

## ATTACHMENT 2

### *Habitat Objectives*

BLM offices with GRSG Plan Amendments will utilize the indicators and desired habitat conditions in the GRSG Seasonal Habitat Objectives table (Habitat Objectives Table) to assess each monitoring location within seasonal habitats for site-scale suitability, as directed by the land use plan. When completing site-scale assessments, **it is inappropriate to use a single indicator** from the Habitat Objectives Table or the HAF habitat suitability form to determine overall habitat suitability of the plot (i.e., suitable, marginal, or unsuitable) unless sagebrush is absent or limiting. Instead, BLM staff must consider all the indicators using multiple lines of evidence, as described in the HAF and in the training materials, to determine the plot's overall habitat suitability. The measured habitat indicator values will vary across time, driven largely by uses and environmental conditions, such as annual rainfall and natural disturbances, especially wildfire. In addition, a site may not meet the suitable rating if many indicators are impacted by annual climate variability, which is independent of management. Thus, it is critical to document environmental factors when completing the habitat suitability forms. This information is essential to inform land health assessments and evaluations.

Any changes to the desired conditions (Habitat Objectives) in the GRSG Plan Amendments itself warrants appropriate action in accordance with the BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1600); in most cases, a plan amendment would be necessary.

The desired habitat conditions in the Habitat Objectives Table define the "suitable" benchmark for each indicator. BLM offices shall develop and refine benchmarks for marginal and unsuitable measures for each indicator outside of the land use planning process, in cooperation with federal and state partners, if they elect to participate.

The offices with management responsibilities for sage-grouse habitat that is not contained within the geographic area of the GRSG Plan Amendments (i.e., Gunnison Sage-Grouse, Bi-State, or Columbia Basin) should work with federal and state partners to agree upon habitat indicators and suitable, marginal, and unsuitable benchmarks for site-scale assessments. These values can be from an applicable sage-grouse conservation plan, state recovery plan, from the HAF, or values found in best available science that are appropriate for the area.