

WATERSHED

STEP 1

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

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Planning Unit Name	MAGIC
Program Activity	WATERSHED
Activity Recommendation Area (code)	Erosion Susceptible Area ES - 1

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Activity Recommendation(s)

1. Eliminate all significant soil and vegetation disturbing activities, e.g., heavy grazing, livestock trailing, road construction, residential development, and sagebrush control projects.

Rationale

-1. This area is the only area in the unit that has mantle stability problems. Wave action along Magic Reservoir has undercut these steep slopes in a few areas and some mass failure has occurred.

Present land uses are minimal and are not causing any significant erosion problems. Any future soil excavation activities could create additional mass failures.

These restrictive measures to maintain the fragile stability of the soil resource as directed in 1603 - Watershed Program.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name           MAGIC

Program Activity             WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)           Erosion Susceptible Area ES - 2

Activity Recommendation(s)

1. Eliminate all extensive high impact soil disturbing activities, e.g., organized ORV events, livestock trailing, heavy grazing.

2. Reduce erosion from "Moderate" and "Critical" classes to "low slight" class by improving grazing management and spraying sagebrush, avoiding the steeper, shallow soil south facing slopes.

3. Seed sprayed area with crested, pubescent and intermediate wheatgrass species where understory grasses are absent or too sparse to provide adequate soil protection.

Rationale

1. Erosion conditions are mostly moderate with one area in the critical erosion class. In the past overgrazing and sheep trailing have resulted in active sheet and gully erosion.

Erosion hazards are severe, but this area is capable of supporting most land use activities provided proper erosion control and soil protection measures are carried out.

2. Improved grazing management would reduce erosion to the "slight" class. Sagebrush dominates most of this area. There is a fair understory of perennial grasses.

Ground cover could be increased if sagebrush were eliminated or reduced. Chemical treatment of sagebrush is the best technique because of the erosion susceptibility of these slopes if mechanical measures are employed.

Some of the southern aspects of steep hills contain shallow eroded soils of low productivity. Existing sagebrush cover is providing fair cover for soil protection. Reduction in sagebrush would decrease cover which would accelerate soil erosion.

Densities of desirable understory grass on some areas are too low to expect rapid increases to provide adequate soil protection if sprayed areas are not seeded. Spraying without seeding would increase erosion.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Program Activity

WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)

Erosion Susceptible Area ES - 3

Activity Recommendation(s)

1. Restrict all extensive high impact soil and vegetation disturbing activities, e.g., heavy grazing, residential development, soil excavation, livestock trailing, and sagebrush control treatments.

Rationale

1. This area is moderately susceptible to erosion because of moderate to steep slopes. Area is presently rated within the "slight" erosion class and should be managed closely to improve erosion condition.

The watershed inventory rated the area with a S.S.F. 28. With improved management it is estimated that the future S.S.F. 20 can be attained.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name           MAGIC

Program Activity            WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)      Erosion Reduction Area - ER - 1

Activity Recommendation(s)

1. Reduce erosion from "moderate" class to "slight" class by improving grazing management and spraying sagebrush.

2. Seed sprayed areas with crested, pubescent, and intermediate wheatgrass species where understory grasses are absent or too sparse to provide adequate soil protection.

Rationale

1. Erosion is moderate and can be reduced to the "slight" erosion class by management alone. It is estimated that with chemical control of sagebrush and improved management the soil surface factor can be reduced from S.S.F. 41 to S.S.F. 25. In light of erosion hazards mechanical control of sagebrush would not be the best alternative.

Some reseeding of perennial grasses would be necessary in portions of this area because of depleted range conditions.

Recommendation follows basic guidance 1602 and 1603 manuals that outline direction to maintain and improve soil productivity.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Program Activity

WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)

Erosion Reduction Area ER - 2

Activity Recommendation(s)

Rationale

1. Reduce erosion from the "moderate" class to the stable class by improving livestock grazing management, controlling sagebrush, and seeding perennial grasses.

1. Present moderate erosion condition can be attributed to overgrazing. Improved management can reduce erosion to the slight condition class. Soils can be completely stabilized on this area with sagebrush control (mechanical or chemical methods) and seeding of perennial grasses. There is a significant opportunity in this area to reduce erosion from a S.S.F. 52 to S.S.F. 15.

2. Seed sagebrush control projects with crested, intermediate, and pubescent wheatgrass species where understory grasses are absent or too sparse to provide adequate soil protection.

