

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)	Twin Falls
Activity	Wildlife - Sage Grouse
Overlay Reference	
Step (WL-2.4)	Step 3

RECOMMENDATION (con't):

- Recreation - Assistance in design of areas to provide aesthetically pleasing landscape values and for consumptive and non-consumptive recreation values.
- Watershed - Assistance in design of projects to protect watershed.
- Wildlife - Location and design of leave areas for upland game.

RATIONALE (con't):

Ring-necked pheasant use of public land is largely limited to the cropland/wildland interface. Brushy cover on public land adjacent to cultivated land is critical to pheasant populations in many locals and they are increasing in importance. Sagebrush eradication in these areas eliminates critical winter habitat, escape and nesting cover. "Travel lanes" are important in assisting the birds in fulfilling their daily requirements. Existing pheasant habitat must be improved and maintained so as to support a population of 2,166 birds on public land in the Planning Unit by 1995. The Planning Area Analysis (PAA) shows that in the Planning Unit only 11 percent of the pheasant habitat is on public land, and, smaller yet, 5 percent of the hunting days take place on public land. All of the pheasant habitat (11 percent of the total pheasant habitat in the Planning Unit) is critical habitat. More than 11 percent of the pheasant population in the Planning Unit depend on this habitat. Therefore, failure to manage these critical areas will result in reduced overall populations on all lands regardless of land status.

From 1975 to 1995 hunter days are expected to make an 86 percent increase on public land. The PAA reflects the importance of the pheasant as a game bird in the Planning Unit. It is reflected in the expenditure of \$65,057.52 spent on hunting pheasants on public land in 1980. This will increase to an estimated \$618,595.70 by 1995. Populations and harvest of ring-necked pheasants were at a high level from 1960 through 1970. There was a significant decline in population, harvest and success rates by 1975 and under current management levels and habitat trends this decline is projected to continue through 1990. Because of the very high non-hunting related, natural, annual mortality rate, it is not possible

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (APP)	Twin Falls
Activity	Wildlife - Sage Grouse
Overlay Reference	Step iWL-2.4 Step 3

RATIONALE (cont.):

to maintain or increase pheasant populations by reduced hunter harvest when habitat is declining. If the decline in pheasant populations is to be halted, habitat will have to be provided to compensate for that being lost. With improved habitat, pheasant populations, harvest and success rates could be restored to 1970 levels by 1990.²

Multiple Use Analysis

Recommendation 2.4 shows the need to retain brushy cover for wildlife in areas where brushy vegetation is not plentiful. It is supported by watershed, recreation and visual resources but conflicts with lands, minerals, fire and range. All of these conflicts arise from proposed land treatments that vary from material extraction to vegetative manipulation. The friction comes from the possibility that land treatments may eradicate the brush and thus wildlife cover.

(Decision)

Multiple Use Recommendation:

Reason:

Modify WL-2.4 -

All land treatment proposals affecting brushy islands or buffer strips, should receive multiple resource input to assure consideration of the wildlife habitat needs and keep the needed patches and islands of brush habitat. The existing islands and leave areas from the initial projects will remain leave areas in future maintenance unless wildlife input indicates that the areas are not critical habitat, in which case treatment can be done in a manner that benefits the wildlife values.

To allow for flexible planning and adequate consideration of brush cover for wildlife species.

- 2 Idaho Department of Fish and Game. 1978. A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF IDHAO'S FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES. Volume I: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES 1975-1990. Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Boise, Idaho.

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION--ANALYSIS--DECISION

Name: <i>WFD</i>
Twin Falls
Activity
Wildlife - Upland Game
Overlay Reference
Step WL-2.5 Step 3

RECOMMENDATION: (*Decision*)

Implement the following cooperative farm agreements to enhance upland game bird habitat:

T. 11 S., R. 14 E.
Sec. 11: NE1/4 SW1/4 - McCoy
North of Canal

T. 12 S., R. 16 E.
Sec. 24: SE1/4 NW1/4 - Courtney
SW1/4 NW1/4
South of Canal

RATIONALE:

Currently, these parcels are isolated from their respective grazing allotments and are burdened with one form of trespass or another. The trespasses should be cleared and cooperative farm agreements should be implemented. The quality is such that when properly developed these parcels could provide very high quality nesting and brood rearing areas for upland game, especially the ring-necked pheasant. The pheasant is an important and highly sought after game bird in this area. Good pheasant habitat on public land is in short supply.

SUPPORT:

Recreation - Assistance in implementation of agreements to enhance recreational values.

