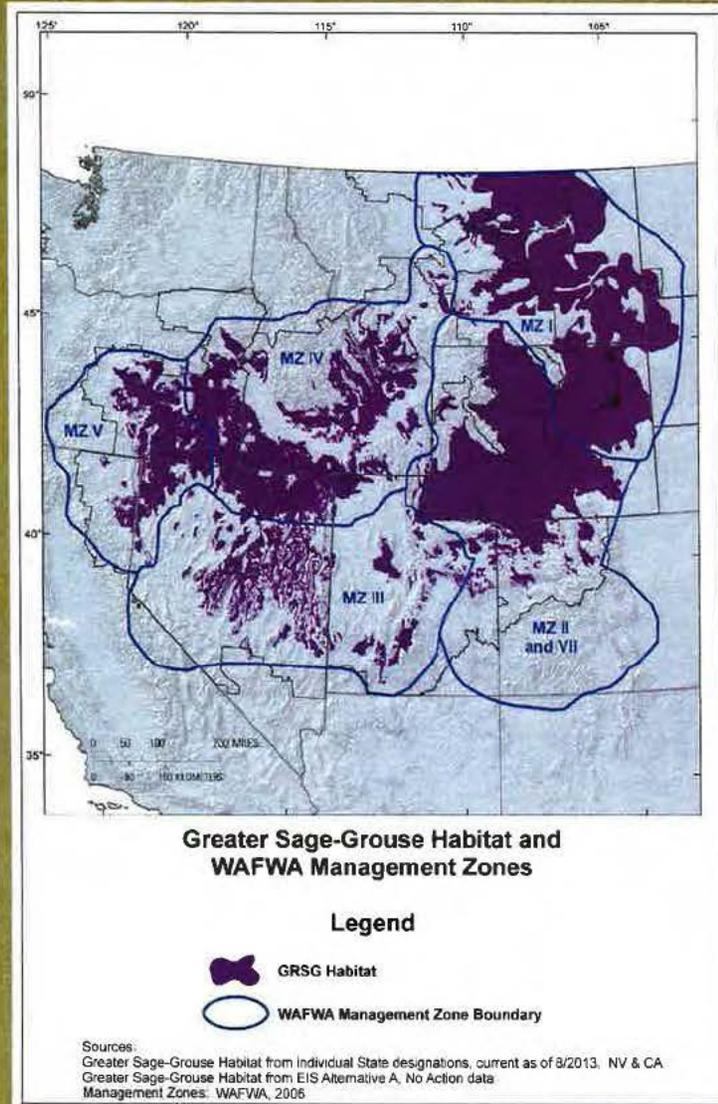


Purpose of and Need for the Land Use Plan Amendments



The purpose of the Land Use Plan Amendments (LUPAs) is to identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures in BLM and Forest Service Land Use Plans to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. The BLM and Forest Service will consider such measures in the context of their multiple-use and sustained yield mandates under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and National Forest Management Act.

Because the BLM and Forest Service administer a large portion of GRSG habitat within the affected states, changes in BLM and Forest Service management of GRSG habitats are anticipated to have a considerable impact on present and future GRSG populations and could reduce the need for the US Fish and Wildlife Service to list the species as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.



Oregon Sub-Region Greater Sage-Grouse
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USFWS-Identified Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse and Their Habitat



