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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kremmling Field Office
P.O. Box 68
Kremmling, CO 80459**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-120-2010-47

PROJECT NAME: North Hay Gulch Sagebrush Treatment (Brush beat) 2010 and
Antelope Pass Sagebrush Treatment (Harrow) 2011

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: N. Hay Gulch: T. 2 N., R. 80 W., Sec 3, 4 and 5,
T. 3 N., R. 80 W., Sec 33 & 34
Antelope Pass: T. 2 N., R. 80 W., Sec 15, 16, 21 and 22

KREMMLING FIELD OFFICE, KREMMLING, COLORADO

APPLICANT: BLM

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION: The objective of the proposed projects is to improve both the quality and quantity of forage for Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, sage-grouse and other wildlife species that depend on the sagebrush steppe vegetative type.

The project would remove the dense sagebrush overstory, thus allowing an increase to the productivity of young sagebrush, grasses and forbs. This increase would improve early brood habitat for sage-grouse, improve forage for mule deer, pronghorn, and Rocky Mountain elk, and improve nesting cover for sagebrush dependent songbirds and small mammals, all of which inhabit the area during various seasons of the year. In addition, livestock forage would increase due to the expected increase in grass production in the treated areas.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Proposed Action:

The proposed treatments would occur in late fall (October or November) of 2010 and 2011, after sagebrush plants have become brittle and dry. Duration of each project is expected to be approximately 7-10 days. The treated areas would be rested from livestock grazing for one successive growing season using either electric fence or livestock exclusion within the allotments. The treatment would only occur during dry soil conditions to prevent rutting/soil compaction due to wet soils. Both treatments would be completed by private contractors.

North Hay Gulch Project Area (2010):

The Proposed Action is to treat 275 acres of mature, even-aged stands of sagebrush in a 667-acre project area within grazing allotments 07506, 7503, and 7569. The treatments would be accomplished by using a brush beater pulled by a heavy, rubber tired tractor to mow down sagebrush 6-8 inches above the ground, resulting in removal of the dense overstory of older, more decadent sagebrush plants. Minimal surface disturbance is to be expected. The treatment would be applied in patches of about 5-10 acres and separated by patches of untreated stands of sagebrush (see Map #1 for proposed treatment areas).

Antelope Pass Project Area (2011):

The proposed project would involve using a Dixie Harrow to treat 200 acres of mature, even-aged stands of sagebrush in a 510-acre project area within grazing allotments 07506, and 7569 (see Map #2 for proposed treatment areas). The harrow would be pulled by a heavy rubber tired tractor. This method would remove older more decadent sagebrush plants, increase the productivity of young sagebrush, grasses and forbs, and allow native species to be more competitive with invasive plants. The harrow would be applied in multiple strips ranging from 30-40 feet-wide, with each strip separated by 50-70 feet of vegetation that has not been manipulated.

Design features of the Proposed Action (Common to both Project Areas):

- The area would require monitoring for two years following treatment to determine the success of the treatment, control the spread of any weeds or invasive plants, and identify any impacts from livestock and/or wildlife.
- Prior to treatment, measurements would be made in existing sagebrush stands in the area to determine canopy cover so that appropriate treatments can be made that meet guidelines for Greater sage-grouse.
- Machinery accessing the project area would remain on existing roads. The project area would be monitored after implementation, with any new routes being closed utilizing signs and fencing as needed.
- Sensitive Paleontological and Cultural resources will be avoided. These areas will be identified and flagged by BLM specialists prior to treatment. After activities for both projects all flagging around sites would be removed.
- To reduce visual impacts, treatment areas would be irregular shapes that repeat other lines found in the natural landscape (vegetation/landform). To make sure visual resources are met, a pre-treatment site visit with the contractor would occur and implementation would be at the discretion of the operator and biologist on-site. In addition, periodic visits during treatments would also occur to ensure that visual resources concerns are met.
- To reduce impacts on recreation big game hunting treatments would be timed in between hunting seasons.
- The contractor would be required to carry in each of his vehicles a shovel and an ABC rated fire extinguisher.
- The BLM would monitor the project area for the establishment or spread of invasive, non-native species after the project is completed. If invasive weeds are detected, BLM would treat those species.

- To reduce possible indirect impacts to Hay Gulch and Pickering Gulch's riparian areas, BLM will coordinate allotment 7506's livestock use with the permittee. BLM will monitor livestock utilization in these areas and remove livestock early if utilization levels reach 50%.