Wildlife - Location and design of wildlife vegetative plantings and identification of plant species to be used. Coordination with operations and adjacent landowners.

Multiple Use Analysis

This recommendation is an attempt to eliminate unauthorized activities by working with allotment users to implement cooperative farm agreements. This action would allow the entire parcel to be farmed, but only half harvested leaving the other half for wildlife feed and cover. This compromise would tend to satisfy both interests (wildlife and the cooperative farmer).

The proposal is supported by recreation and lands, but conflicts with lands and range recommendations. The lands conflict comes from a proposed land exchange that would stop a cooperative farm agreement. The range conflict is from proposed vegetation treatments and forage allocation. The problem could be solved by planning with the permittees to determine the best alternative management.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed
(Instructions on reverse)

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFD)	Twin Falls
Activity	Wildlife - Upland Game
Overlay Reference	Step WL-2.7 Step 3

RECOMMENDATION: (Decision)

Provide improved upland game bird habitat by planting vegetation which will out compete noxious weeds, are non-spreading in nature but will provide the same benefits as many of the noxious weeds. Until this can be accomplished, herbicide and pesticide use will have to be selective.

SUPPORT:

- Range - Coordination in the weed control program with wildlife along areas of important upland game habitat.
- Watershed - Assistance with this recommendation for watershed benefits.
- Wildlife - Identification of areas to incorporate this recommendation.

RATIONALE:

Weed-seeds are an important component in the diet of the Hungarian partridge year around. "Huns" select nest sites in weed patches and value them as important escape areas. Weed control programs adversely affect the "Hun" by reducing its habitat. It is important to improve and maintain the existing Hungarian partridge habitat so as to support a population of 13,265 birds on public land in the Planning Unit by 1995. A gradual decline in populations, harvests and success rates from the present plateau is predicted through 1990 under current management levels and habitat trends. By improving and maintaining Hungarian partridge habitat in optimum condition, the demand should result in greater harvests and a slight increase in success rates.¹ The Planning Area Analysis (PAA) shows that in the Planning Unit 30 percent of the Hungarian partridge habitat is found on public land and 44 percent of the hunting days take place on public land. From 1975 to 1995 hunter days are expected to make a 47 percent increase on public land. This demand can be met with improvement and maintenance of existing Hungarian partridge habitat in top condition. The PAA reflects the importance of the "Hun" as a game bird in the Planning Unit. It is reflected in the expenditure of \$44,629.77 spent on hunting "Huns" on public land in 1980. This will increase to an estimated \$556,541.45 by 1995.

The general widespread use of herbicides and pesticides adversely affects pheasants, either through reduced cover and/or food supply.

¹ Idaho Department of Fish and Game. 1978. A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF IDAHO'S FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES. Volume I: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES 1975-1990. Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Boise, Idaho.

UNITED STATES
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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
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Name (B/LP)	Twin Falls
Activity	Wildlife - Quail
Overlay Reference	
Step	WL-2.8 Step 3

RECOMMENDATION: (Decision)

Improve quail habitat by establishing artificial quail roosting sites (brush piles on platforms) every one-half mile in quail range. Protect the 160 acres of juniper trees near Mule Creek. Maintain dense brushy areas in wetland-riparian situations. Maintain the natural shrub-tree mixtures and native vegetation. Maintain 25-50 percent shade provided by woody cover which is needed for successful quail nesting.

RATIONALE:

If roosting sites are not present quail will be few and scattered. For night roosting, quail require stiff-twigged, densely foliated evergreen trees or tall shrubs. In good quail habitat, there is at least one roosting site every one-half mile.

The mountain quail is a "sensitive" species. In desert habitats mountain quail nests are often found associated with junipers and other such woody plants.¹ It is important to maintain the natural shrub-tree mixtures and native vegetation that is an integral part of mountain quail habitat.

SUPPORT:

- Forestry - Maintenance of existing juniper area.
- Range - Development and implementation of grazing systems to protect "dense" brushy areas.
- Operations - Construction and installation of artificial roosting sites.
- Recreation - Assistance in design to enhance aesthetic values and recreational benefits.
- Watershed - Assistance in implementation of recommendation to enhance watershed.
- Wildlife - Location and design of artificial roosting sites. Coordination with other resources in protection of quail habitat.

Since quail nesting occurs in dense vegetation near a water source it is important to keep livestock from removing the vegetation around watering areas in quail habitat.