Threat	Applicable BLM Resource Program and Management for Addressing the Threat
Wildland fire	Wildland fire management: Establish fire management strategies; identify areas suitable and unsuitable for wildland fire use and priority areas for suppression; fuels treatment.
Invasive species	Vegetation management: Implement weed control, suppression, or eradication; allowable use restrictions; or active management or treatment. Livestock grazing/range management: Allowable use restrictions. Wildland fire management: Active management or treatment to livestock grazing/range management. Recreation management: Restrictions and best management practices associated with special recreation use permits.
Wind energy development	Lands and realty management: Issue ROW grants; identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas; identify utility corridors. Leasable minerals management: Identify open and closed (no lease) areas to fluid mineral leasing; identify open areas with no surface occupancy, controlled surface use, and timing limitation stipulations.
Prescribed fire	Vegetation management: Conduct vegetation treatments. Wildland fire management: Establish fire management strategies; identify areas suitable and unsuitable for prescribed fire use.
Livestock grazing Management	Livestock grazing/range management: Identify acres available and not available to grazing; establish animal unit months; manage grazing systems and permit renewal; improve ranges; identify season of use and stocking rates. Vegetation management: Conduct vegetation treatments.
Wild Horse and Burro Management	Wild horses and burros management: Identify herd areas, herd management areas, and appropriate management levels.
Conifer encroachment	Wildland fire management: Active management or treatment. Vegetation management: Conduct vegetation treatments.
Agriculture and urbanization	Lands and realty management: Identify land for acquisition, retention, and disposal; issue permits and leases for agricultural activities.
Hard rock mining	Locatable minerals management: Recommend to withdraw lands from locatable mineral development; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations. Mineral materials (salables) management: Identify open and closed areas to mineral materials disposal; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations. Nonenergy leasable minerals management: Identify open and closed areas to nonenergy leasable minerals; establish terms, conditions, or special considerations.
Infrastructure (power lines/pipelines; roads; communication sites; railroads; fences)	Lands and realty management: Issue ROW grant; identify ROW avoidance or exclusion areas; identify utility corridors. Travel management: Identify motorized and nonmotorized area designations, including areas open, limited, or closed to off-highway vehicles (OHVs). Livestock grazing/range management: Authorize the installation or removal of fences; identify fence installation or removal requirements. Decisions may be made regarding modification of fences that would not be done by ranchers.
Water developments	Wild horses and burros: Identify number, location, and type of range water developments. Livestock grazing: Authorize water developments; identify water development requirements. Decisions may be made regarding water development that would not be done by ranchers.
Climate change	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern: Identification of areas of critical environmental concern
Weather	There are no resource programs in the BLM RMPs for addressing these USFWS-identified threats.
Hunting	
Predation	All applicable programs: Establish design features and best management practices to reduce avian predator perching and nesting on structures, and enhance hiding cover at nest sites.
Disease	All applicable programs: Establish design features and best management practices to reduce risk for West Nile virus.
Contaminants	Mineral resources: Plan of operation requirements. Public health and safety: Remediate and resolve illegal dumping.

Alternatives Themes and Disturbance Cap

Alternative	Theme (Alternative Based On...)	Disturbance Cap
Alternative A	Current management from 8 BLM RMPs	None
Alternative B	Based on the National Technical Team Report (per BLM IM-2012-044)	Apply a 3% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PPMA.
Alternative C	Mixture of conservation measures from the NTT report and public input	Apply a 0% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PPMA and PGMA, unless there are valid existing rights.
Alternative D	Oregon BLM Alternative developed by the Oregon Sub-Region BLM	Apply a 3% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in PPMA.
Alternative E	State Plan based on: <i>Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon: A Plan to Maintain and Enhance Populations and Habitat</i>	Apply a 0% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (not including fire) in Core Areas, unless non-habitat.
Alternative F	Mixture of conservation measures from the NTT report and public input	Apply a 3% surface disturbance cap to anthropogenic disturbances (including fire) in PPMA.



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Minerals

Mineral development can result in direct loss of Greater Sage-Grouse habitat, increase fragmentation, displace birds from preferred habitats, and decrease and isolate sage-grouse populations. Indirectly, mineral development can result in the loss of sage-grouse populations and habitat through the creation or expansion of new roads and other infrastructure.

