PART II

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This Resource Management Plan (RMP) is designed to guide the management of public land resources in the Jarbidge Resource Area and to ensure that the public lands and resources are planned and managed in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield and other principles outlined in BLM planning regulations. The plan focuses on nine issues identified by the public: land tenure and adjustments; livestock grazing; management of wildlife resources (including riparian and aquatic habitats); wilderness management; recreation; soil, air, and water; energy and mineral exploration and development; fire management; and special designations. Special management concerns also addressed in the plan include cultural resource protection, paleontologic resource protection, timber management, and social and economic changes.

This chapter is organized into four sections. The first contains a summary of management proposals and decision rationale for each resource activity (ie., lands, wildlife, range, etc.). The second section (The Management Prescription) contains a description of objectives and management actions for 16 separate management areas called multiple use areas (MUAs). This section is followed by a description of management objectives and actions for three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The chapter is concluded by a description of resource management guidelines which identify guidelines and implementation procedures for implementing the plan.

SUMMARY OF RESOURCE DECISIONS

Lands and Realty Management

The RMP identifies 90,366 acres of public land for possible transfer out of Federal ownership. Detailed analysis will be conducted on a case by case basis before decisions are made to transfer these lands through sale, exchange, or through appropriate agricultural entry laws. Those T4 lands found as unsuitable for DLE/CA and not needed for a public purpose may be considered for disposal through sale or exchange. The remaining 1,599,027 acres of public land in the Jarbidge Resource Area will be retained in Federal ownership unless amended at a later date. A legal description of lands identified for potential transfer is located in Appendix K.

Under this RMP, there would be 1,467,180 acres of public land open to rights-of-way application for utility lines or other projects needed for public or private use. A total of 223,293 acres will be protected against issuance of rights-of-ways. The military withdrawal for the Saylor Creek

Gunnery Range will be updated to reflect future management for livestock grazing and wildlife habitat needs.

Rationale

The RMP is designed to be responsive to public and private needs to acquire Federal lands. Lands identified for sale only (T1) are so designated because they met the Section 203 criteria of the FLPMA and because the parcel size and/or location in relationship to other lands made this the most viable method of disposal.

Lands identified for sale or exchange (T2) also meet the disposal criteria in the FLPMA, and are suitable for disposal through either method.

Lands identified for exchange only (T3) are designated because there are current exchange proposals involving them and they meet the Section 206 criteria of the FLPMA. Criteria for disposal through exchange is located in Appendix K.

Sufficient lands have been made available for agricultural entry (T4) to help meet goals for agricultural product needs in Idaho and Pacific northwest states.

Those lands identified for disposal for agricultural development (T4) will be subjected to further detailed analysis before the actual transfer is completed. Other resource uses and needs will be a primary consideration in those detailed analysis. Provisions for livestock grazing, the management of an established herd of wild horses, and the protection of significant cultural and paleontologic resources are important factors included in the plan in so far as agricultural development is concerned.

The RMP makes sufficient provisions for public and private needs for rights-of-ways. Major areas are maintained for linear rights-of-ways. Nine major areas with significant public values are protected through the following special designations and are identified as avoidance areas. These are:

1) Wilderness Study Areas,
2) Wild and Scenic River designation (proposed),
3) Birds of Prey (essential nesting habitat),
4) Oregon Trail,
5) Hagerman Fossil Beds,
6) Sand Point Paleontologic site,
7) Salmon Falls Creek Canyon,
8) Saylor Creek Gunnery Range, and
9) Suitable Bighorn Sheep Habitat.

Livestock Grazing Management

Introduction

Livestock grazing will be authorized on 79 allotments within the resource area. The Salmon Falls Creek Outstanding Natural Area and the

Hagerman Fossil Bed area will be closed to livestock grazing to protect natural values and paleontologic values.

The overall objective of the range program is to maintain or improve the soil, vegetation and watershed conditions within the resource area and to provide forage for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses. Specific objectives for each multiple use area are identified in the Management Prescription Section. Future management actions, including activity plans and range improvements will be tailored to meet these objectives.

Activity Planning

New activity plans will be implemented on 39 allotments. These plans will be implemented on an allotment basis and will be designed to achieve the resource objectives identified for each multiple use area. Activity plans will be prepared and implemented on a priority basis as identified on Appendix Table D-2. They will identify allotment specific objectives, the level and season of grazing use, proposed range improvements and the monitoring and evaluation plan for the allotment.