The existing vally/mountain quail habitat should be improved and maintained so as to support a population of 2,100 birds on public land in the Planning Unit by 1995. The Sikes Act (PL 93-452) authorizes the BLM to jointly develop and carry out wildlife programs with state wildlife departments on federal lands. The Planning Area Analysis (PAA) shows that in the Planning Unit 55 percent of the quail habitat is found on public land but only 2 percent of the hunting days take place on public land. From 1975 to 1995 hunter days are expected to make a 64 percent increase on public land. Under current management levels and habitat trends, it appears that peak populations were reached in 1975 and a gradual decline in population, harvest and hunter success are projected through 1990.

¹ Johnsgard, P. A. 1973. GROUSE AND QUAIL OF NORTH AMERICA. University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln, Nebraska.

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
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Name (M/F)	Twin Falls
Activity	Wildlife - Sage Grouse
Overlay Reference	
Step	WL-2.9 Step 3

RECOMMENDATION:

Maintain at least 20 percent live sagebrush cover within nesting, brood rearing and winter sage grouse habitat areas. Limit control of vegetation to a site by site basis within two miles of leks. Apply all treatment measures in irregular patterns. Treated areas will not be wider than 100 feet and untreated areas will be at least as wide as treated areas in sage grouse range. No control of sagebrush will be considered in any suitable area known to have supported wintering concentrations of sage grouse within the past ten years.

RATIONALE:

Sage grouse are intimately, probably inseparably, associated with sagebrush. Almost all cover types used are composed of various combinations of growth forms and densities of sagebrush. Sage grouse dependence on sagebrush cannot be over-emphasized. They are solely dependent upon sagebrush from October through April of each year.¹ Sagebrush is essential for food and cover requirements of sage grouse.

SUPPORT:

- Range - Design land treatments in accordance with the above recommendation.
- Operations - Layout of land treatment areas. Coordination with wildlife.

¹ Bean, R. 1941. LIFE HISTORY STUDIES OF THE SAGE GROUSE (Centrocercus urophasianus) IN CLARK COUNTY, IDAHO. B. S. Thesis. Utah State Agricultural College. Logan, Utah.

Griner, L. A. 1939. A STUDY OF THE SAGE GROUSE, (Centrocercus urophasianus), WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LIFE HISTORY, HABITAT REQUIREMENTS, AND NUMBERS AND DISTRIBUTION. M. S. Thesis. Utah State Agricultural College.

Oakleaf, R. J. 1971. THE RELATIONSHIP OF SAGE GROUSE TO UPLAND MEADOWS IN NEVADA. Job Final Report W-48-2. Nevada Department of Fish and Game.

Patterson, R. L. 1952. THE SAGE GROUSE IN WYOMING. Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. Sage Books, Incorporated. Denver, Colorado.

Savage, D. E. 1969. RELATION OF SAGE GROUSE TO UPLAND MEADOWS IN NEVADA. Job Progress Report W-39-R-9. Nevada Department of Fish and Game.

Wallestad, R. O. and Pyrah, D. 1974. MOVEMENT AND NESTING OF SAGE GROUSE HENS IN CENTRAL MONTANA. Journal of Wildlife Management. 38:630-633.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

Instructions on reverse

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Name 1140

Twin Falls

Activity

Wildlife - Sage Grouse

Overlay Reference

Step WL-2.9 Step 3

RECOMMENDATION (cont.):

- Recreation - Assistance in design to provide pleasing aesthetic values.
- Watershed - Assistance in design to protect watershed values.
- Archaeology - Assistance in design to protect cultural resources.
- Wildlife - Designation of important and critical sage grouse use areas. Coordination with range and operations before any on-the-ground work begins.

Multiple Use Analysis

This is a recommendation to protect stands of sagebrush that play intimate roles in the life cycle of sage grouse. These birds are dependent on sagebrush for food and shelter throughout much of their lives. By following this proposal their dependence can be accommodated without sacrifice by other activities.

WL-2.9 is supported by watershed, recreation and visual resource management. The conflicts are with lands, fire and range. The lands conflict is caused by a proposed exchange of critical sage grouse range. The conflict would be compromised by allowing no exchanges until an HMP is developed for this critical sage grouse range.

The problem with fire is solved by changing sage grouse winter range from the protection proposed restricted retardant use to normal fire suppression methods. This would insure that the winter range is not totally decimated by fire.

Range recommendations RM-2.1 through RM-2.8 address land treatments that do not consider sage grouse habitat. To resolve this problem wildlife should be consulted on all land treatments that affect sage grouse habitat. Wildlife should recommend patterns of treatments and leave areas that will benefit wildlife.

All in all the modifications to other activity plans are inconsequential compared to the benefits of preserving sage grouse and their habitat.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Form BLM-21, April 1973