

Endangered, Threatened, or Sensitive Species: The Federal Surface Management Agency is responsible for assuring that the leased land is examined prior to undertaking any surface-disturbing activities to determine effects upon any plant or animal species, listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened, or their habitats. The findings of this examination may result in some restrictions to the operator's plans or even disallow use and occupancy that would be in violation of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 by detrimentally affecting endangered or threatened species of their habitats.

The lessee/operator may, unless notified by the authorized officer of the Surface Management Agency that the examination is not necessary, conduct the examination on the leased lands at his discretion and cost. This examination must be done by or under the supervision of a qualified resources specialist approved by the Surface Management Agency. An acceptable report must be provided to the Surface Management Agency identifying the anticipated effects of a proposed action on endangered or threatened species or their habitats.

Erosion Control: Surface disturbing activities may be prohibited during muddy and/or wet soil period. This limitation does not apply to operation and maintenance of producing wells using authorized roads.

Controlled or Limited Surface Use Stipulation: This stipulation may be modified by special stipulations which are hereto attached or when specifically approved in writing by the District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, with concurrence of the Federal surface management agency. Distances and/or time periods may be made less restrictive depending on the actual on-ground conditions. The lessee should contact the Federal Surface Management Agency for more specific locations and information regarding the restrictive nature of this stipulation.

The lessee operator is given notice that the lands within this lease may include special areas and that such areas may contain special values, may be needed for special purposes, or may require special attention to prevent damage to surface and/or other resources. Possible special areas are identified below (would be listed below on an actual lease). Any surface use or occupancy within such special areas will be strictly controlled or, if absolutely necessary, excluded. Use or occupancy will be restricted only when the Bureau of Land Management and/or the Surface Management Agency demonstrates the restriction necessary for the protection of such special areas and existing or planned uses. Appropriate modifications to imposed restrictions will be made for the maintenance and operations of producing oil and gas wells.

Geothermal Leasing

Geothermal resource leasing is covered by a district-wide environmental assessment at the present time, and this assessment is incorporated in the RMP. Lease applications will continue to be processed as received. Stipulations developed during the preparation of the district-wide environmental assessment will be attached to the leases prior to issuance. Specific proposals for prelease exploration or operation on leases will

be reviewed by an interdisciplinary team. This review process will result in a site-specific environmental assessment of the proposal and may include additional special stipulations necessary to protect other resources. Seasonal or no-surface-occupancy stipulations for oil and gas leasing apply also to geothermal leasing in the same specified areas.

Non-Energy Mineral Leasing

Prospecting permits and lease applications will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary team and environmental assessments will be prepared for each proposed action. These assessments will develop any special stipulations necessary for the protection of other surface resources. A phased approach will be used, with site-specific analysis of a proposed activity following the analysis completed for permit issuance. The only known potential for hardrock leasing is in the Hawley Creek area; an environmental assessment has been completed for Hawley Creek, with a recommendation for issuance of prospecting permits.

Coal Leasing

In this RMP, coal leasing is not considered as an issue because the potential for commercial development appears very low. Applications for coal prospecting permits or coal leases will be evaluated when received. Preliminary applications of the "Coal Suitability Criteria" indicate that not all lands identified as having coal potential are suitable for leasing.

Locatable Minerals

Mineral exploration and development on public land will be regulated under 43 CFR 3800 to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation of the land. The BLM will conduct validity examinations, checking mining claims to determine whether a claimant has established any right to the mineral resources, under the following conditions:

1. Where a mineral patent application has been filed and a field examination is required to verify the validity of the claim(s).
2. Where there is a conflict with a disposal application and it is deemed in the public interest to do so, or where the statute authorizing the disposal requires the removal of mining claims that are not valid. If the validity examination showed that the mining claim was valid, the disposal action could not be completed.
3. Where the land is needed for a federal program.
4. Where a mining claim is located under the guise of the mining law and flagrant unauthorized use of the land or mineral resource is occurring.

Withdrawals from mineral entry will be used only where there are significant resource values that cannot be adequately protected under the surface management regulations. This would include areas recommended for wilderness designation, important historical and cultural resources, and recreational developments.

Public land will be reopened to mineral entry where mineral withdrawals are revoked through the withdrawal review process.

Salable Minerals (Common Variety)

Applications for the removal of common variety mineral materials will be processed using the standards developed in this RMP and the restrictions developed for each alternative. Since most disposals within the resource area are generally under the 100,000 ton or cubic yard threshold, the Categorical Exclusion Review process for critical resources will be used; an environmental assessment need not be prepared. Community pits will be designated where there is sufficient demand to open new material sites. Disposals to state, county, and municipal governments will generally be handled through issuance of free use permits rather than establishment of mineral material sites.

