

# Sagebrush Focal Area Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement



## WHY IS THIS WITHDRAWAL BEING PROPOSED?

- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service decided that the greater sage-grouse should not be placed on the Endangered Species List at this time.

- A key conservation measure that factored into that decision was the new BLM and Forest Service land use plan decisions that protect lands containing the most important greater sage-grouse habitat; landscapes defined as “Sagebrush Focal Areas.”



- On September 24, 2015, the Department of the Interior published a notice proposing to withdraw approximately 10 million acres of Sagebrush Focal Areas on BLM- and Forest Service-managed lands from location and entry of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights.
- The purpose of the proposed withdrawal is to protect the greater sage-grouse and its habitat from adverse effects of reasonably foreseeable locatable mineral exploration and mining.



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## KEY COMPONENTS OF THE WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL

### **What the proposed withdrawal would do:**

- Withdraw approximately 10 million acres of BLM- and Forest Service-managed lands in six western states from location and entry of new mining claims for 20 years.

### **What the proposed withdrawal would NOT do:**

- The withdrawal would not ban mining on all lands within the proposed boundary. The proposed withdrawal protects valid existing rights.
- The proposal does not affect other BLM public land uses or National Forest System land uses such as grazing, recreation, timber harvest, mineral leasing, geothermal leasing, or mineral material sales.





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## **LOCATABLE MINERAL DEVELOPMENT ON WITHDRAWN LANDS**

### **Locatable mineral development can take place on withdrawn lands under these conditions:**

- A mining or exploration project on active mining claims is currently authorized, OR
- Active mining claims are present and after the BLM or Forest Service determines that those mining claims are valid.

### **A withdrawal can affect locatable mineral development because:**

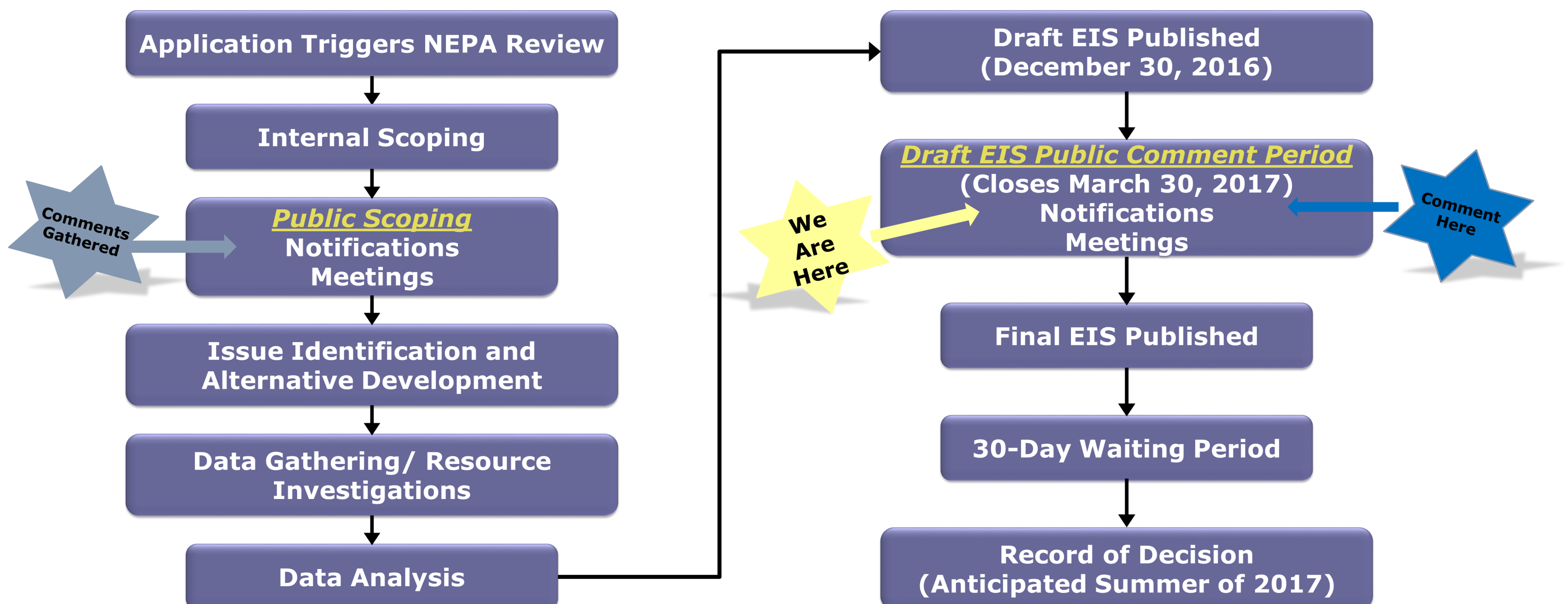
- No exploration or mining can happen on lands where no mining claims exist. If a mining claimant abandons or forfeits existing mining claims then any mining on those lands must cease.
- No new mining claims can be established.
- No new exploration can be completed on existing mining claims for the purpose of satisfying the requirements for validity.
- A mineral validity examination must be completed before processing a request for new authorization or a major modification to an existing authorization.