Design features of the Proposed Action (Specific to Antelope Pass):

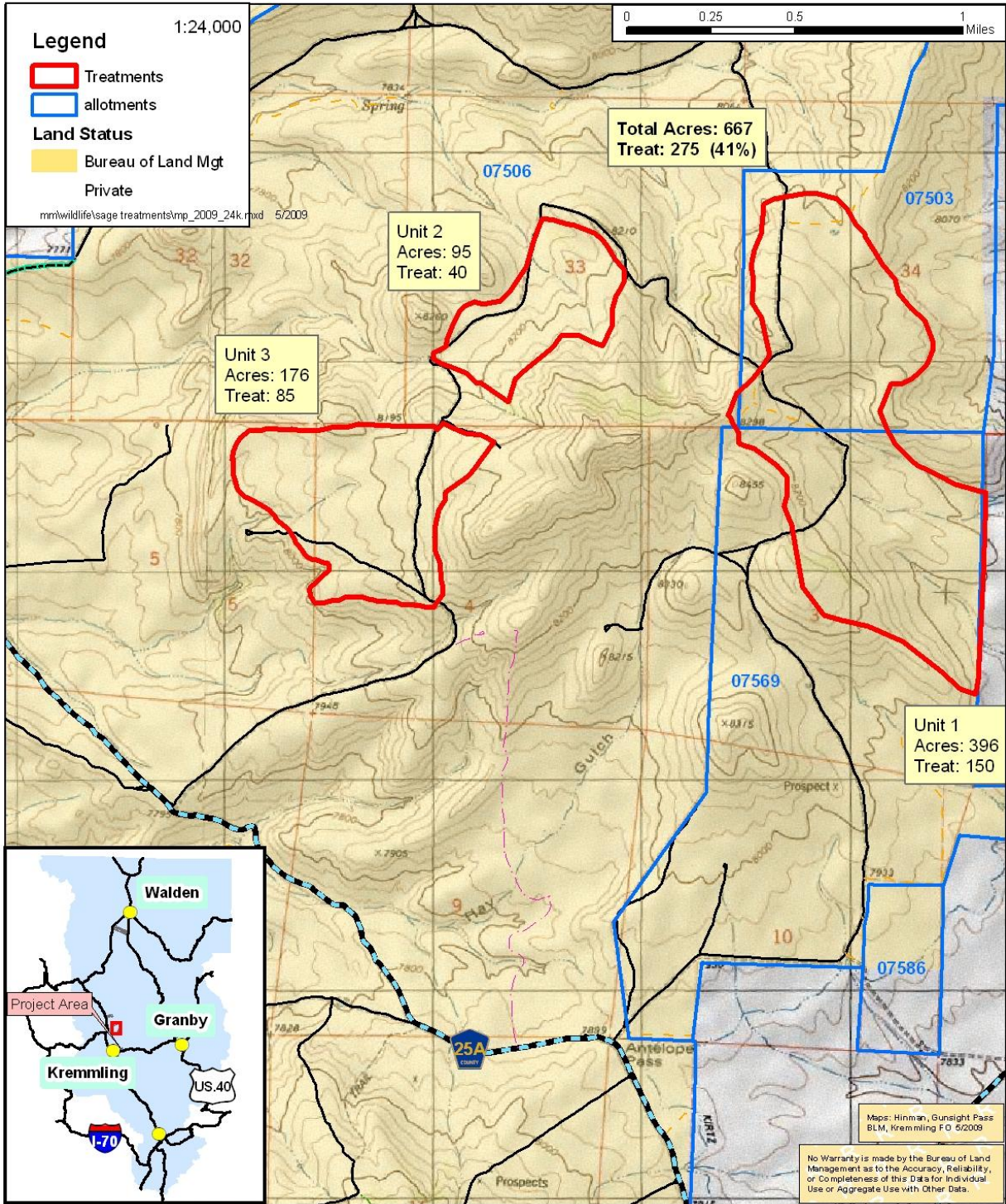
- Prior to treatment, measurements would be made in existing sagebrush stands in the area to determine canopy cover. Once these measurements are made, the selection of either one or two passes with the Dixie Harrow would be made so that sage-grouse nesting cover requirements would improve through treatment.