Forest Management

General Forest Management and Planning

The suitable timber production base, as determined by the Timber Production Capability Classification inventory, will be subject to the specific restrictions and withdrawals required by this RMP. These RMP actions further refine the timber base to those acres available for sustained yield production of forest products. All lands within the available timber production base will be considered for scheduled timber harvesting and subject to a variety of forest development activities.

Restrictions placed on the available timber base because of concerns for other resource values (wildlife, recreational use, etc.) will not rule out intensive forest management and planned timber harvest. However, any loss in timber yield resulting from these restrictions will be taken into consideration in future allowable cut computations.

Any commercial forest lands set aside are removed from the timber production base will not be available for scheduled timber harvesting. This acreage will not be included in allowable cut calculations. However, these set aside stands, along with those classified as woodland, will be subject to limited forest management activities such as logging road right-of-ways, salvage operations, and firewood cutting. Any volumes of timber removed from these lands will not be used to satisfy allowable cut levels.

Timber Harvesting and Silvicultural Treatments

Methods of harvest will include clearcutting and shelterwood systems. Clearcutting will be utilized in predominantly lodgepole pine stands, with limited use in Douglas-fir to control dwarf mistletoe infestations. Clearcuts will be limited to 40 acres and will be irregularly shaped to minimize wildlife escape distances and blend into the surrounding landscape.

Timber marking prescriptions will concentrate on genetic improvement of the regenerated stand and will be designed primarily to encourage natural regeneration.

Natural regeneration will be the primary method of reforestation except where an area has been depleted or heavily affected by insects, disease, fire, or other natural catastrophe. Artificial reforestation or site preparation will be considered when natural regeneration does not occur within five years after harvest. The backlog of harvest areas without adequate regeneration stocking levels will also be planted or scarified as forest development funds become available.

Tractor skidding will be restricted to slopes of 45 percent or less in the volcanic, granitic, and sediment land types. Skidding on quartzite soils will be allowed on slopes up to 60 percent. One exception to the 45 percent restriction would be on small areas of convex slopes with inadequate deflection for cable yarding. Some limited skidding activity on slopes up to 60 percent would be allowed in these areas.

Slash treatments will vary with the specific harvesting system and the silvicultural objectives for the stand. Most Douglas-fir harvest units will require lop and scatter slash disposal with some piling of large concentrations at landings. Lodgepole pine slash treatments will vary between lop and scatter and piling depending on cone serotiny and stand objectives. All burning of slash will be conducted by BLM personnel in conformance with state air quality guidelines.

All skid trails will be cross-drained with the construction of water bars upon completion of skidding operations.

All harvest units susceptible to livestock damage will be protected by grazing closures or fencing until such time as regeneration becomes stocked and established.

At least three nonhazardous snags per acre will be left in shelterwood harvest units for nongame wildlife use. In the absence of sufficient numbers of nonhazardous snags, some large culls will be substituted.

Seasonal harvest restrictions and road closures will be imposed to protect soils, watershed, and wildlife values during critical periods.

No firewood cutting permits will be issued in cottonwood/aspen and associated riparian areas/drainages except as part of a special vegetation management project designed to encourage sprouting and regeneration of the stand.

All forestry practices will meet or exceed those set forth under the Idaho Forest Practices Act, Title 38, Chapter 13, Idaho Code.

Range

Allotment Categorization

All grazing allotments in the resource area have been assigned to one of three management categories--M (maintain), I (improve), and C (custodial)--based on present resource conditions, potential for improvement, and management objectives. The M category allotments generally will be managed to maintain current satisfactory resource conditions, I category allotments generally will be managed to improve resource conditions, and C category allotments will receive custodial management while protecting existing resource values.

Allotment-Specific Objectives for the Improvement Category

Multiple use management objectives have been developed for each allotment in the I category (see Appendix B, Draft Lemhi RMP/EIS). Future management actions, including approval of allotment management plans, will be tailored to meet these objectives. However, the priorities assigned to achieving sometimes conflicting objectives for wildlife habitat, watershed, vegetation condition, and livestock forage production differ between alternatives.

Implementing Changes in Allotment Management

Activity plans are commonly used to present, in detail, the types of changes required in an allotment and to establish a schedule for implementation. Actions set forth under the AMP that affect the environment will be analyzed and compared to alternative actions. During the analysis, the proposal may be altered or completely revamped to mitigate adverse impacts. The following sections contain discussions of the types of change likely to be recommended in an activity plan and the guidance that applies to these administrative actions.

