn, and Lower Klamath. Provide intermittent monitoring on other locations, and establish permanent photo points at significant trail locations. Include signing, utilize periodic patrols and photo points to check trail traces at established vulnerable locations and associated features, and ensure that emigrant trails or trail resources are not compromised by visitor use. Inspect planned projects as well as on-the-ground projects for compliance to maintain trail integrity. Monitor, record, and document with photos any erosion, OHV impacts or other damage from visitor use or project work. Assure that the VRM objectives for public lands seen along the trail are met. Immediately halt impacting agents and rectify damage to trail traces and associated resources.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR)</p>	<p>Manage three waterways and associated uplands, so as not to impair their suitability for WSR designation. If designated, ensure that future planning, projects, and management actions maintain the free-flowing character and outstandingly remarkable values of these WSRs.</p> <p>Provide reasonable public access and encourage low-impact recreation. Ensure hazard information is available to the public.</p>	<p>Conduct monitoring, including periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, and visitor use to ensure that outstandingly remarkable values are not compromised on 18.5 miles of three WSR segments. Inspect planned projects as well as on-the-ground projects for compliance to maintain WSR integrity. Monitor the upper and lower boundaries of each WSR at a minimum of once per year, document with photos at permanent locations at the on-stream boundaries. Every other year inspect random segments of the interior of each WSR for compliance to maintain WSR integrity.</p>
<p>Special Designations – Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)</p>	<p>Manage four WSAs so as not to impair their suitability for wilderness designation.</p>	<p>Follow direction within the existing policy for WSAs (USDI-BLM 1995). Monitor 56,648 acres of WSAs during the months the area is accessible by the public, or more frequently if necessary because of potential use activities or other resource conflicts. Use aerial surveillance, on-the-ground surveillance, visitor contact, permit compliance checks, and other methods as appropriate.</p>
<p>Travel Management</p>	<p>Manage motor vehicle use to protect natural and cultural resources, minimize user conflicts, and maintain public safety.</p> <p>Provide adequate motorized public access, and ensure that area and route designations sufficiently protect non-motorized areas and non-motorized recreation, while accommodating motorized activities in suitable locations on appropriate routes.</p> <p>Identify and map undocumented routes in areas that were not included in the 2004 route inventory, including areas not normally accessed by motor vehicles.</p> <p>Modify the travel route system on 902 miles of routes, where needed to improve access or protect resources.</p>	<p>Conduct monitoring, including periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, compliance with travel designation requirements that all motor vehicles remain on existing or designated roads and trails unless otherwise authorized, and meeting land health standards for OHVs as established by BLM’s Northeast CA Resource Advisory Council</p> <p>Periodically check that developed roads are available to all communities and routes are planned to access public land where use is deemed appropriate, as well as protect resources from unwarranted impacts. Establish photo points on three locations to determine OHV impacts to soils, water quality, and ecosystems: Delta/Bayley Road, Hogback Allotment, and the Westside Allotment. Additional areas for potential inspection and surveillance include: the Day Bench area, Modoc Gulch, and Brush Mountain. Areas will be monitored in the spring and fall for compliance through the various use seasons.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
<p>Travel Management (continued)</p>	<p>Support community-based efforts to promote rural tourism and benefit local economies by creating a high-quality, non-motorized trail network.</p>	<p>Conduct periodic inspections at Cinder Cone, Barnes Grade/Crowder, and the Fall River Trail OHV management areas. Establish photo point transects (minimum of once per year) on OHV impacted areas, as well as non-impacted locations to determine appropriate use and levels.</p> <p>Hike or ride non-motorized trails to monitor trail conditions to determine trail maintenance needs, and to assess types and amounts of visitor use on trails. Evaluate trail impacts on natural resources through visual inspections, photo at problem areas (erosion, users short cutting, etc). Use trail traffic counters where appropriate to determine visitor use levels. Involve volunteers to assist in trail monitoring where appropriate and feasible.</p>
	<p>Ensure that recreational quality and access are maintained for whitewater and recreational boating, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other suitable activities.</p>	<p>Conduct monitoring, including periodic patrols to check boundaries, signing, and visitor use; to ensure visitor compliance with rules and regulations. Ensure that the designated motor requirements for boating are met and adhered to on Nelson Corral and Bayley reservoirs, Moon and Delta Lakes, once yearly on each water body.</p> <p>Periodically check that the maintained and primitive roads meet the objectives set forth in the RMP to ensure water quality, hunting, wildlife habitat, recreational values, and high quality fisheries are maintained and available to communities and users, and ensure resource values are not compromised.</p>