2. Seeding mixture of crested wheatgrass, pubescent, and intermediate wheatgrass has been successful on similar sites in this unit. Intermediate and pubescent wheatgrasses are weakly rhizomatous plants with good watershed protection growth characteristics.

3. Do not employ any brush control measures on low sagebrush types.

3. This area contains some low sagebrush types. These types usually grow on shallow, stony, gravelly, or clay soils of low productivity. A reduction in low sagebrush cover would result in a decrease of overall ground cover followed by increased erosion.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name      MAGIC

Program Activity        WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)      Erosion Protection Area      EP - 1

Activity Recommendation(s)

1. Continue intensive grazing management to allow for reduction of erosion from slight to stable condition.

Rationale

1. Present livestock management of the Magic R.C.A. is maintaining the slight erosion condition with a S.S.F. 28

Soil erosion in this area can be stabilized with intensive grazing management. The present grazing system should be evaluated to see if it is the best system in meeting watershed objectives. Some alternatives may achieve the stabilization goal more quickly than the present system even though current trends appear to be towards soil stabilization.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name      MAGIC

Program Activity        WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)    Erosion Protection Areas      EP - 2

Activity Recommendation(s)

Rationale

1. Reverse the upward trend in erosion condition and stabilize soils by improving grazing management\* and controlling sagebrush employing chemical or mechanical methods.

1. This area is presently in a "high-slight" erosion class and erosion trends are upward. Primary reason for the upward trend is poor livestock grazing and trailing management practices.

Improved grazing management could reverse declining trends and allow for improved erosion conditions.

Because of the dense stands of sagebrush some control is needed to achieve soil stabilization objectives.

Low sagebrush areas generally have poor site productivity and should not be disturbed. Big sagebrush areas should be treated to protect the better soils in these areas.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name      MAGIC

Program Activity      WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)      Erosion Protection Area      EP - 3

Activity Recommendation(s)

Rationale

1. Reverse the upward trend in erosion condition by improving livestock grazing management.

1. Present erosion conditions are in the "high slight" class and trends are upward. This area is dominated by low sagebrush and the productivity of these sites are fairly low. Ground cover could not be improved with sagebrush eradication treatments.

The best alternative for decreasing erosion would be through improved grazing managements.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 1 - ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATION

Planning Unit Name           MAGIC

Program Activity            WATERSHED

Activity Recommendation Area (code)           UNIT WIDE

Activity Recommendation(s)

Rationale

1. Promptly mitigate the adverse effects of wildfire and other soil disturbing impacts with proper erosion control measures and seeding.

1. Each impact should be evaluated as to the rehabilitation measures needed to prevent soil erosion.

Seeding should include a mixture of crested, pubescent, and intermediate wheatgrasses applied at about 8 lbs. per acre.

2. Provide for future consumptive water needs for the watershed activity and other resource management programs within unit.

2. Present and future consumptive water requirements for the watershed activity have been estimated at 1 acre foot. Total consumptive water requirements for all activities have been estimated at 28 acre feet by the year 2020. If and when basin-wide adjudication occurs, the Bureau should take the necessary steps to file on 28 acre feet to insure adequate water to carry out a multiple use program.

3. Upgrade Bureau roads to appropriate standards to mitigate flood damage.

3. Upgrading roads to provide adequate drainage and drainage crossing would mitigate flood damage potential.

4. Improve ground cover to protect and improve water quality.

4. Overall improvement of vegetative cover will protect and improve water qualities from unit watersheds.

STEP 2

Soils +  
reparation

UNITED STATES  
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Step 2 - Multiple Use Recommendations and Supporting Analysis

Planning Unit Name	MAGIC
ACTIVITY	WATERSHED

Arrangement of Contents

<u>Recommendation Category</u>	<u>Recommendation Areas Included</u>	<u>Conflicts Involved</u>
Grazing Management	ER-1(A), ER-1(B), ER-2(A) ER-2(B), ES-2(A), ES-2(B) EP-1(A), EP-1(B), EP-2(A) EP-2(B), EP-3	None
Sagebrush Control- Strutting Grounds	ES-2(A), ER-1(A), ER-2(A) EP-2(A)	Watershed/Wildlife
Sagebrush Control- Outside Strutting Grounds	ES-2(B), ER-1(B), ER-2(B) EP-2(B)	Watershed/Wildlife
Sagebrush Control- Low Sage Types	ER-2(A), ER-2(B), EP-2(A) EP-2(B)	None
Seeding After Brush Control	ES-2(A), ES-2(B), ER-1(A) ER-1(B), ER-2(A), ER-2(B)	Watershed/Wildlife
Limiting Surface Disturbance	ES-1, ES-2(A), ES-2(B) ES-3(A), ES-3(B)	Watershed/Range Mgmt. Watershed/Recreation Watershed/Minerals
Entire Planning Unit	All Areas	None