Map #1



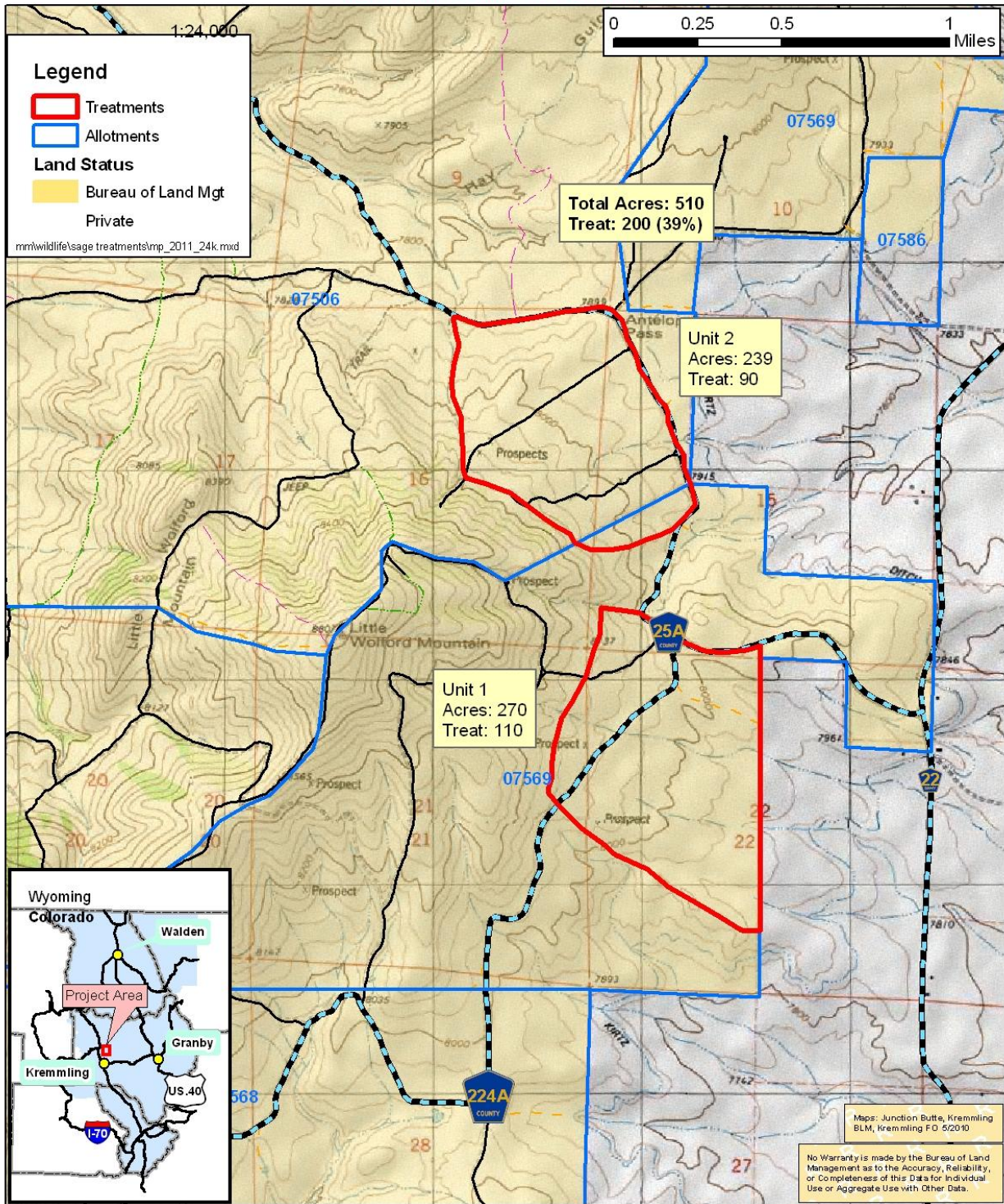
N. Hay Gulch Brushbeat Treatment 2010

T 2N R 80W Sections 3, 4, 5 and T 3N R 80W Sections 33 and 34



Antelope Pass Harrow Project 2011

T 2N R 80W Sections 15, 16, 21 and 22



No Action Alternative: The No Action Alternative is to not implement the vegetation treatments. This alternative would result in habitat conditions for deer, elk, sage-grouse, and other sagebrush dependent species remaining as they currently exist and no improvement of vegetative conditions would occur.

Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Further Analysis: No other alternatives were considered.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Kremmling Resource Management Plan (RMP), Record of Decision (ROD)

Date Approved: December 19, 1984; Updated February 1999

Decision Number/Page: Decision 5.a., page 8

Decision Language: While the RMP doesn't specifically mention this kind of action in terms of a decision, the proposed action supports the following objective:

“Manage public land habitat to support optimum wildlife population levels as determined by the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s Strategic Plan. Emphasis will be placed on intensively managing critical and important wildlife habitats 326,000 acres of upland, 3 miles of riparian, 3,000 acres of wetlands and 53 miles of stream. All threatened and endangered plant and wildlife habitats will be protected as required by law and regulation.”

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: Cultural Resource inventory CR-10-22 was conducted for the North Hay Gulch 2010 project. Three new prehistoric cultural resources sites, 5GA4088, 5GA4089, and 5GA4090, were located and evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Sites 5GA4088 and 5GA4090 are determined to be not eligible to the NRHP. Site 5GA4089 is a prehistoric stone circle site that has been determined to be eligible to the National Register. Three previously recorded sites, 5GA202, 5GA186, and 5GA2919, lie within the project area, of which site 5GA202 was re-evaluated from a ‘need data’ site to not eligible. Sites 5GA186 and 5GA2919 are determined to be eligible to the NRHP.

Cultural Resource Inventory CR-10-02 was conducted for the Antelope Pass 2011 project and located three previously recorded sites, 5GA50, 5GA206, and 5GA639. Site 5GA50 was found to be a component of site 5GA639, since it lies within the boundaries of site 5GA639, known as the Jerry Craig site. Site 5GA206 is a prehistoric lithic procurement and stone circle site that was re-evaluated as eligible to the NRHP.