Management Actions

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<p>Mineral current management from BLM RMPs.</p> <p>Fluid leasable minerals: 8,314,700 acres (66%) of BLM-administered surface within the decision area would continue to be open to ROVY location.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: 596,800 acres (7%) of federal mineral estate would remain withdrawn, and an additional 20,500 acres (less than 1%) would continue to be recommended for withdrawal.</p> <p>Mineral materials: 8,314,700 acres (66%) of BLM-administered surface within the decision area would continue to be open to ROVY location.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: 3,134,200 acres (24%) would remain closed to prospecting and leasing.</p>	<p>Fluid leasable minerals: Approximately 6,762,920 acres (44% of the federal mineral estate), including all federal mineral estate within PPMA, would be closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: 4,490,500 acres (29%) of federal mineral estate in the decision area (including all PPMA) would be recommended for withdrawal.</p> <p>Mineral materials: Close PPMA to mineral material sales.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: 7,157,800 acres (47%) of federal mineral estate in the decision area would be closed to prospecting and leasing.</p>	<p>Fluid leasable minerals: Approximately 10,895,300 acres (71% of the federal mineral estate), including all federal mineral estate within occupied habitat, would be closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: 9,653,400 acres (63% of federal mineral estate in the decision area (including all occupied habitat) would be recommended for withdrawal.</p> <p>Mineral materials: Close all occupied habitats to mineral material sales.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: 11,085,800 acres (73%) of federal mineral estate in the decision area would be closed to prospecting and leasing.</p>	<p>Fluid leasable minerals: Approximately 3,604,400 acres (24% of the federal mineral estate) would be closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: Locatable mineral management under Alternative D would be similar to that under Alternative A.</p> <p>Mineral materials: Close PPMA to development of new mineral sites. Existing permitted sites would not be closed, but reclaimed upon exhaustion of resource.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: Nonenergy leasable mineral leases are subject to an NSO stipulation in PPMA. Consider only underground development options with entry outside PPMA and occupied sites found in PGMA.</p>	<p>Fluid leasable minerals: Approximately 6,762,920 acres (44% of the federal mineral estate), including all federal mineral estate within Core Area habitat, would be closed to fluid mineral leasing.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: Similar to Alternative B, 4,490,500 acres of federal mineral estate (including all Core Area habitat) would be recommended for withdrawal.</p> <p>Mineral materials: Same as Alternative B, unless non-habitat.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: Alternative E would be the same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Fluid leasable minerals: Management of fluid minerals would be similar to that under Alternative C; however, geophysical exploration would be allowed within occupied habitat for the purpose of gathering information about fluid mineral resources outside occupied habitat.</p> <p>Locatable minerals: Locatable mineral management would be the same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Mineral materials: Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Nonenergy leasable minerals: Alternative F would be the same as Alternative B.</p>



Issue: How would energy and mineral development, including renewable energy development, be managed within GRS habitat while recognizing valid existing rights?

Oregon Sub-Region Greater Sage-Grouse Draft RMPA/EIS



Infrastructure

Infrastructure such as roads and power lines affect Greater Sage-Grouse populations through habitat fragmentation, habitat loss, and an increased potential for predation. Habitat fragmentation is the separation or splitting apart of previously contiguous, functional habitat. Infrastructure can also cause direct mortality to sage-grouse by posing a collision hazard. The BLM Lands and Realty administers rights-of-way permit applications for infrastructure development projects.