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name MAGIC

Activity WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)  
GRAZING MANAGEMENT

- Area ER-1(A)
- Area ER-1(B)
- Area ER-2(A)
- Area ER-2(B)

Attempt to reduce erosion from the Moderate Class to the Slight Class by implementing grazing management systems which meet the physiologic needs of herbaceous species.

(See also Range Management)

- Area ES-2(A)
- Area ES-2(B)

Attempt to reduce erosion from the Moderate and Critical Classes to the lower part of the Slight Class by implementing grazing management systems which meet the physiologic needs of herbaceous species.

(See also Range Management)

Analysis

Healthy robust herbaceous vegetation will improve moisture infiltration, trap sediment, improve soil structure and add litter to the soil surface.

This recommendation is brought forward from MFP Step 1, Watershed with wording changes.

This recommendation is consistent with the Range Management MFP Step 1 recommendation to implement rest-rotation grazing systems wherever possible.

While erosion can be reduced from the Moderate Class to the Slight Class by livestock management alone, there is opportunity to reduce the SSF from 41 to 25 in Areas ER-1(A) and ER-1(B) and from 52 to 15 in Areas ER-2(A) and ER-2(B) by controlling Big Sagebrush and seeding.

(See also multiple area recommendations for Sagebrush Control and Seeding After Brush Control in this MFP Step 2 Watershed portion.)

The analysis is similar to that above.

No specific SSF numbers were presented in MFP Step 1.

(See also Sagebrush Control and Seeding After Brush Control in this MFP Step 2 Watershed portion.)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

GRAZING MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Area EP-1(A)

Implement a rest rotation grazing system with one of the objectives being reduction of erosion from the Slight Class to the Stable Class.

Present livestock management of the Magic R.C.A. is maintaining the slight erosion condition with a SSF 28.

Soil erosion in this area can be stabilized with more intensive grazing management. The present grazing system is probably not the best system to meet watershed objectives. Other alternatives may achieve the stabilization goal more quickly than the present system even though current trends appear to be toward soil stabilization.

This recommendation did not come forward from Step 1 MFP without alteration. "Intensive grazing management" is here defined as rest-rotation. This is consistent with Range Management MFP Step 1 Recommendation 1-A and Wildlife MFP Step 1 Recommendation Habitat Improvement (Mammals) No. 2.

Area EP-1(B)

Assure a form of grazing management on National Resource Lands which will meet the needs of herbaceous vegetation. This will allow for reduction of erosion from the Slight Class to the Stable Class.

Soil erosion in this area can be stabilized with intensive grazing management.

This recommendation did not come forward from Step 1 MFP without alteration. The Step 1 recommendation was aimed principally at the Magic Resource Conservation Area. There are several livestock operations with part of their grazing privileges within this area. Their use of the land needs to be closely monitored.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name MAGIC

Activity WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

GRAZING MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Area EP-2(A)  
Area EP-2(B)

Reverse the present trend in erosion condition and stabilize the soil by implementing grazing management systems which meet the physiologic needs of herbaceous species.  
(See also Range Management)

This area is presently in a "high-slight" erosion class and erosion is continuing. The primary reason for the worsening erosion is poor livestock grazing and trailing management practices.

Improved grazing management could reverse declining trends and allow for improved erosion conditions.

Area EP-3

Reverse the present trend in erosion condition by implementing grazing management systems which meet the physiologic needs of herbaceous species.  
(See also Range Management)

Present erosion conditions are in the high Slight class. Erosion is continuing. This area is dominated by Low sagebrush and the productivity of these sites are fairly low. Ground cover could not be improved with sagebrush eradication treatments.

The best alternative for decreasing erosion would be through improved grazing management.

This recommendation is carried forward from MFP Step I with only minor changes in wording.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

SAGEBRUSH CONTROL - STRUTTING GROUNDS

Area ES-2(A)  
Area ER-1(A)  
Area ER-2(A)  
Area EP-2(A)

Control Big sagebrush only with chemicals or fire only after an interdisciplinary team determines that such control will not impair adequate nesting success of sage grouse. Avoid steep south facing slopes having shallow soils if they occur in the treatment area. Orient treatment in strips or elongate patches with the long axis running generally north/south.