Environmental Consequences: Site 5GA2919, located within the North Hay Gulch 2010 project, lies within sagebrush that would be treated. The treatment of the sagebrush cover over site 5GA2919 would make the site more exposed to potential artifact collection and impacts from cattle. Sites 5GA186 and 5GA4089 contain surface features that would be impacted by mechanical equipment as a result of brush beating activities.

Two sites, 5GA206 and 5GA639, are both within the Antelope Pass treatment and are determined to be eligible to the NRHP, and, both sites contain surface features that would be affected by mechanical treatment activities.

No Action Alternative:

Changes to the existing vegetation would not occur under this alternative. As a result, there would be no impacts to cultural resources under this alternative.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: A variety of migratory bird species, primarily birds of prey and songbirds, have been observed in allotments 07503, 07506 and 07569. Surveys conducted in 1994 by the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas Partnership recorded many species including Swainson's hawks, Red-tailed hawks, Golden Eagles, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Sage Thrasher, Horned Lark, Killdeer, Loggerhead Shrike, American Kestrel, Common Nighthawk, and others. These species inhabit the sagebrush steppe uplands within the allotments.

Environmental Consequences: The proposed treatments should improve habitat conditions for migratory birds using the treatment areas. The proposed treatments would provide for grass and forb production by reducing sagebrush occurring in the treatment areas. The expected increase in grass and forb productivity would provide additional high quality forage, cover, and nesting habitat. Young sagebrush plants would return to the treated areas over time and would also provide high quality cover and nesting habitat, adding diversity to the existing monotypic age class of sagebrush which currently exists in the project areas.

The No Action alternative would result in the continued limited productivity of vegetation within the project areas. Understory grasses and forbs would not be able to flourish due to the continued dominance of sagebrush on these sites. Food, cover, and nesting habitat for migratory birds would be limited in the future due to the low productivity of grasses and forbs in the sagebrush understory and overabundance of mature sagebrush.

Mitigation: None

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: No listed species would be impacted by the proposed project.

The proposed treatment areas provide habitat for the Greater sage-grouse, a BLM-designated sensitive species. Four sage-grouse breeding complexes, known as leks, are located within four miles of the treatment areas. Since 80 percent of sage-grouse nesting occurs within four miles of

leks, sage-grouse likely nest in suitable habitat in the proposed treatment areas. The area is also mapped as winter habitat identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW).

Under-story vegetation, which is important for successful sage-grouse nesting, is lacking in the project area. Over-abundance of sagebrush and past grazing practices have resulted in the reduction of grasses and forbs.

Environmental Consequences: The proposed vegetative treatment projects would benefit sage-grouse if sufficient sagebrush canopy remains to provide nesting cover. If too much habitat is removed, the treatment could reduce the sagebrush canopy to a level which would render treated areas unusable for sage-grouse nesting for some years in the future. Monitoring the treatment to determine the number of passes with the harrow will ensure that sufficient cover remains for sage-grouse nesting.

Under the No Action Alternative, the project areas would remain as they currently exist. Understory grasses and forbs would continue to exist at levels below optimum for wildlife, especially sage-grouse. Sagebrush canopy would continue to prohibit grass and forb production to increase in both quality and quantity. Sage-grouse nesting and brood rearing would continue to be limited by the over-abundance of sage and lack of grass and forb understory.

Mitigation: None

WETLANDS & RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: Hay Gulch and Pickering Gulch are located in allotment 07506. Hay Gulch is a perennial spring fed drainage that supports a sedge/rush wetland community. In the lower reaches of the drainage there are scattered narrowleaf cottonwood and willows. The drainage is considered to be in proper functioning condition. Pickering Gulch has three distinct seeps with a developed spring near the headwaters. The gulch is primarily intermittent to ephemeral, especially during the last several drier years. The amount and duration of water diverted for livestock is suspected of exacerbating this problem. The immediate area around the seeps is considered in good condition, but the dryland species are increasing in the drainage segments between the seeps.

Environmental Consequences: The proposed treatments are located in the uplands and do not directly affect any wetland or riparian area. Allotment 07506, however, has units 2 and 3 of the North Hay Gulch and unit 2 of the Antelope treatments. During the rest periods necessary to establish revegetation in the treatment areas of allotment 07506, livestock could concentrate more in the gulches. This could result in increased utilization and trampling of the wetland areas. The permittee has agreed to moving livestock out of treated pastures if utilization levels in the riparian areas reach 50%. This insures that riparian conditions are protected from heavy grazing pressures which reduce vegetative cover and vigor and increase trampling of wet soils. After all the treatment areas are rested, the improved upland vegetation could improve livestock distribution and further reduce grazing pressure in allotment 07506 on the two gulches.

No Action Alternative:

Changes to the existing vegetation would not occur under this alternative. As a result, there would be no impacts to wetlands or riparian zones under this alternative.