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## NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)

### Public Involvement Milestones



### Process Participants

BLM	Cooperators
District, State & Field Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washington DC</li> <li>• Idaho</li> <li>• Montana</li> <li>• Nevada</li> <li>• Oregon</li> <li>• Utah</li> <li>• Wyoming</li> </ul>	<b>33 Total</b> <b>Tribes:</b> Duckwater Shoshone and the Summit Lake Paiute <b>Federal Agencies:</b> Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Area Power Administration <b>State Agencies:</b> State of Idaho, Nevada Division of Minerals, Nevada Department of Wildlife, State of Wyoming, State of Utah, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries <b>Conservation Districts:</b> Lincoln County Conservation District (WY), Sweetwater County Conservation District (WY), Uinta County Conservation District (WY) <b>Counties:</b> ID-Bingham, Jefferson, Lemhi; MT-Fergus, Valley; NV-Elko, Humboldt, Lander, Nye; OR-Harney, Lake; WY-Fremont, Lincoln, Sublette, Sweetwater, Uinta <b>County Organization:</b> Harney County (OR) <b>Sheriff:</b> Malheur County Sheriff (OR)
<b>Native American Tribes</b> 53 Participating Tribes	
<b>Contracting Team</b>	
North Wind Resource Consulting, LLC   Burns and McDonnell, Inc.   Galileo Project, LLC SWCA Environmental Consultants, Inc.   BBC Research & Consulting	