There is a direct conflict with Wildlife MFP Step 1 Recommendation, Habitat Maintenance (Birds) Recommendation No. 1 which calls for maintaining existing sagebrush within a two-mile radius of known sage grouse strutting grounds. However, the District Wildlife Biologist feels that some control work could be done in small select areas.

Ground cover could be increased in the selected areas if Big sagebrush were reduced.

Chemical control or burning methods should be used in areas ES-2(A) and ER-1(A) because of the erosion hazard of mechanical methods. Burning is especially attractive because it is less destructive of forbs needed for wildlife. Chemical, mechanical, or burning control can be used in Areas ER-2(A) and EP-2(A)

See Sagebrush Control Outside Strutting Grounds for the analysis of leave strips and their directional orientation.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

SAGEBRUSH CONTROL - OUTSIDE STRUTTING  
GROUNDS

Area ES-2(B)  
Area ER-1(B)  
Area ER-2(B)  
Area EP-2(B)

Control Big sagebrush using chemicals or fire. Strive for about 50 percent reduction in the amount of Big sagebrush. Orient treatment areas in strips or elongate patches with the long axis oriented generally north/south.

The analysis is similar to the brush control recommendation for sage grouse strutting grounds.

However, these areas are not as critical as sage grouse habitat.

The reason for the strips of brush being left is to meet the needs of migrating mule deer and to provide adequate antelope fawning and fawn cover. These needs are identified in Wildlife MFP Step 1, Habitat Maintenance (Mammals) No. 2 and No. 3.

Brush left will help trap snow and reduce wind-sweeping. This will help improve effective precipitation.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

SAGEBRUSH CONTROL - LOW SAGE TYPE

Area ER-2(A)  
Area ER-2(B)  
Area EP-2(A)  
Area EP-2(B)

Do not employ any brush control measures on Low sagebrush types.

These areas contain some low sagebrush types. These types usually grow on shallow stony, gravelly, or clay soils of low productivity. A reduction in low sagebrush cover would result in a decrease of overall ground cover followed by increased erosion.

Low sagebrush areas generally have poor site productivity and should not be disturbed. Big sagebrush areas could be treated to protect the better soils in these areas.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

SEEDING AFTER BRUSH CONTROL

- Area ES-2(A)
- Area ES-2(B)
- Area ER-1(A)
- Area ER-1(B)
- Area ER-2(A)
- Area ER-2(B)

When Big sagebrush is controlled in selected areas and sufficient residual perennial grasses and forbs do not occur, seed the area to provide ground cover and forage.

Controlling Big sagebrush without seeding may lead to increased erosion if understory vegetation is inadequate to respond rapidly to release and fully occupy the site. The species of perennial grasses to seed include but is not limited to:

- Crested wheatgrass
- Pubescent wheatgrass
- Intermediate wheatgrass

Seeding a mixture of the above-mentioned grasses has been successful on similar sites in this unit. Intermediate and pubescent wheatgrasses are weakly rhizomatous plants with good watershed protection growth characteristics.

Summer-succulent forbs such as Nomad Alfalfa or other adapted species should be included in the seed mix to achieve the 10-15 percent composition recommended by the Wild-life activity.

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

LIMITING SURFACE DISTURBANCE

Area ES-1

Eliminate all significant soil and vegetation disturbing activities.

Examples of disturbing activities are heavy grazing, livestock trailing, road construction, residential development, and sagebrush control projects.

This area is the only area in the unit that has mantle stability problems. Wave action along Magic Reservoir has undercut these steep slopes in a few areas and some mass failure has occurred.

Present land uses are minimal and are not causing any significant erosion problems. Any future soil excavation activities could create additional mass failures.

These restrictive measures<sup>are</sup> to maintain the fragile stability of the soil resource as directed in 1603 - Watershed Program.

Note:

This recommendation is carried forward from MFP Step 1 for the two small areas on the east side of the reservoir. There were no conflicts identified.

However, the small area shown on MFP Step 1 Watershed overlay which lies west of the reservoir is entirely on deeded land. Therefore, that small area was dropped and does not appear on Overlay Magic MFP, Step II, Multiple Use Recommendations for the Watershed Activity.