Mitigation: None

RANGE MANAGEMENT:

Affected Environment:

North Hay Gulch Treatment (Brush beat) 2010: The Proposed Action would occur in three livestock grazing allotments. Allotment 07506 (Antelope Pass) is divided into five pastures and authorized for 296 AUMs of livestock grazing. The permittee is authorized to graze 243 cattle from May 25 through June 30 each year. One or two pastures are rested each year to allow the vegetation to complete a life cycle without disturbance from livestock. Allotment 07503 (Ritschard C) is authorized for 92 AUMs and is generally used for a few days in late June as a transition pasture before the cattle are moved off of the BLM. Allotment 07569 (Wheatley A) is authorized for 208 AUMs of livestock grazing. The allotment is grazed by 180 cattle from May 16 through June 19 each year.

Antelope Pass Harrow Project 2011: The Proposed Action would occur in two of the three same allotments (07506, 07569) as the North Hay Gulch Treatment in 2010.

Environmental Consequences: In the long term, the Proposed Action would reduce the cover of sagebrush and allow for an increase in vigor and production of the understory species. The increased vegetation production would provide additional high quality forage for wildlife and livestock. Resting the treated areas from livestock grazing following treatment provides time for the existing vegetation to recover and for the establishment of new plants. The livestock grazing permittees would be provided with alternative grazing sites, so their authorized livestock preference would not be reduced during the rest period.

Under the No Action Alternative, the project areas would remain as they currently exist. Understory grasses and forbs would continue to exist at current levels, with no additional benefit to wildlife and livestock.

Mitigation: None.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Both of the treatments occur in sagebrush steppe vegetation communities. They are dominated by dense over-aged sagebrush with an understory of native, cool season grasses and forbs. A few other shrubs such as snowberry (*Symphoricarpos* spp) and serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) occupy the project area. Prominent grasses include bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), bluegrasses (*Poa* spp), fescues (*Festuca* spp), pine needlegrass (*Achnatherum pinetorum*), Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), and bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*). Forbs can vary greatly in variety and vigor from year to year depending on local precipitation timing and intensity. Forbs include wild buckwheat (*Eriogonim* spp), daisies (*Erigeron* spp), phlox (*Phlox* spp), pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp), and beard tongues (*Penstemon* spp).

Environmental Consequences: The Proposed Action for both of the treatments would reduce the dense cover of sagebrush, opening the areas for increased moisture for the other plants and letting more sunlight reach the lower level of vegetation. The results would be more diverse

age classes, more vigorous and productive understory plants. The increased vegetation production would provide additional high quality forage for wildlife and livestock. Young sagebrush plants would return to the treated areas over time and would also provide high quality food and cover, adding diversity to the existing monotypic age class of sagebrush which currently exists in the areas proposed for treatment.

Under the No Action Alternative, the project areas would remain as they currently exist. Understory grasses and forbs would continue to exist at current levels, with no additional benefit to wildlife and livestock. Sagebrush canopy would continue to prohibit grass and forb production to increase in both quality and quantity.

Mitigation: None.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The areas proposed for treatment are inhabited by a variety of wildlife species including mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, pronghorn, coyotes, badgers, and ground squirrels. The treatment area is especially important for deer and elk during winter as these areas have been designated as critical habitat for these species. Pronghorn use the area during all seasons except winter when they migrate to lower elevation sagebrush habitats where less snow accumulates. Coyotes, badgers, and other small mammals are yearlong residents. Existing habitat conditions include an over-abundance of mature sagebrush with little understory vegetation. Grasses and forbs are lacking due to past grazing management practices and long-term proliferation of sagebrush. Habitat conditions for the species listed above are not as high quality as they should be because of the dominance of sagebrush on the site proposed for treatment.

Environmental Consequences: The proposed treatments should improve habitat conditions for terrestrial wildlife using the treatment areas. The proposed treatments would provide for grass and forb production by reducing sagebrush occurring in the treatment areas. The expected increase in grass and forb productivity would provide additional high quality forage for deer, elk, and pronghorn during the seasons they inhabit the area, especially winter, and would provide more cover for small mammals. Young sagebrush plants would return to the treated areas over time and would also provide high quality food and cover, adding diversity to the existing monotypic age class of sagebrush which currently exists in the areas proposed for treatment.

The No Action alternative would result in the continued limited productivity of vegetation in the project areas. Understory grasses and forbs would not be able to flourish due to the continued dominance of sagebrush. Wildlife food and cover would be limited in the future due to the low productivity of grasses and forbs in the sagebrush understory. Winter forage for deer and elk would continue to be less than optimum in the areas proposed for treatment.

Mitigation: None

VISUAL RESOURCES:

Affected Environment: The Proposed Action for Antelope Pass (Unit 1, West of GCR 224A and Unit 2) is within an area inventoried as Visual Resource Inventory (VRI) Class II. Since the 1984 Resource Management Plan (RMP) did not designate Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes, the BLM manages visual resources to protect the VRI by applying management class objectives to the inventory. Objectives for VRM Class II are to retain the existing character of the landscape. Changes to the landscape should be low and should not attract attention. The visual landscape in the project area consists of sagebrush-covered hills in the foreground and low rocky, timbered hills in the background.