Livestock Use Levels

Proposed stocking rates are designed to provide adequate forage for watershed protection, plant requirements, wildlife, livestock and other resource uses. The proposed use of 176,976 AUMs is a target level that will be reached over a period of several years and which may be adjusted based on monitoring and evaluation studies. If all components of the plan are implemented and all objectives are met, forage production will be at a level capable of supporting 280,501 AUMs of livestock use. However, if current trends in the livestock market continue, the level of use on public lands will be considerably lower than this figure. The increased use in 20 years results from the availability of additional forage from water developments, brush control and seeding projects and improvement in native range condition. Proposed livestock use by allotment is shown on Appendix Table D-1.

Season-of-Use

The current season-of-use, by allotment, is identified on Appendix Table D-2. Allotments or pastures that fall within MUA 2 will have the livestock season-of-use adjusted so that approximately 50% of the livestock use occurs during the spring period and 50% occurs during the fall. This is proposed to resolve forage conflicts between livestock, mule deer and elk. On the remaining allotments, the current seasons-of-use will be continued unless AMP development or monitoring and evaluation studies identify a need for modification. Priority will be given to evaluating the season-of-use on MUAs 10, 15, and 16. These MUAs contain large areas of crucial wildlife habitat. Season-of-use will be carefully evaluated in these areas and adjusted if necessary to resolve forage conflicts. Priority will be given to resolving conflicts on crucial habitat areas that are in poor ecological condition.

Rangeland Improvement Projects

Range improvements are proposed to improve resource conditions, implement grazing systems and to allow proper utilization of forage by livestock. Proposed improvements include 130 miles of pipeline, 163 miles of fence, two reservoirs or wells and up to 132,620 acres of land treatment.

The location of improvements is identified by multiple use area in the Management Prescription section and on Appendix Table B-5. The general location of land treatments is identified on Map 11. Normally, allotments in the "I" category will receive funding for improvements prior to those in the "M" or "C" categories. The implementation of range improvements will be guided by the procedures identified in the Resource Management Guidelines section.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Vegetative trend, forage utilization, actual use (livestock numbers and periods of grazing), and climate will be monitored. The data collected from these studies will be used to evaluate current stocking rates, schedule pasture moves by livestock, determine levels of forage competition, detect changes in plant communities, and to identify patterns of forage use. If monitoring studies indicate that allotment or multiple use area objectives are not being met, then management actions will be adjusted accordingly. This may include adjusting livestock seasons of use, livestock stocking levels or the grazing system being used.

Monitoring efforts will focus on allotments in the Improve category. The priority for monitoring by allotment is identified on Appendix Table D-2.

Rationale

The final plan for range improvement projects and livestock grazing management was selected because it provides for the maintenance or improvement of the soil, wildlife and vegetation resources. It provides for increases in livestock use only if monitoring studies indicate that these basic resources are protected or improved.

Livestock grazing constitutes a major component of the local economy. The Jarbidge Resource Area currently provides about 165,000 AUMs of forage for the livestock grazing program. In addition, the area contains significant acreage of rangeland with high potential for improvement through vegetation manipulation and improved livestock management techniques.

Wild Horse Management

One wild horse area will be managed under the approved plan. The Saylor Creek herd area will be about 82,000 acres in size (about 24,000 acres less than the current area) and will be managed to support 50 wild horses and other permitted livestock. Wild horses will be managed in accordance with the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

Rationale

The Saylor Creek wild horse herd area will be reduced in size to allow agricultural development to occur. The remaining 82,000 acre wild horse area has sufficient size and available forage to support 50 horses (the number that has been running in the area since the passage of the Wild Horse and Burro Act).

Wildlife Management

Wildlife habitat will be managed to maintain or increase wildlife numbers over the long term, and the total acres of unsatisfactory crucial habitat will be reduced over the long term. Localized adverse impacts will be avoided or reduced through interdisciplinary project planning and wildlife input into the development of allotment management plans and other specific resource activity plans. The plan addresses wildlife issues by providing habitat for present and future wildlife populations. Existing and potential bighorn sheep habitat on the Jarbidge and Bruneau River systems will be managed under an ACEC designation. Specific habitat improvement projects for wildlife will be initiated on 18,200 acres.