Area ES-2(A)

Area ES-2(B)

Reduce extensive high-impact soil disturbing activities as much as possible in this area.

Erosion hazards are severe, but this area is capable of supporting most land-use activities provided proper erosion control and soil protection measures are carried out.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)  
LIMITING SURFACE DISTURBANCE (Cont.)

Analysis

If the need for space to hold an organized off-road-vehicle (ORV) event should arise, confine the event to an area other than Area ES-2(A) and Area ES-2(B)

Present erosion conditions are mostly moderate with one area in the Critical class. In the past, overgrazing and sheep trailing have resulted in active sheet and gully erosion.

Work as closely as possible with persons seeking to explore for and/or extract locatable minerals to minimize soil disturbance.  
(See also Minerals)

The Watershed MFP Step 1 recommendation was to eliminate several land uses including organized ORV events. This multiple-use recommendation is simply an extension of that idea.

Allow for geothermal leasing within the area. If a plan for exploration and/or development is submitted, include stipulations which will minimize soil disturbance and will assure rehabilitation of disturbed areas.  
(See also Minerals)

There is a direct conflict with Minerals, Step 1 Recommendation M-4 which calls for mineral exploration and development. The only alternative to working closely with miners is to segregate the area from mineral entry. This is probably not possible on the basis of watershed protection.<sup>2</sup>

Area ES-3(A)  
Area ES-3(B)

Limit extensive high-impact soil and vegetation disturbing activities within these areas as much as feasible.

There is a direct conflict with Minerals, Step 1 Recommendation M-5 which calls for accommodating geothermal leasing and/or development.

These areas are moderately susceptible to erosion because of moderate to steep slopes. The areas are presently rated within the Slight erosion class and should be managed closely to improve erosion condition.

The watershed inventory rated the areas with a SSF 28. With improved management a future SSF 20 can be attained.

Examples of disturbing activities from the original Watershed, MFP Step 1 recommendation are heavy grazing, residential development, soil excavation, livestock trailing,

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name

MAGIC

Activity

WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

LIMITING SURFACE DISTURBANCE (Cont.)

Area ES-3(B)

Allow for the development of camping and sanitary facilities, and the construction of a boat ramp and an access road (road shown on Overlay Magic MFP Step II, Multiple Use Recommendations for the Watershed Activity). Make sure that adequate design and construction standards are included to protect the soil in this erosion susceptible area.

Analysis

and sagebrush control treatments.

The recommendation is carried forward from Step 1 with only minor changes in wording.

There was a direct conflict with Recreation, MFP Step 1, No. 7 and No. 8. However, if the facilities are designed with the erosiveness of the soil in mind and if construction is carried out properly, the recreational resources can be utilized without undue abuse to watershed values.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN  
STEP 2 - MULTIPLE USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

Planning Unit Name MAGIC

Activity WATERSHED

Multiple Use Recommendation(s)

Analysis

ENTIRE PLANNING UNIT

Promptly mitigate the adverse effects of wildfire and other soil disturbing impacts with proper erosion control measures and seeding.

Provide for future consumptive water needs for the watershed activity and other resource management programs within unit.

Upgrade BLM roads in the unit to accepted road standards to reduce erosion and washouts.

Improve ground cover to protect and improve water quality.

If implemented grazing management systems do not measurably reduce erosion (in terms of SSF numbers) and if the physiologic needs of herbaceous species are not being met (by range trend studies), reduce livestock numbers. Numbers should be reduced enough to control erosion in the heavy-use pasture during the year of use.

Each impact should be evaluated as to the rehabilitation measures needed to prevent soil erosion.

Seeding should include a mixture of crested, pubescent, and intermediate wheatgrasses applied at about 8 lbs. per acre.

Present and future consumptive water requirements for the Watershed activity have been estimated at one acre foot. Total consumptive water requirements for all activities have been estimated at 28 acre feet by the year 2020. If, and when, basin-wide adjudication occurs, the Bureau should take the necessary steps to file on 28 acre feet to insure adequate water to carry out a multiple-use program.

Upgrading roads to provide adequate drainage and drainage crossing would reduce damage and control erosion.

This recommendation was slightly reworded from that found in MFP Step 1.

Overall improvement of vegetative cover will protect and improve water qualities from unit watersheds.

It may not be possible to restore watershed conditions if too many livestock are on the land. Physical damage from trampling and soil compaction from too early turnout may offset the benefits of rest and rotation grazing. The number of stock should be watched as closely as the rest of the grazing system.