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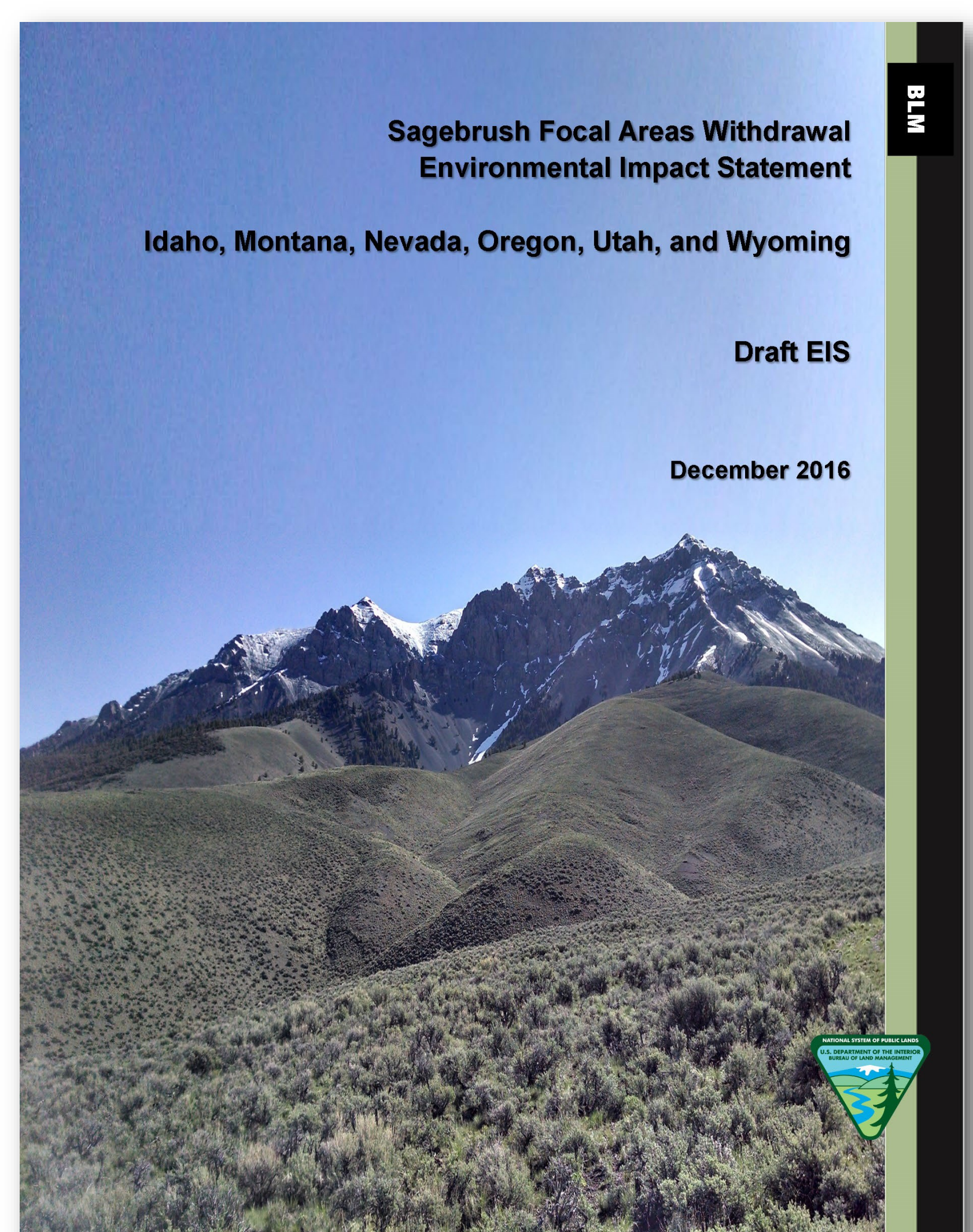
## ISSUES/RESOURCES AND ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

### Issues or resources raised during scoping and analyzed in the EIS include:

- Geology and mineral resources.
- Social and economic conditions.
- Vegetation, including special status plants.
- Wildlife and special status animals, including greater sage-grouse.

### Proposed Action and alternatives considered in detail in the EIS include:

- Proposed Action (withdraw 10 million acres from location and entry for 20 years, subject to valid existing rights).
- No Action Alternative (no withdrawal).
- State of Nevada Alternative.
- Remove Areas of High Mineral Potential Alternative.
- State of Idaho Alternative.