Environmental Consequences: The design feature of ensuring all treatment areas use irregular shapes that repeat lines in the landscape would result in a low level of contrast in the landscape (see attached contrast rating worksheet). There would be a short-term impact following the treatment where the edges of the treated areas would contrast with the untreated areas. Over time the contrast would be less visible as the treated sagebrush regenerated. The proposed action could improve the visual resources of the area. Currently, the area is dominated by sagebrush, resulting in little diversity in the vegetation layer. The proposed action would create openings in the sagebrush where grasses and forbs would become visible. The result would be a more complex and appealing landscape.

No Action Alternative:

The changes to the existing vegetation layer would not occur under this alternative. As a result, there would be no change to visual resources under this alternative

RECREATION

Affected Environment: The proposed project is within the Extensive Recreation Management Area. Recreation activities include hunting, horse riding, hiking, wildlife & bird watching, and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use. Under the 2005 Wolford Travel Management Plan, the proposed action is within an area designated as “Limited to Designated Roads and Trails”.

Environmental Consequences: While a short-term displacement of big game may occur during implementation of the Proposed Action, public recreational hunting opportunities for browsing species and small game would be improved over time as vegetation diversity and health within the project area would be enhanced. Since there are no proposed road or trail closures, recreational OHV use would not be impacted.

No Action Alternative: Under the No Action Alternative, big game habitat would not be improved and recreational hunting opportunities would not see the benefits from the proposed action.

Mitigation: None

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY:

Geographic Scope of the Cumulative Analysis:

For the purpose of this EA, the general geographic boundary for cumulative impact analysis is allotments 07506, 07503, and 70569 which are grazed by the Ritschard Cattle Company (07506 and 07503) and W. Diamond Ranch (07569). This land is found east of the Muddy Creek drainage area north of Kremmling, Colorado.

Past Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Action:

Unit 2 of the Antelope Pass treatment was treated in 1991 by the Middle Park Habitat Partnership Program to reduce sagebrush. Unit 1 of the North Hay Gulch treatment has been treated several times. In 1964, the northern half of Unit 1 was treated with 2-4D (herbicide) to reduce sagebrush. Then in 1987, Unit 1 was partially burned during an escaped prescribed fire. Lastly in 1992, 45 acres were fertilized in the middle of Unit 1 to improve forage for big game. Before 2010 the vegetation health of sagebrush in the area is generally described as even-aged, old and decadent, resulting in only adequate habitat for wildlife and also resulting in reduced forage for livestock. The area is meeting land health standards, however potential still exists to improve habitat and forage.

When considered with past and present actions, the long-term effect of the proposed sagebrush treatment would be an improvement in migratory bird habitat, vegetation production and health, and wildlife habitat resources within the project area. The proposed treatment would also improve riparian vegetation in allotment 07506. Short term impacts could result in increased utilization and trampling of the wetland areas due to livestock concentrating more in the gulches. The proposed treatment would also help implement the livestock grazing plan

The No Action Alternative would reduce the ability to improve the overall land health within the allotments over the long term. This would result in less than desirable habitat and decreased foraging opportunity for migratory birds, wildlife and livestock. Short term impacts would keep current conditions the same and reduce the ability to fully implement the livestock grazing management plan.

When considering future action, wildlife and livestock grazing are anticipated to continue within these allotments. However, additional projects are not anticipated within the area.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: See Appendix 2 for the Tribal consultation list. Ritschard Cattle Company, W. Diamond Ranch, Middle Park Habitat Partnership Program committee members and the Colorado Division of Wildlife were consulted. There was strong support for this project.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW: See IDT-RRC in Appendix 1.

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DOI-BLM-CO-120-2010-0047-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

DECISION RECORD

DECISION: It is my decision to authorize the Proposed Action as described in the attached EA. This decision is contingent on meeting all mitigation measures and monitoring requirements listed below.

RATIONALE: The Proposed Action was chosen because the North Hay Gulch Sagebrush Treatment (Brush beat) and Antelope Pass Sagebrush Treatment (Harrow) will improve vegetation that will benefit wildlife and livestock grazing.

MITIGATION MEASURES: None

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING:

- Prior to treatment and after treatment, photos and monitoring would be made in the sagebrush stands.
- The BLM would monitor the project area for the establishment or spread of invasive, non-native species after the project is completed.

