

Little Snake Field Office Resource Management Plan Revision

Adaptive Management

The Preferred Alternative would authorize the use of “adaptive management” in implementing the decisions in the RMP.

What is adaptive management?

Adaptive management is a formal decision-making process that gives land managers flexibility to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of their decisions, then modify them if necessary to better meet management objectives. It is less rigid than traditional approaches to management and should allow managers to react more quickly when changes are needed.

Why is BLM considering adaptive management in this RMP?

The use of adaptive management should enhance BLM’s ability to meet the stated objectives in the Resource Management Plan. The approach would give BLM managers more flexibility to adjust management to better achieve their objectives without necessarily initiating a new formal planning (NEPA) process. Additionally, this approach should validate predictions of impacts, keep up with new science, ensure mitigation is effective, and allow managers to adapt to unintended consequences. It would also emphasize collaboration with the public and stakeholder groups.

How would adaptive management be incorporated into the management actions of the Preferred Alternative?

The RMP would authorize the use of adaptive management in implementing the plan’s decisions if certain conditions are met. Adaptive management includes both a broad, system-level framework to assess long-term changes in the landscape as well as a site-specific, project-level approach. If the BLM determines through these assessments that a project is failing to meet the outcome objectives, adaptive management could be discontinued and a fallback prescription would be employed.

Guidance on adaptive management from both BLM and the Department of the Interior emphasizes the importance of collaborating with affected parties. BLM would include the public and stakeholders in determining outcomes. In some cases a balanced, multi-stakeholder group might be used as appropriate to advise BLM. Timelines would be set for decision-making to prevent long stalemates.

Where can I learn more?

Appendix M in the Draft RMP provides a great deal of detail about adaptive management and how it would be incorporated into the implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