Livestock Use Adjustments

Livestock use adjustments are made by changing one or more of the following: the season of use, the number of head, or the pattern of grazing. For each of the alternatives presented in this RMP, target stocking rates have been set for each allotment (refer to Appendix B, Draft Lemhi RMP/EIS). While most livestock use adjustments will occur in the I allotments, use adjustments are permitted for allotments in categories C and M.

In reviewing the target stocking rate figures and other recommended changes, it is emphasized that the target animal unit month (AUM) figures are not final stocking rates. All livestock use adjustments will be implemented through documented mutual agreement or by decision. When adjustments are made through mutual agreement, they may be implemented once

the Rangeland Program Summary has been through a public review period. When livestock use adjustments are implemented by decision, the decision will be based on operator consultation, range survey data, and monitoring of resource conditions. Current BLM policy emphasizes the use of a systematic monitoring program over a period of years to verify the need for livestock adjustments proposed on the basis of one-time inventory data.

Monitoring will also be used to measure the changes brought about by new livestock management practices and to evaluate the effectiveness of management changes in meeting stated objectives. Detailed guidance for rangeland monitoring is available in current BLM policy and guidance. (Refer to Implementation Section of this document).

The federal regulations that govern changes in allocation of livestock forage provide specific direction for livestock use adjustments implemented by decision. The regulations specify that permanent increases in livestock forage or suspensions of preference "shall be implemented over a five-year period...." The regulations do provide for adjustments to be implemented in less than five years when (1) an agreement is reached to implement the adjustment in less than five years or (2) a shorter implementation period is needed to sustain resource productivity.

Temporary Suspensions and Closures

Temporary suspensions of grazing use or closures of all or portions of allotments may be implemented to protect the public lands because of drought, fire, flood, or insect infestation. When conditions such as fire, flood, or insect infestation create a significant impact on the normal operation of a grazing operator, efforts to mitigate the impact will be taken by BLM. These mitigating efforts may consist of relocation of grazing use, modification of grazing systems, and granting of temporary nonrenewable grazing use in other allotments under permit or lease. No action will be taken by BLM prior to consultation and coordination with affected permittees or lessees and other affected parties.

Range Improvements and Treatments

Typical range improvements and treatments and the general procedures to be followed in implementing them are described in Appendix B, Draft Lemhi RMP/EIS. The extent, location, and timing of such actions will be based on the allotment-specific management objectives adopted through the resource management planning process, interdisciplinary development and review (to include the Idaho Department of Fish and Game) of proposed actions, operator contributions, and BLM funding capability. Since some of the soils in the resource area may be unsuitable for range improvement projects, proposed projects will be investigated for feasibility prior to approving location and design plans.

All new fence construction will comply with the Lemhi Resource Area fencing policy dated May 20, 1983 which is as follows:

It shall be standard policy for the Lemhi Resource Area that:

- A. All wire fences constructed subsequent to this policy statement shall be 3-wire only.
- B. Wire spacing shall be as follows:
 - a. Top wire shall be set no higher than 38" from ground level.
 - b. Bottom wire shall be smooth and set at a minimum of 18" from ground level.
 - c. Mid-wire shall be set at 26" from ground level unless:
 - 1. Bighorn sheep are involved (34")
 - 2. Fence is adjustable for antelope (29")
- C. All new fences shall be flagged (e.g. cloth strips, survey flagging) between every other post.
- D. Exceptions: Variances or exceptions to the above may be allowed in unusual or unique circumstances where public safety is involved or where total exclusion of animals is required (e.g. campgrounds, enclosures, etc.). Exceptions will be justified in writing.

All allotments in which range improvement funds are to be spent will be subjected to an economic analysis. The analysis will be used to develop a final priority ranking of allotments for spending range improvement funds that are needed to carry out activity plans. The highest priority for implementation generally will be assigned to those improvements for which the total anticipated benefits exceed costs. Generally, all structural range improvements will be maintained by the benefitting party(s). All nonstructural range improvements will be maintained by BLM.

Noxious weed control will be considered under all alternatives. Individual sites and species (i.e., larkspur, Canadian thistle, leafy etc.) will be handled on a case-by-case basis through the environmental assessment (EA) process. Where biological controls have proven to be effective, they will be used in preference to chemical or mechanical methods.

Grazing Systems

The type of system to be implemented will be based on consideration of the following factors:

1. Allotment-specific management objectives (see Appendix B, Draft Lemhi RMP/EIS)
2. Resource characteristics, including vegetation potential and water availability
3. Operator needs
4. Implementation costs

Typical grazing systems available for consideration are described in Appendix B of the Draft Lemhi RMP/EIS.