Management Actions

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain current management from BLM RMP. Manage ROWs as follows (acres): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ROW Avoidance: 3,445,685 (acres) ROW Exclusion: 857,564 (acres) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage PPMA as exclusion areas for new ROWs (4,866,030 acres). Manage PGMA as avoidance areas for new ROW (5,662,632 acres). Where new ROWs associated with valid existing rights are required, co-locate new ROWs within existing ROWs or where GRSG impacts would be minimized. Evaluate and take advantage of opportunities to remove, bury, or modify existing power lines within priority GRSG habitat areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage all PPMA and PGMA (19,682,100 acres) as ROW exclusion areas. New transmission corridors, ROWs for corridors (oil, gas, water, aquifer mining), and communication or other towers are prohibited in ACECs and occupied habitats. Site new corridors/facilities in non-habitat, and bundle them with existing corridors to the maximum extent possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPMA currently managed as exclusion areas for new BLM ROW authorizations (Alternative A) would remain exclusion areas (857,564 acres). All other PPMA would be designated as avoidance areas for new ROW authorizations. PGMA would be managed the same as under Alternative A, except, for all new ROWs proposed in PGMA, the local BLM Wildlife Biologist, in cooperation with ODFW, shall conduct a field evaluation to determine if the proposal would impact occupied, suitable or potential habitat for GRSG. Development could occur within the avoidance areas if that disturbance was within or under the 3% disturbance threshold. Evaluate power lines in PPMA by district and identify which power lines would provide the most benefit to the species by being buried, modified, or relocated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage PPMA as exclusion areas for new ROWs (4,866,030 acres). Recommend no development in Core Area habitat if it has been identified as GRSG habitat and there has been evidence of GRSG presence. In Low Density and all other GRSG habitat outside of Core Area, require mitigation to avoid, minimize, and restore impacts on GRSG habitat caused by BLM-administered activities. Use existing utility corridors and ROWs to consolidate activities to reduce habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage PPMA as exclusion areas for new ROWs (4,866,030 acres). Manage PGMA as avoidance areas for new ROW (5,662,632 acres). Evaluate and take advantage of opportunities to remove, bury, or modify existing power lines within priority GRSG habitat areas. Do not site wind energy development in occupied GRSG habitat and site wind energy infrastructure at least 5 miles from active GRSG leks.



Issue: What opportunities exist to adjust public land ownership that would increase management efficiency for GRSG and GRSG habitat?

Oregon Sub-Region Greater Sage-Grouse Draft RMP/EIS



Photo Credit: P.A. Miller and State of Nevada

Livestock Grazing / Range Management

Livestock grazing is the most widespread type of land use across Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Improper livestock grazing may affect vegetation communities that are important to the sage-grouse lifecycle. Fencing constructed to manage livestock grazing can cause direct mortality to sage-grouse and fragmentation of habitat. The effects of livestock grazing on sage-grouse habitat depend upon the grazing management system, stocking levels, season of use, and utilization levels.

Management Actions

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current management from 8 BLM RMPs. • No change in permitted AUMs. There would be 924,617 AUMs. • Manage 4,492,467 acres open to livestock grazing in PPH. • Manage 5,501,821 acres open to livestock grazing in PGH. • Manage 36,244 acres closed to livestock grazing in PPH. • Manage 142,522 acres closed to livestock grazing in PGH. • Manage livestock to meet Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of AUMs would be the same as Alternative A. • Manage acres open and closed to livestock grazing in PPMA and PGMA the same as Alternative A. • In PPMA, manage for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state to achieve GRSG seasonal habitat objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibit grazing in occupied GRSG habitat. There would be 0 AUMs. • Manage 0 acres open to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 0 acres open to livestock grazing in PGMA. • Manage 4,529,711 acres closed to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 5,644,343 acres closed to livestock grazing in PGMA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be 915,624 AUMs. • Manage 4,417,924 acres open to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 5,479,819 acres open to livestock grazing in PGMA. • Manage 110,787 acres closed to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 164,525 acres closed to livestock grazing in PGMA. • When conducting rangeland health assessments, use habitat indicators and associated values that are consistent with the Habitat Assessment Framework or with values adjusted for regional conditions to determine the suitability of PPMA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of AUMs would be the same as Alternative A. • Manage acres open and closed to livestock grazing in Core Area habitat the same as Alternative A. • Manage 3,824,263 acres open to livestock grazing in Low Density habitat. • Manage 88,103 acres closed to livestock grazing in Low Density habitat. • Where livestock grazing management results in a forage use level detrimental to habitat quality, it is recommended changes in grazing management be made as soon as possible to recover habitat quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by 25% the area grazed. There would be 350,208 AUMs. • Manage 3,369,350 acres open to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 4,126,365 acres open to livestock grazing in PGMA. • Manage 1,123,116 acres closed to livestock grazing in PPMA. • Manage 1,375,455 acres closed to livestock grazing in PGMA. • Manage for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state to achieve GRSG habitat objectives.