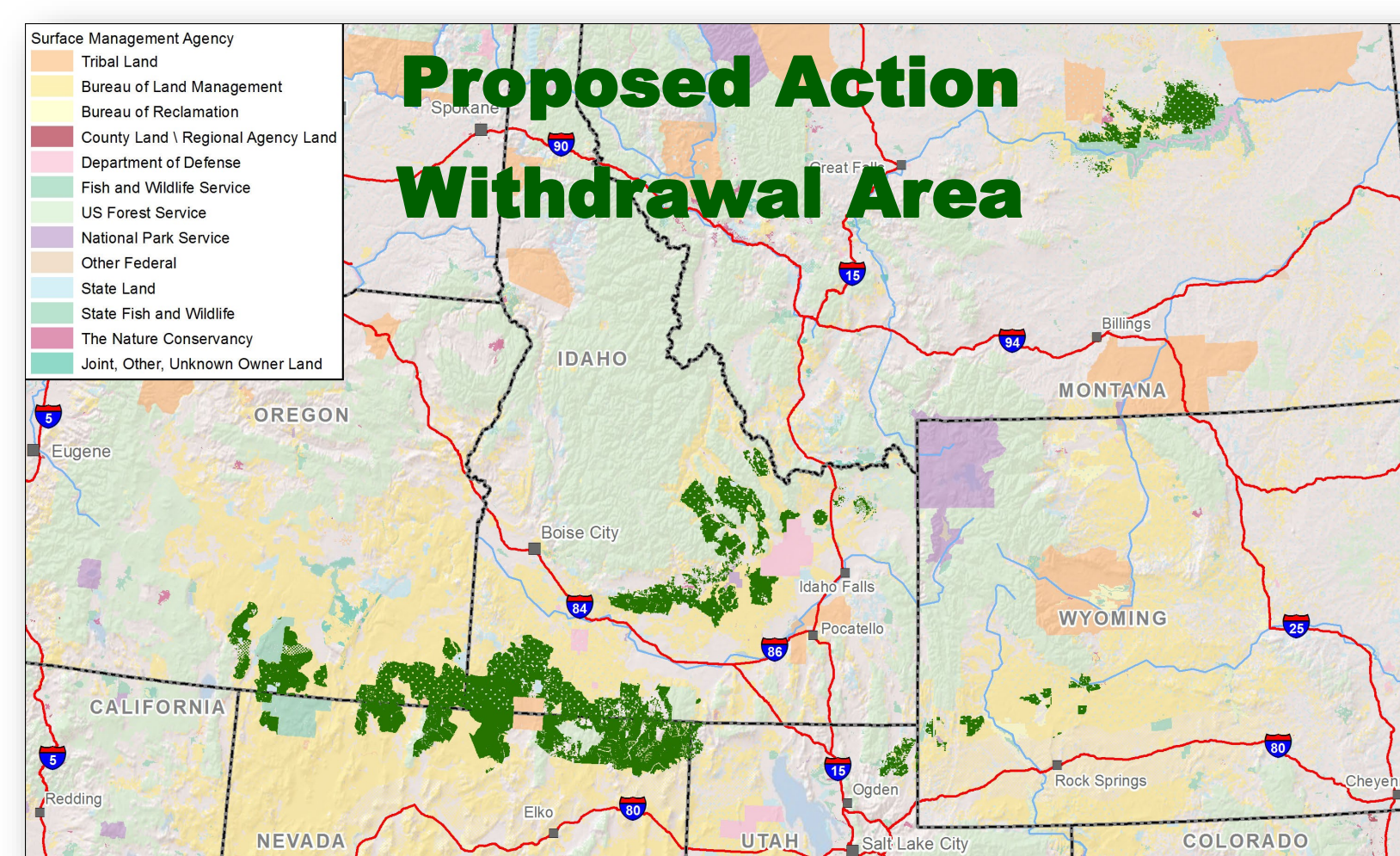
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# ALTERNATIVES

**No Action:** No withdrawal.

**Proposed Action:** Withdraw approximately 10 million acres of federal lands in SFAs from location and entry under the Mining Law, subject to valid existing rights, for 20 years.



**Remove Areas of High Mineral Potential:** Withdraw approximately 9.5 million acres as stated in the Proposed Action, excluding 558,918 acres of high mineral potential lands.

**State of Nevada Alternative:** Withdraw approximately 9.9 million acres as stated in the Proposed Action, excluding 487,756 acres of high mineral potential lands in Nevada, and substituting 387,981 acres of high value habitat adjacent to SFAs.

**State of Idaho Alternative:** Withdraw approximately 9.5 million acres as stated in the Proposed Action, excluding 538,742 acres that are considered economically developable in Idaho.