NAME OF PREPARER: Megan McGuire

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Susan Cassel

DATE: 9/30/10

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Susan Cassel

DATE SIGNED: 9/30/2010

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Interdisciplinary Team Analysis Review Record and Checklist
Appendix 2 -- Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet
Appendix 3 – Native American Tribal List

Appendix 1

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM ANALYSIS REVIEW RECORD AND CHECKLIST:

Project Title: North Hay Gulch Sagebrush Treatment (Brush beat) 2010 and Antelope Pass Sagebrush Treatment (Harrow) 2011

Project Leader: Megan McGuire

Date Proposal Received: (Only for external proposals)

Date Submitted for Comment: 7/15/10

Due Date for Comments: 9/3/10

Need for a field Exam: (If so, schedule a date/time) N/A

Scoping Needs/Interested or Affected Publics: (Identify public scoping needs)

Consultation/Permit Requirements:

Consultation	Date Initiated	Date Completed	Responsible Specialist/ Contractor	Comments
Cultural/Archeological Clearance/SHPO	NA	8/31/2010	B. Wyatt	See analysis above. The Field Office Archaeologist would identify for avoidance those sites that are significant within the proposed actions.
Native American	7/28/2010	8/31/2010	B. Wyatt	To date no tribe has identified any area of traditional spiritual concern.
T&E Species/FWS	N/A	N/A	McGuire	A list of threatened, endangered, and candidate species which could inhabit the proposed project area was received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) March 11, 2010.
Permits Needed (i.e. Air or Water)	N/A	N/A	PBelcher	

(NP) = Not Present

(NI) = Resource/Use Present but Not Impacted

(PI) = Potentially Impacted and Brought Forward for Analysis.

NP NI PI	Discipline/Name	Date Review Comp.	Initials	Review Comments (required for Critical Element NIs, and for elements that require a finding but are not carried forward for analysis.)
CRITICAL ELEMENTS				
NI	Air Quality Belcher	8/24/2010	PB	Air quality in the area is considered to be good, as there are no areas of non attainment of national ambient air quality standards. The Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative would not impact air quality. The Proposed Action is planned to occur in the fall of the year, when fugitive dust creation is generally at its highest level. Dust creation would be of short duration, however, and total amount is minimal. Post treatment dust level could be

				less than pre-treatment within two years, due to increased vegetative cover in the interspaces.
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern McGuire	8/2/2010	MM	There are no Areas of Critical Environmental Concern in the proximity of the proposed project area.
PI	Cultural Resources Wyatt	8/31/2010	BBW	See analysis. The field Office Archaeologist would identify and flag for avoidance all significant sites to the selected contractor.
NP	Environmental Justice Cassel	9/3/2010	SC	According to the most recent Census Bureau statistics (2000), there are no minority or low income communities within the Kremmling Planning Area.
NP	Farmlands, Prime and Unique Belcher	8/24/2010	PB	There are no farmlands, prime or unique, in the proximity of the proposed project area.
NP	Floodplains Belcher	8/24/2010	PB	The Proposed Action would occur in the uplands and would not impact any floodplain area.
NI	Invasive, Non-native Species Johnson Torma Hughes	9/3/2010	RJ	There are no known invasive, non-native species within the project area. Since heavy equipment is a common pathway for the importation of invasive, non-native species seeds into an area, the BLM would monitor the site after the treatment. Thus, there should be minimal impacts.
PI	Migratory Birds McGuire	8/2/2010	MM	See analysis.
NI	Native American Religious Concerns Wyatt	8/31/2010	BBW	To date no tribe has identified any area of traditional spiritual concern.
PI	T/E, and Sensitive Species (Finding on Standard 4) McGuire	8/2/2010	MM	See analysis.
NP	Wastes, Hazardous and Solid Hodgson	9/3/2010	KH	There are no quantities of wastes, hazardous or solid, located on BLM-administered lands in the proposed project area, and there would be no wastes generated as a result of the Proposed Action or No Action alternative.
NI	Water Quality, Surface and Ground (Finding on Standard 5) Belcher	8/30/2010	PB	Design features protect water quality by minimizing ground disturbance, providing "buffer strips" of untreated vegetation, treating during dry soil conditions, and resting treated areas. Post treatment (after two to three years) ground cover would be greater than pre-treatment conditions with vegetation in the interspaces and increased litter. This would improve or protect infiltration and reduce runoff.
PI	Wetlands & Riparian Zones (Finding on Standard 2) Belcher	8/24/2010	PB	See Wetland/Riparian section of this document.
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers Windsor	8/2/2010	AW	There are no eligible Wild and Scenic River segments in the proposed project area.
NP	Wilderness Monkouski	9/13/2010	JJM	There is no designated Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas in the proximity of the proposed project area.
NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS (A finding must be made for these elements)				
NI	Soils (Finding on Standard 1) Belcher	8/30/2010	PB	Limited soil disturbance from the brush beater and moderate soil disturbance from the Dixie harrow. The treated sagebrush, however, is left scattered over the units protecting the disturbed soil from wind and water erosion, and untreated