Existing fences will be modified where specific wildlife needs are not being met. All new fences will be built to allow for wildlife passage. Wildlife needs will be considered in all vegetative treatment projects. Seed mixtures will contain appropriate mixtures of grasses, forbs and shrubs to benefit wildlife. These modifications will be made over time on a priority basis depending on the location of fences and project maintenance schedules.

Rationale

Detailed standard operating procedures to maintain specific wildlife habitats are an integral part of the plan. Future activity planning and the incorporation of appropriate resource management guidelines into projects will enhance wildlife populations. Adequate forage has been provided to meet future wildlife population goals.

Riparian and Fisheries Management

The plan will enhance management of 53 miles of riparian habitat and 51 miles of fisheries habitat by implementing fencing/management practices. Because of riparian and fisheries overlap, a total of 70 stream miles would be treated. Specific areas for improvement are identified in Appendix E. Riparian habitat will receive priority consideration in all project proposals and/or developments.

Rationale

The value of riparian and fisheries habitat is recognized. Standard operating procedures are incorporated into all proposals to insure adequate protection and/or development for fisheries and riparian habitat.

Minerals Management

The plan maintains 1,478,104 acres open for mineral leasing. Withdrawal from mineral entry will apply to 242,507 acres. Restrictions on mineral development will apply predominantly in those areas proposed for wilderness or other special designation such as Wild and Scenic River. The existing Saylor Creek Gunnery Range is withdrawn from mineral entry and applies to 102,746 acres.

Rationale

No significant constraints are imposed on the availability of leasable minerals in areas where high values have been identified. Locatable minerals such as Bruneau Jasper will have some constraints applied in the proposed plan because of conflicts with wilderness proposals and other special designations such as Wild and Scenic River proposals. All existing local demands for minerals and/or materials can be satisfied in the plan. Surface occupancy restrictions only apply to about 24% of the mineral leases in the plan.

Recreation Management

Portions of the planning area are experiencing significant recreation demands because of their proximity to heavily populated areas of southern Idaho. These demands are increasing each year and the need for significant expansion in planning, development and user supervision is inevitable. Several areas have high potential to meet these future needs. The RMP provides 1.2 million acres open to off road vehicle (ORV) use. About 130,000 acres is closed to ORV use and 370,000 acres is available for limited ORV use. Seven Special Recreation Management Use Areas are established as follows:

1) Salmon Falls Creek SRMA,
2) Hagerman (National Natural Landmark and Owsley Bridge Area) SRMA,
3) Bruneau/Jarbidge Rivers (Wild and Scenic Rivers) SRMA,
4) Jarbidge Forks SRMA,
5) Bennett Hills Winter SRMA,
6) Oregon Trail SRMA, and
7) Upper Salmon Falls Creek and Canyon SRMA.

Rationale

The RMP includes provisions to accommodate increased demands for recreational resources. It also resolves several conflicts where heavy recreation use is not compatible with other resource uses and/or needs. Anticipated future needs for recreation use are provided for in the plan without incurring unacceptable environmental impacts.

Wilderness Management

There are currently 208,833 acres of public land being considered for wilderness designation within the planning area. The RMP recommends 37,540 acres as preliminary suitable for wilderness designation. Of the 37,540

acres, 19,360 acres lie within the Jarbidge Resource Area and 18,180 acres are in the Bruneau Resource Area. A separate final wilderness EIS will be released addressing these lands. Congress will make the decision regarding wilderness designation.

The proposed wilderness area will be managed in conformance with the BLM Wilderness Management Policy. Lands recommended nonsuitable for wilderness will continue to be managed under the BLM Interim Management Policy until released by Congress.

Rationale

The RMP proposes to recommend as preliminary suitable about 18% of the lands currently in wilderness study area status. The recommendation would protect the exceptional wilderness characteristics of the Bruneau River, Jarbidge River and Sheep Creek Canyons. The plan includes a wilderness proposal that compliments other protective land use designations including wild and scenic river designations and areas of critical environmental concern.

A separate final environmental impact statement and wilderness study report will be prepared for these WSAs. The wilderness study report will provide detailed WSA specific rationales for the selection of the preferred wilderness alternative.