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## GEOLOGY & MINERAL RESOURCES

**Relevant issue:** The proposed withdrawal may decrease development of mineral resources during the 20-year period.

### Approximate Acres Withdrawn and Estimated Mineral Development Projects During the 20 Year Period

#### Impact indicators:

- Approximate acres of federal locatable mineral estate proposed for withdrawal.
- Approximate acres of land with high and moderate locatable mineral potential proposed for withdrawal.
- Estimated number of mines and exploration projects that would be developed on lands proposed for withdrawal.

State	No Action	Proposed Action	Nevada Alternative	HMP Alternative	Idaho Alternative
<b>Idaho</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	3,961,824	3,961,824	3,935,837	3,423,185
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	242,460	242,460	216,472	73,938
Mines	9	1	1	2	4
Exploration Projects	26	3	3	9	13
<b>Montana</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	877,624	877,624	819,863	877,624
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	101,227	101,227	43,466	101,227
Mines	1	-	-	-	-
Exploration Projects	2	1	1	2	1
<b>Nevada</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	2,767,552	2,670,289	2,363,743	2,767,552
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	504,179	312,666	100,371	504,179
Mines	3	1	2	2	1
Exploration Projects	78	32	47	55	32
<b>Oregon</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	1,843,539	1,843,539	1,776,958	1,843,539
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	87,714	87,714	21,133	87,714
Mines	10	1	1	3	1
Exploration Projects	8	3	3	5	3
<b>Utah</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	233,848	233,848	230,396	233,848
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	37,477	37,477	34,025	37,477
Mines	-	-	-	-	-
Exploration Projects	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Wyoming</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	265,085	265,085	263,757	265,085
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	111,051	111,051	109,723	111,051
Mines	3	-	-	-	-
Exploration Projects	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>					
Acres proposed for withdrawal*	-	9,949,472	9,852,208	9,390,553	9,410,832
High and moderate mineral potential acres**	-	1,084,109	892,595	525,191	915,586
Mines	26	3	4	8	7
Exploration Projects	114	38	54	72	48

\* Approximate acres of federal locatable mineral estate proposed for withdrawal. These values are based on GIS acreages, not official legal description acreages. To view the amended proposed withdrawal legal  
 \*\* Approximate acres of high and moderate locatable mineral potential proposed for withdrawal.



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## SOCIAL & ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

**Relevant issue:** The proposed withdrawal may impact economies and communities by reducing the number of future mineral development projects.

### Impact indicators:

- Changes in county jobs and labor income related to mining.
- Changes in local government revenue.
- Direction, magnitude, and rate of change in demographic conditions.

### Projected Annual Economic Output and Employment from Estimated Mines During the 20 Year Period

State	No Action	Proposed Action	Nevada Alternative	HMP Alternative	Idaho Alternative
<b>Idaho</b>					
Annual output*	\$118.0	\$13.1	\$13.1	\$26.2	\$52.5
Employment**	327	36	36	73	145
<b>Montana</b>					
Annual output*	\$28.1	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Employment**	107	0	0	0	0
<b>Nevada</b>					
Annual output*	\$398.6	\$132.9	\$265.7	\$265.7	\$132.9
Employment**	801	267	534	534	267
<b>Oregon</b>					
Annual output*	\$48.5	\$4.9	\$4.9	\$14.6	\$4.9
Employment**	231	23	23	69	23
<b>Utah</b>					
Annual output*	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Employment**	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Wyoming</b>					
Annual output*	\$251.3	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Employment**	565	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>					
Annual output*	<b>\$844.6</b>	<b>\$150.8</b>	<b>\$283.7</b>	<b>\$306.5</b>	<b>\$190.2</b>
Employment**	<b>2,031</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>435</b>

\* Annual output is in millions of \$.

\*\* Employment includes full-time and part-time positions directly or indirectly related to mining activity.



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## VEGETATION

**Relevant issue:** The proposed withdrawal may benefit native vegetation and special status plant species by reducing surface disturbing activity caused by mines and exploration projects.

