



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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March 14, 2016

EMS TRANSMISSION 03/15/2016
Instruction Memorandum No. ID-2016-011
Expires: 09/30/2019

To: All Idaho Employees

From: State Director

Subject: Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment and Interim Land Use Plan Amendment Guide

Program Area: All Programs

Purpose: Provide guidance to districts and field offices on management direction coordination between the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment for the Great Basin Region and the Idaho Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (GRSG ARMPA) and existing Land Use Plan (LUP).

Policy/Action: The GRSG ARMPA amends all existing LUPs within the Boise, Twin Falls and Idaho Falls Districts. For each existing LUP, an evaluation of all existing LUP goals, objectives, and management actions that still apply needs to be completed and documented. Until LUPs are evaluated to document the specific management direction carried forward for each existing LUP, the existing LUPs are generally amended by the GRSG ARMPA in the following manner:

- The GRSG ARMPA is largely geographically based and made decisions over most, if not all, of our land use planning decision areas. Therefore, for decisions within Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA), Important Habitat Management Area (IHMA) and General Habitat Management Area (GHMA), the GRSG ARMPA generally replaces decisions in existing plans regarding resources and uses addressed.
- Several decisions from the GRSG ARMPA apply beyond GRSG habitat designation areas - these include travel management limited decision, buffers, seasonal restrictions and Required Design Features for GRSG habitat outside of delineated PHMA, IHMA or GHMA.

- Grazing available/unavailable allocation and animal unit month (AUM) levels are still guided by the existing LUP; however, the process for consideration and prioritization for permit renewals is described in the GRSG ARMPA.

Also, the existing LUPs are generally NOT amended by the GRSG ARMPA in the following circumstances:

- Areas outside GRSG habitat designations (PHMA, IHMA, or GHMA) – see the exceptions in the second bullet on page 1.
- Areas where existing allocation level decisions are more restrictive than, or do not conflict with, the GRSG ARMPA. Typically, these are right of way (ROW) exclusion areas, Off Highway Vehicle closure areas, or special management or designation areas. In these areas, where there may be specific management associated with other resource management goals and objectives.
- Plan direction such as visual resource management or aquatic/riparian (PACFISH/INFISH or Aquatic Conservation Strategy) that the GRSG ARMPA did not discuss or amend.

The State Office is currently developing a process for evaluating existing plans. Additional guidance regarding this process will be issued at a later date.

Timeframe: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) is effective immediately and will remain in effect until replaced by the plan specific evaluation of goals, objectives and management actions.

Background: In March 2010, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published its petition decision for the Greater Sage-Grouse as “Warranted but Precluded.” Inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms was identified as one of the major factors in the FWS’s finding on Greater Sage-Grouse. The FWS has identified the principal regulatory mechanism for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as protective measures embedded in LUPs. In September 2015, the ROD approving the Resource Management Plan Amendments for the Great Basin Region was signed. These plans guide future land and resource management on BLM-administered land in this region to benefit the Greater Sage-Grouse and more than 350 other species of wildlife that depend on healthy sagebrush-steppe landscapes, while maintaining multiple uses, including grazing and recreation.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: None

Coordination: This IM was coordinated with the GRSG Core and Extended Implementation Teams, the Idaho BLM Leadership Team and the Idaho Planning and Environmental Coordinators.

Contact: Direct any questions or concerns to application of this direction to Brent Ralston, Project Manager, Idaho GRSG Implementation Team (ID-931) at 208-373-3812 or bralston@blm.gov, or to Eric Mayes, Idaho Planning and Environmental Coordinator (ID-931) at 208-373-4050 or emayes@blm.gov.

Boise District with Union: Management is reminded to notify and satisfy any bargaining requirements prior to implementation.

Signed by:
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