					vegetation buffer strips prevent water flow patterns from developing. Opportunity to improve overall ground cover from the No Action Alternative, protecting longterm soil health. No Action alternative would continue present conditions which provide good soil protection.
PI	Vegetation (Finding on Standard 3)	Johnson Torma	8/31/2010	RJ	See analysis.
NP	Wildlife, Aquatic (Finding on Standard 3)	McGuire	8/2/2010	MM	No aquatic wildlife present. Finding: N/A
PI	Wildlife, Terrestrial (Finding on Standard 3)	McGuire	8/2/2010	MM	See analysis.
OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS					
NI	Access/Transportation	Monkouski	9/20/2010	JJM	The proposed action is within the Wolford Mountain Area that limits all modes of travel other than foot or horse use to designated trails. There are no proposed closures for routes within the project area. No impacts would occur from proposed action or no action alternative.
NP	Forest Management	K. Belcher	8/29/2010	KB	No impact to forest resources.
NI	Geology and Minerals	Hodgson	9/3/2010	KH	No impacts.
NI	Fire	Wyatt	8/31/2010	BBW	No impacts.
NI	Hydrology/Water Rights	Belcher	8/24/2010	PB	There are no hydrologic issues that are not addressed in the water quality section of this document.
NI/ PI	Paleontology	Rupp	7/15/10	FGR	North Hay Gulch Brush Beating Treatment - No impact by maintaining mower 6-8" above the ground. Antelope Pass Dixie Harrow Treatment - Areas sensitive for fossil resources could be impacted. Sensitive areas have been mapped and would be avoided during treatment implementation.
NI	Noise	Monkouski	9/13/2010	JJM	Under the proposed action there would be a short term increase in noise levels during the project implementation. There are no residences or developments within the immediate area of the proposed action. No Impacts.
PI	Range Management	Johnson Torma	8/31/2010	RJ	See analysis.
NI	Lands/ Realty Authorizations	Sperandio	8/16/10	AS	There is one buried phone line ROW for Quest (COC-58109), three power line ROWs for Mt. Parks (12512, 71871, and 8482), and one ROW road for Cecilia Young. No impacts would occur in the proposed project area.
PI	Recreation	Monkouski	9/13/2010	JJM	See Analysis.
NI	Socio-Economics	Cassel	9/3/2010	SC	There would be no impacts to socio-economics of the area by the proposed action or the no action alternative.
NI	Visual Resources	Hodgson	9/3/2010	KH	See analysis.
NI	Cumulative Impact Summary		9/10/10	MM	See summary.

FINAL REVIEW				
	P&E Coordinator	Cassel	9/30/2010	SC

Appendix 2

Form 8400 - 4
(September 1985)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

Date 9/22/2010

District/Field Office:
Kremmling Field Office

Resource Area

Activity (program): Wildlife

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name Antelope Pass Sagebrush Treatment (Harrow) 2011	4. Location Township 2N Range 80 W Section 15, 16, 21, 22	5. Location Sketch
2. Key Observation Point County Road 25A adjacent to the proposed project		
3. VRM Class II		

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

1. LAND/WATER		2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Rolling hills	Patchy forms from different vegetation types	N/A
LINE	Undulating ridgelines, angled drainages	Irregular lines between riparian, sagebrush and timber (aspen and conifer)	N/A
COLOR	N/A	Green riparian vegetation, gray sagebrush, green/brown grass and forbes, green aspen, black timber	N/A
TEXTURE	Smooth	Coarse sagebrush	N/A

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

1. LAND/WATER		2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	N/A	Patchy, irregular shapes	N/A
LINE	N/A	Irregular lines between treated and untreated areas	N/A
COLOR	N/A	Gray sagebrush intermixed with green/brown grasses and forbes	N/A
TEXTURE	N/A	Coarse sagebrush and smooth grasses	N/A

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING SHORT TERM LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST	FEATURES												Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (Explain on reverse side)				
	LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)					Additional mitigating measures recommended? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (Explain on reverse side)			
ELEMENTS	Form				X					X						X	Evaluator's Names Kelly Hodgson
	Line				X					X					X		
	Color				X					X					X		
	Texture				X					X					X		

Appendix 3

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES CONTACTED:

Ivan Posey, Chairman
Shoshone Business Council
Shoshone Tribe
P O Box 538
Ft. Washakie, WY 82514

Arlen Shoyo, THPO
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Shoshone Tribe, Cultural Center
P.O. Box 538
Fort Washakie, WY 82514

Ernest House, Sr., Chairman
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
P O Box JJ
Towaoc, CO 81334

Mr. Terry Knight, Sr., NAGPRA
Representative
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
P O Box 468
Towaoc, CO 81334

Darlene Conrad, THPO Director
Northern Arapaho Tribe
P O Box 396
Fort Washakie, WY 82514

Ernest House, Jr., Executive Secretary
Colorado Commissioner of Indian Affairs
130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203

Robert Goggles, NAGPRA Representative
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328 Seventeen Mile Road
Arapaho, WY 82510

Mathew Box, Chairman
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
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Neil Cloud, NAGPRA Representative
Southern Ute Tribe
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Curtis Cesspooch, Chairman
Uintah & Ouray Tribal Business
Committee
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Betsy Chapoose, Director
Cultural Rights & Protection Specialist
Uintah & Ouray Tribe
P O Box 190
Fort Duchesne, UT 84026