### Impact indicators:

- Acres of surface disturbance and vegetation loss.
- Introduction and spread of invasive weeds.

### Approximate Acres of Potential Disturbance and Vegetation Loss During the 20 Year Period

State	No Action	Proposed Action	Nevada Alternative	HMP Alternative	Idaho Alternative
Idaho	1,916	187	187	518	927
Montana	1,609	81	81	146	81
Nevada	5,611	2,285	3,297	4,074	2,285
Oregon	348	66	66	157	66
Wyoming	70	1	1	8	1
Utah	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,554</b>	<b>2,620</b>	<b>3,632</b>	<b>4,903</b>	<b>3,360</b>



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## WILDLIFE & GREATER SAGE-GROUSE

**Relevant issue:** The proposed withdrawal may benefit wildlife, including greater sage-grouse and other special status wildlife species, by reducing surface disturbing activity and habitat loss caused by future mines and exploration projects.

### Impact indicators:

- Acres of surface disturbance and habitat loss.
- Habitat fragmentation.

### Estimated Number of Sage-Grouse Leks and Male Birds Potentially Impacted During the 20 Year Period

State	No Action	Proposed Action	Nevada Alternative	HMP Alternative	Idaho Alternative
<b>Idaho</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	18 (242)	5 (83)	5 (83)	0 (38)	34 (175)
Male Sage-Grouse**	97 (3,515)	27 (1,136)	27 (1,136)	0 (588)	544 (2,601)
<b>Montana</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	4 (53)	1 (17)	1 (17)	3 (43)	1 (17)
Male Sage-Grouse**	176 (1,186)	49 (546)	49 (546)	83 (1,374)	49 (546)
<b>Nevada</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	86 (45)	24 (130)	46 (247)	66 (49)	24 (130)
Male Sage-Grouse**	688 (1,133)	191 (2,278)	423 (3,871)	908 (958)	191 (2,278)
<b>Oregon</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	0 (0)	0 (22)	0 (22)	0 (5)	0 (22)
Male Sage-Grouse**	0 (0)	0 (572)	0 (572)	0 (197)	0 (572)
<b>Wyoming</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	0 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Male Sage-Grouse**	0 (30)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
<b>Utah</b>					
Sage-Grouse Leks*	0 (43)	0 (9)	0 (9)	0 (1)	0 (9)
Male Sage-Grouse**	0 (2,467)	0 (950)	0 (950)	0 (11)	0 (950)
<b>Total</b>					
<b>Sage-Grouse Leks*</b>	<b>108 (386)</b>	<b>30 (261)</b>	<b>52 (369)</b>	<b>69 (136)</b>	<b>59 (353)</b>
<b>Male Sage-Grouse**</b>	<b>961 (8,331)</b>	<b>267 (5,482)</b>	<b>499 (7,075)</b>	<b>991 (3,128)</b>	<b>784 (6,947)</b>
* Number of Sage-Grouse Leks Potentially Impacted [Direct (Indirect)].					
** Number of Male Sage-Grouse Potentially Impacted [Direct (Indirect)].					