Preliminary suitable recommendations will be finalized by the Secretary of Interior following the assessment of mineral and energy data received from the Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines.

Special Designations

The RMP designates three areas of critical environmental concern; 1) Hagerman Fossil Beds, 2) Sand Point Paleontologic site, and 3) Bruneau/ Jarbidge River. Specific objectives and management actions for these areas are described on pages 62-71. Salmon Falls Creek is designated as an Outstanding Natural Area.

There are 47,537 acres of the Snake River Birds of Prey Area (14,111 acres of essential nesting habitat) which will be protected. The RMP supports Wild and Scenic River designation on 29 miles of the Jarbidge River, 71 miles of the Bruneau River and 21 miles of Sheep Creek under the proposed plan (the Sheep Creek portion lies within the Bruneau Resource Area).

Special recreation management areas (SRMAs) will be established for six important recreation use areas.

Rationale

The RMP includes provisions to protect all sensitive resource values identified in the planning area. These resources will be protected and managed through appropriate special designation. The Hagerman Fossil Bed Area and the Sand Point Area offer highly significant paleontologic values. The Hagerman Area has already been established as an area of national

significance. The RMP outlines broad land use objectives for the protection of these two areas.

The Bruneau and Jarbidge River Systems offer unique ecological systems that have essentially been protected from extensive alteration by human presence in the past. The RMP sets out goals for future management of these areas. Salmon Falls Creek also exhibits unique ecological characteristics that will receive special management attention through designation as an Outstanding Natural Area.

The Birds of Prey Area will continue to be managed in accordance with Public Law 5777. Selected reaches of the Bruneau and Jarbidge River Systems will be managed to protect Wild and Scenic River values and will be recommended for designation and inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Fire Control Management

The RMP will use fire as a management tool to accomplish natural resource objectives in the most economical fashion possible. Full suppression on wild fires will be applied to the entire resource area. Fire rehabilitation and fire reduction actions/procedures outlined under the Resource Management Guidelines - Fire Management section (p. 88 and Appendix F) will be followed.

Rationale

The RMP incorporates the management of wildfires and prescription burning into the overall resource management scheme. Provisions for all resource values and needs will be a primary consideration in planning wildfire rehabilitation and prescription burning.

Cultural Resource Management

The RMP will protect 51 miles of the Oregon Trail through special "no surface disturbance" stipulations. Sixty-five cultural sites associated with dry lake beds and with the Bruneau River will receive protection through special management considerations. The Dry Lakes/Bruneau River complex is proposed for National Register Site District designation. The Oregon Trail and the Devil Creek Complex is proposed for National Register nomination.

The RMP identifies special management considerations to protect nine areas where cultural values are found in concentrated numbers. These areas and the known number of sites are as follows:

	Name of Area	Number of Sites
1)	Dove Springs Complex	2
2)	Pot Hole Complex	5
3)	Juniper Ranch Complex	4
4)	Clover Creek Complex	2
5)	Devil Creek Complex	230
6)	Cougar Creek Complex	11

7)	Post Office Complex	2
8)	Dry Lakes/Bruneau River Complex	65
9)	Oregon Trail Ruts (miles)	51.2

Rationale

The RMP identifies and protects cultural resource values in accordance with existing laws and regulations. Proposals for protection of cultural resources does not preclude the use and development of natural resources that share areas where cultural resources are found. Standard operating procedures and clearance procedures apply in critical protection areas.

Paleontologic Resource Management

The RMP will protect 4,394 acres within the Hagerman Fossil Bed Area and 815 acres in the Sand Point Paleontologic Site. A total of 431 individual sites are identified for special management consideration.

Forest Land Management

The RMP identifies 2,371 acres as commercial forest lands. Because of timber production restrictions, wildlife set aside areas and deferment because of economic conditions, 1,086 acres are available for harvest. Approximately 1,454 Mbdft of commercial timber is available for sale.

Rationale

The RMP identifies all available forest lands. The twenty year production plan in the proposed plan is designed to develop timber production to the extent possible, recognizing other resource uses and needs. Past interest in forest products has been relatively low in the planning area. The plan includes provisions to respond to increased interest and/or demands for forest products in the future.