<p>Water Resources</p>	<p>Improve hydrologic function and/or water quality in areas not meeting state standards.</p>	<p>Use the rangeland health assessment process, particularly Standards 2, 3, and 4 according to Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health, Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines, and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1.</p> <p>Water quality monitoring would be conducted at the established water quality sampling stations on a priority basis using the following indicators that were chosen based on the standards contained in the Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management. These indicators are temperature, nutrients, fecal coliform, turbidity, sediment, dissolved oxygen, and stream channel condition. The protocol is outlined in the USDI - BLM National Field Manual for the Collection of Water Quality Data and the Susanville District Bioregional Assessment Water Quality Inventory Statement of Work.</p> <p>Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be developed and implemented to protect and restore the quality and beneficial uses of water at the project level. BMPs will be monitored and evaluated on implementation and effectiveness as part of the project or activity plan.</p>
	<p>Determine in-stream flow requirements necessary to support healthy aquatic and riparian habitats. Acquire and maintain water rights needed to protect federal investments by ensuring an adequate and reliable water supply for BLM programs.</p>	<p>Conduct Proper Functioning Condition Assessment TR 1737-9 and TR 1737-15 and TR 1737-11 and TR 1737-16 to assess the functionality of riparian and wetland areas. Additional stream Habitat Condition Surveys and macro-invertebrate sampling would be conducted as needed to assess functionality of streams for fish and other aquatic resources.</p> <p>Completion of the Water Source Inventory and maintenance of water rights data base would provide needed information to assert federal water rights, especially Public Water Reserves to protect federal investments and to ensure a reliable water supply for beneficial uses of public lands.</p>

Resource	RMP Goal/Objective	Suggested Methodology
Wild Horses	The Red Rock Herd Management Area (HMA) will be maintained in a stable, ecologically healthy condition with respect to soils, vegetation, wildlife, and other resources with wild horses at the AML.	<p>On a periodic basis, evaluate every herd management area using the “Healthy Rangelands Standards and Guidelines”. Field data collection includes using the rangeland health and riparian functional assessment process, as prescribed in the most current versions of Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health, Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines, and BLM Manual 4180 and Handbook H-4180-1. Conduct periodic evaluations about once every 10 years, or when changes in resource conditions are apparent.</p> <p>Herd population monitoring and distribution data collection would occur periodically. Aerial census would be completed at 3-year intervals.</p>
Wildlife and Fisheries	<p>Habitats of federally listed (endangered, threatened, or candidate), state-listed and BLM sensitive wildlife will be protected, restored, and maintained so that species populations increase in size and stability, and occupy available habitats.</p> <p>Naturally occurring habitats for all wildlife species native to the planning area will be managed in such a way that food, water, thermal and escape cover, and reproductive territory is readily available and in satisfactory condition to meet the year-round (or seasonal) requirements of native terrestrial wildlife.</p>	<p>Monitor BLM actions to ensure they are consistent with the Special Status Species Management Policy, BLM Manual 6840, and to ensure they are consistent with the objectives and guidelines outlined in the RMP.</p> <p>In conjunction with other federal, state, or private agencies, continue to monitor wildlife populations in the planning area. Do this for individual species such as bald and golden eagles, sage-grouse, deer, and pronghorn; and groups of species associated with source habitats such as sagebrush-steppe, juniper, and mixed conifer forest.</p> <p>Periodically determine the adequacy of existing data (i.e. species, habitats, etc.) for supporting management decisions.</p> <p>Periodically assess the effectiveness of a sampling of different vegetation treatments and disturbance actions to determine effectiveness of management decisions.</p>
	Aquatic ecosystems (and associated riparian and wetland habitats) will be restored, enhanced, and protected from degradation, so that native (and desirable non-native) fish and other aquatic species will thrive.	Monitor riparian habitat condition on an allotment basis during allotment evaluations or during rangeland health assessments as part of determining properly functioning condition.

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