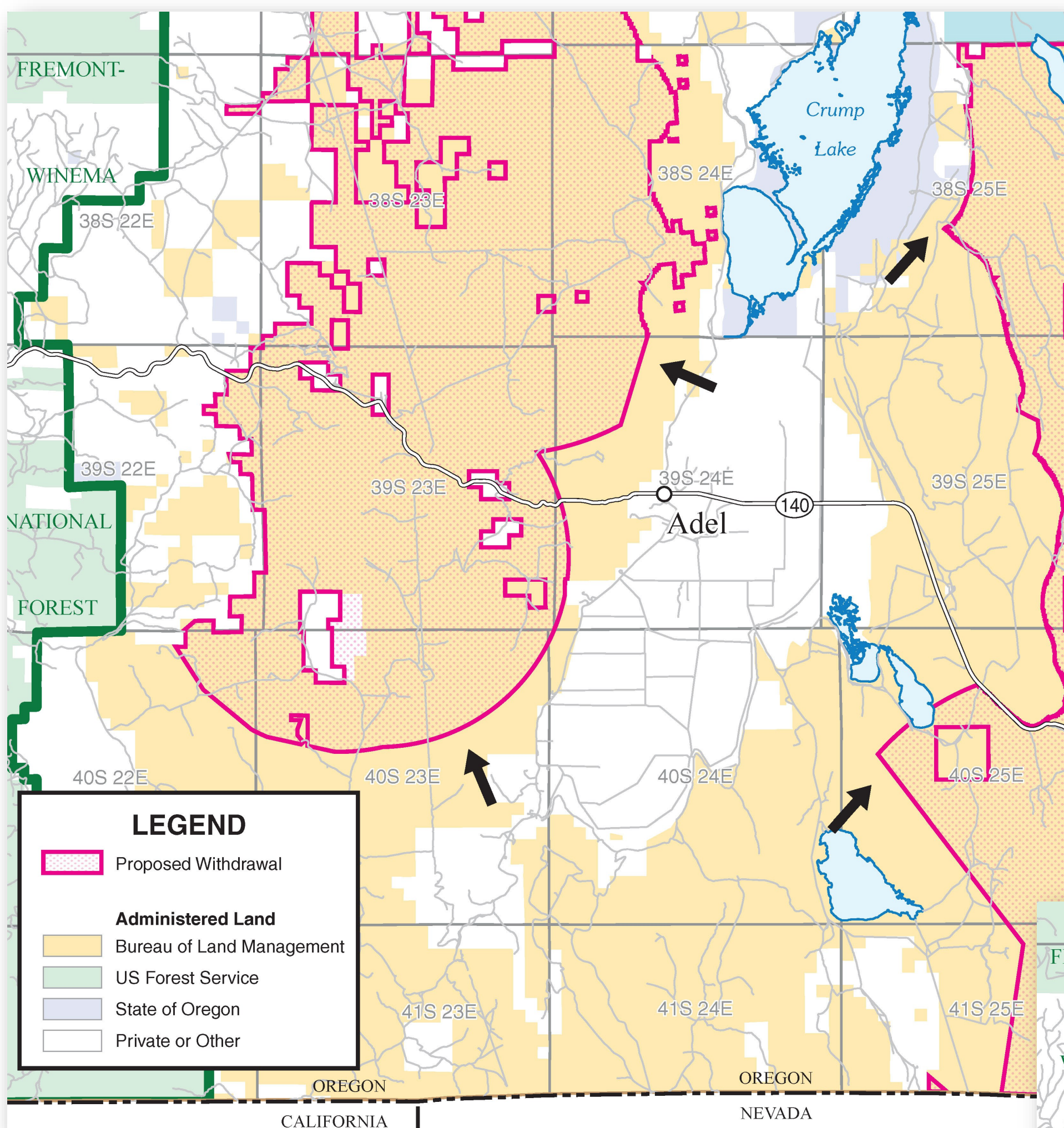
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# WITHDRAWAL AREA BOUNDARY REFINEMENT