THE MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

The Jarbidge Resource Area is divided into sixteen multiple use areas (MUAs) for purposes of organizing and presenting the planning decisions. The multiple use area generally contains lands having similar resource features and characteristics and can effectively be managed as a unit. Each multiple use area consists of one or more multiple use or transfer classes: moderate use class, limited use class, intensive use class, or transfer class.

Multiple use and transfer classes serve two purposes. The first is to describe overall resource opportunities and constraints by indicating what level of resource production and use is appropriate, what intensity of management is needed, whether there are sensitive and significant resources which must be protected, and whether BLM would consider transfer of public lands from its jurisdiction. The second is to provide a basis for considering unexpected proposals by supplementing the detailed resource management objectives and required actions established for the multiple use

area with general purpose and policy statements. This feature is intended to help keep the plan responsive to demands and to reduce the number of future plan amendments needed.

Prior to undertaking or approving any proposed resource management action on public lands in the Resource Area, BLM will ensure that such action is consistent with the purposes and policies of the multiple use or transfer class or classes involved.

The multiple use or transfer class assigned to each multiple use area is shown on Map 4 and identified in the multiple use area descriptions beginning on page 12. Public lands are placed in the multiple use or transfer class that best reflects the specific resource and management priority for the area. A description of these classes and their purposes and policies is as follows:

Moderate Use Class

Purpose - The purpose of a moderate use class is to delineate public lands which are suitable for a wide variety of existing and potential uses.

Policy - The first priority for managing a moderate use class is to provide for the production and use of forage, timber, minerals and energy, recreation, or other consumptive resources while maintaining or enhancing natural systems. These areas will be managed for a moderate intensity of use. These areas will generally be available for production and use of consumptive resources, subject to BLM standard operating procedures and other controls as needed. Sensitive and significant resource values, however, will be protected consistent with federal and state law. Public lands in a moderate use class are to be retained in federal ownership.

Limited Use Class

Purpose - The purpose of a limited use class is to delineate public lands where strict environmental controls are required to protect sensitive and significant resources.

Policy - The first priority for managing a limited use class is to protect and enhance key wildlife habitat, wild horse habitat, scenic values, wilderness, cultural resources, watershed, and other sensitive and significant resources, while providing for other compatible uses. These areas will be managed for relatively low intensities of use and with strict environmental controls to protect sensitive and significant values. A limited use class may be closed to or contain restrictions on ORV use, mineral and energy exploration and development, forest management practices, location of utility corridors and installations, livestock grazing, or any potentially conflict use. Because of the relatively significant environmental considerations in these areas, some uses may not be permitted. Special attention will be given to finding appropriate locations for compatible uses. Public lands in a limited use class will be retained in federal ownership.

Intensive Use/Development Class

Purpose - The purpose of an intensive use/development class is to delineate areas suitable for large scale intensive use and development.

Policy - The first priority for managing an intensive use/development class is to provide for existing and projected demands for large scale intensive use and development. These areas will be managed for a high intensity of use. These areas will generally be reserved for major recreation sites or facilities, ORV intensive use areas, large scale mineral or energy extraction operations, military use areas, or major utility installations. Because of the potential for conflict with other uses in these areas, some uses may not be permitted. Protection of sensitive and significant resources, however, will be ensured consistent with federal and state law. Public lands in an intensive use/development class will be retained in federal ownership.

Transfer Class

Purpose - The purpose of a transfer class is to delineate public lands which may be considered for transfer out of federal ownership.

Policy - A transfer class is the only class in which public lands may be transferred out of federal ownership under this plan. Public lands declared eligible for transfer by their inclusion in this category meet the criteria for disposal under FLPMA are subject to detailed consideration prior to the final decision regarding transfer. Transfer classes are delineated in response to specific demands and needs identified during the planning process, such as agricultural development, community expansion, and other transfers, including transfers to the State of Idaho. Transfer classes will be managed on a custodial basis until transferred from federal jurisdiction. New public investments in these lands will generally be kept to a minimum.

There are four land disposal designations used in this plan. They are (T1) for disposal by sale only; (T2) for disposal by sale or exchange; (T3) for exchange only; and (T4) for disposal under DLE/CA. These designations are used in the narrative portion of the plan. However, because of the scale of the maps in this document, it would not be feasible to note each parcel with a "T" designation. These designations are shown on maps available at the Boise District Office. Appendix C identifies the legal descriptions and categories of land identified for transfer.