Characteristics of Sagebrush Rangeland Needed for Productive Sage-Grouse Habitat

	Habitat Type					
	Breeding		Brood-rearing		Winter	
	Height (cm)	Canopy (%)	Height (cm)	Canopy (%)	Height (cm)	Canopy (%)
Mesic Sites						
Sagebrush	40-80	15-25	40-80	10-25	25-35	10-30
Grass/Forb	>18	25	variable	>15	N/A	N/A
Arid Sites						
Sagebrush	30-80	15-25	40-80	10-25	25-35	10-30
Grass/Forb	>18	25	variable	>15	N/A	N/A

Source: Connelly et al. 2000, Guidelines to Manage Sage Grouse Population and their Habitats

Issue: What measures will the BLM put in place to manage livestock grazing to meet Greater Sage-Grouse habitat requirements?

Oregon Sub-Region Greater Sage-Grouse Draft RMPA/EIS

Travel

Roads affect Greater Sage-Grouse populations through habitat fragmentation, habitat loss, and an increased potential for predation.

Management Actions

Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain current management from 8 BLM RMPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In PPMA, limit motorized travel to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails at a minimum, until such time as travel management planning is complete and routes are either designated or closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In occupied habitat, limit motorized travel to existing roads and trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alternative B, as well as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A final TMP due within 5 years of RMP Amendment completion. Areas in PPMA currently managed as closed would remain closed (Alternative A). Areas in PPMA, aside from those closed, would become limited OHV areas. The extent and intensity of OHV use should be assessed, as appropriate, prior to travel management planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrict OHV use to areas greater than 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from leks during the breeding season (approximately March 1 through July 15). OHV use should be restricted to on-trail or on-road use during the nesting season in areas known to be occupied by GRSG. Some playas serve as breeding display sites and could be impacted by off-road use. The extent and intensity of OHV use should be assessed. Quantifying OHV use (e.g., daily and seasonal use) assists in mitigating potential conflicts with GRSG habitat needs and recreational pursuits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alternative B.

Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management (acres)

Travel Type	Alt A (acres)	Alternative B (acres)	Alternative C (acres)	Alternative D (acres)	Alternative E (acres)	Alternative F (acres)
Open in PPH/PPMA/Core Area habitat	2,669,145	0	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B
Open in PGH/PGMA/Low Density habitat	2,540,051	1,938,846	0	Same as Alternative B	1,610,288	Same as Alternative B
Closed in PPH/PPMA/Core Area habitat	48,450	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A			
Closed in PGH/PGMA/Low Density habitat	143,637	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A	70,566	Same as Alternative A
Limited in PPH/PPMA/Core Area habitat	1,828,999	4,498,590	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B	Same as Alternative B with seasonal buffers	Same as Alternative B with buffers
Limited in PGH/PGMA/Low Density habitat	2,576,796	Same as Alternative A	5,518,995	Same as Alternative A	1,710,392	Same as Alternative A

Issue: How would motorized, non-motorized, and mechanized travel be managed to provide access to federal lands and a variety of recreation opportunities while protecting greater sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat?

Oregon Sub-Region Greater Sage-Grouse
Draft RMPA/EIS



Mitigation by DEIS Alternative

Alternatives B, C, D, and F

- Incorporate Regional Mitigation Strategy (2013). For impacts that cannot be sufficiently avoided or minimized onsite, the BLM must ensure implementation of effective measures to offset (or compensate for) such impacts and to maintain or improve the viability of GRSG habitat and populations over time, as described in the COT Report.

Alternative D

- Proposes a “no net loss, net benefit” mitigation goal for PPMA
- Proposes a “no net loss” mitigation goal for PGMA
- Requires collaboration with USFWS and ODFW in selection of mitigation
- Creates Focal Areas (5.2 million acres: 3.8 million in PPMA, 1.4 million in PGMA). These represent the best options for restoration activities related to projects or potential locations for off-site mitigation. Includes (1) climate change consideration areas; (2) high-density breeding areas; and (3) restoration opportunity areas.

Alternative E

- Incorporates ODFW Mitigation Framework
- Proposes a “no net loss, net benefit” standard for Core Area Habitat
- Proposes a “no net loss” mitigation goal for Low Density Habitat and GRSG habitat outside of Core Area Habitat