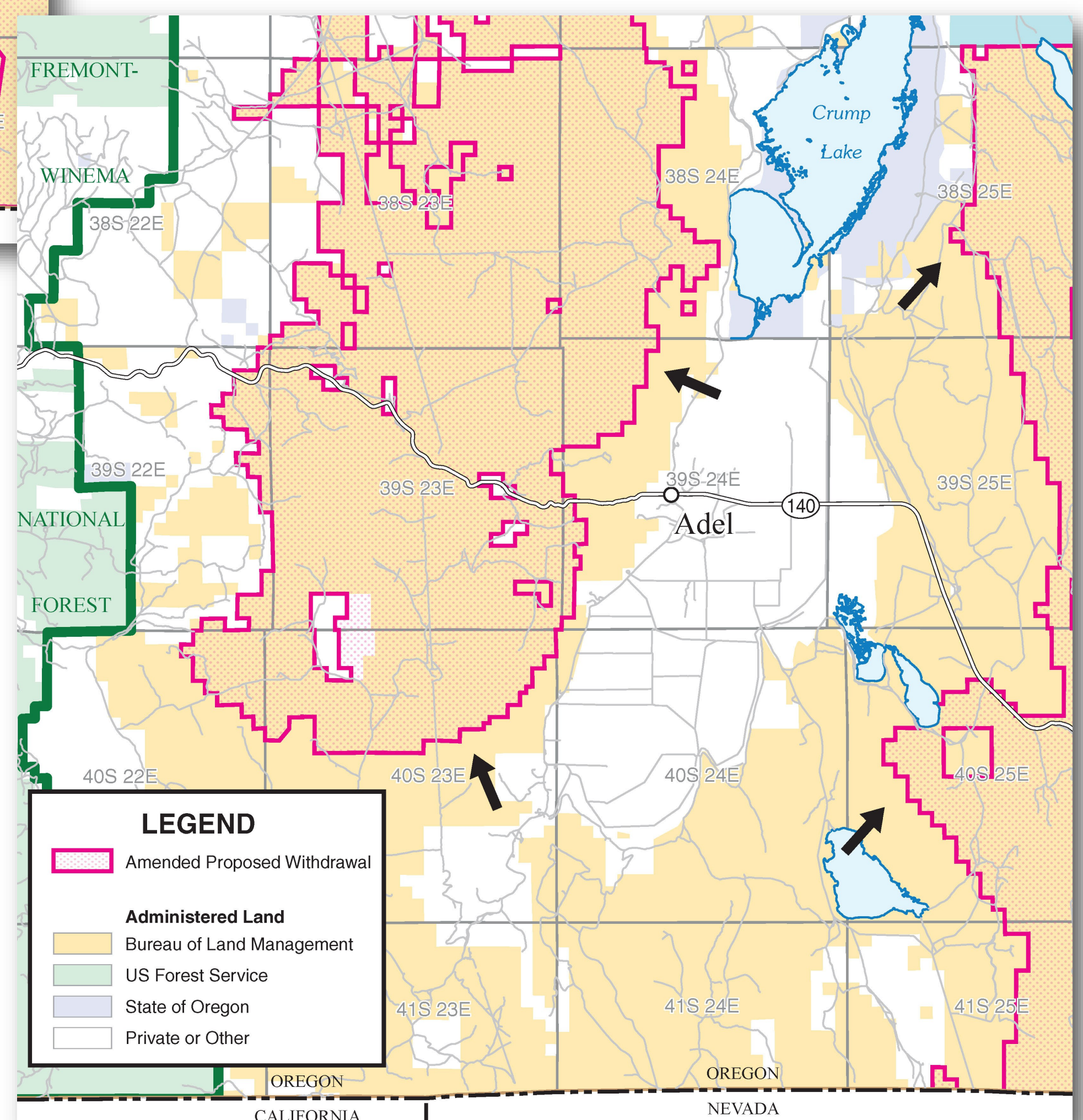
## September 2015 Proposed Withdrawal

Withdrawal Boundary  
Referenced to a Map



## December 2016 Amended Proposed Withdrawal

Withdrawal Boundary Referenced to  
the Public Land Survey System









# Sagebrush Focal Area Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement



## WE VALUE YOUR COMMENTS!

### Three ways to ensure we receive your comments:

1. Complete and submit a comment form provided at this meeting.
2. Mail comments to:

**Mark Mackiewicz**  
**Bureau of Land Management WO**  
**c/o Price Field Office**  
**125 South 600 West**  
**Price, Utah 84501**

3. Email comments to:

**Sagebrush\_withdrawals@blm.gov**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Project website:

**<https://www.blm.gov/node/3282>**

Project contact:

Mark Mackiewicz, PMP  
BLM Senior National Project Manager  
435-636-3616  
mmackiew@blm.gov

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment -including your personal identifying information- may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.