

Draft

Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement

*Great Basin Region
Idaho and Southeastern
Montana Sub-region*



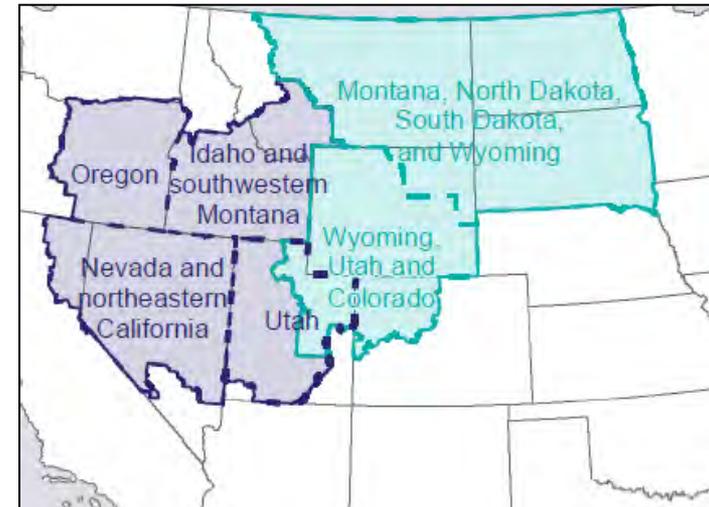
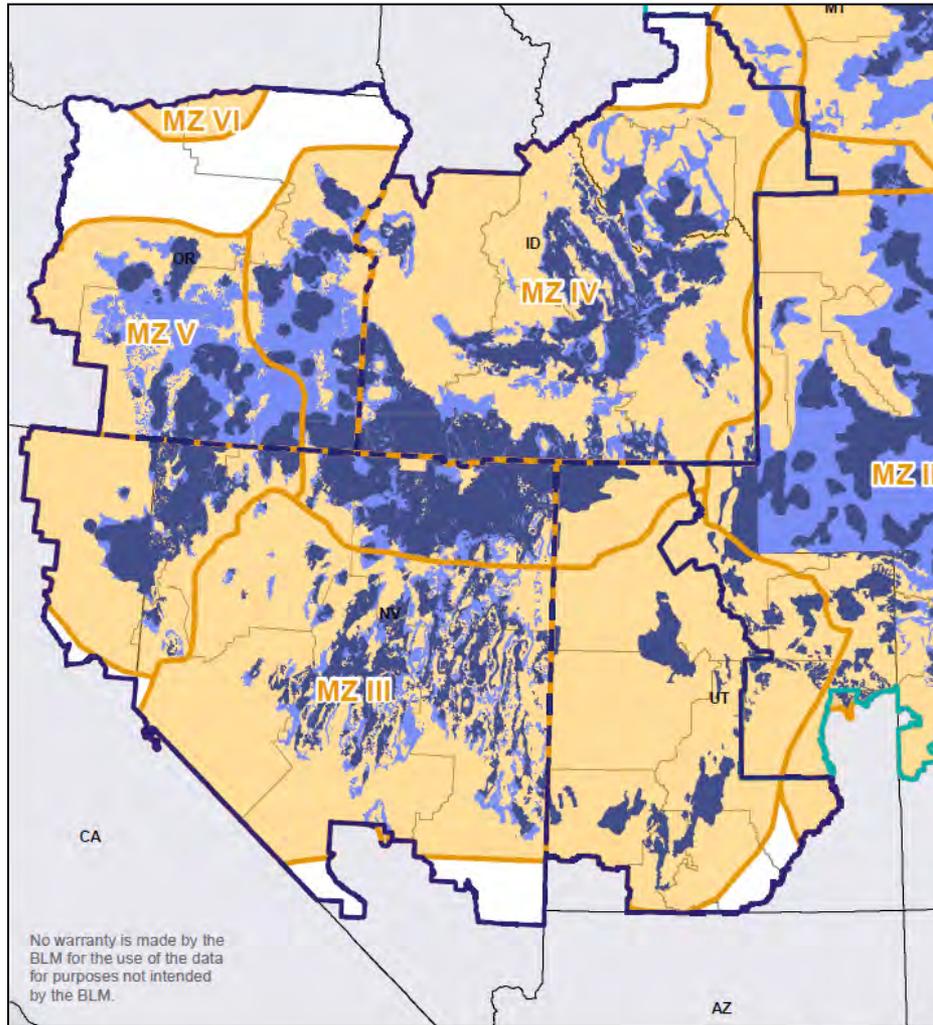


Greater Sage-Grouse Draft Land Use Plan Amendments and EIS

GREAT BASIN REGION – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT OVERVIEW



Great Basin GRSG Habitat Overview



-  Great Basin
-  Rocky Mountain
-  Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Management Zone
-  Preliminary priority habitat
-  Preliminary general habitat



Great Basin GRSB Habitat Overview

- Total Great Basin Habitat Area: 61 million acres
- Sub-regions:
 - Idaho and southwestern Montana
 - Nevada and northeastern California
 - Oregon
 - Utah
- Land management:
 - BLM: 50% of habitat
 - FS: 7% of habitat
- Land Use Plan (LUP) Revisions:
 - 41 BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs)
 - 12 Forest Service Forest Plans



Purpose and Need

of all Great Basin Greater Sage-Grouse EISs

Purpose

Identify and incorporate appropriate conservation measures in LUPs to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat.

Need

Respond to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) March 2010 "warranted, but precluded" Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing petition decision, which identified inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms as a significant threat to GRSG.

The principal regulatory mechanism for BLM and FS is conservation measures in BLM's and FS's LUPs.



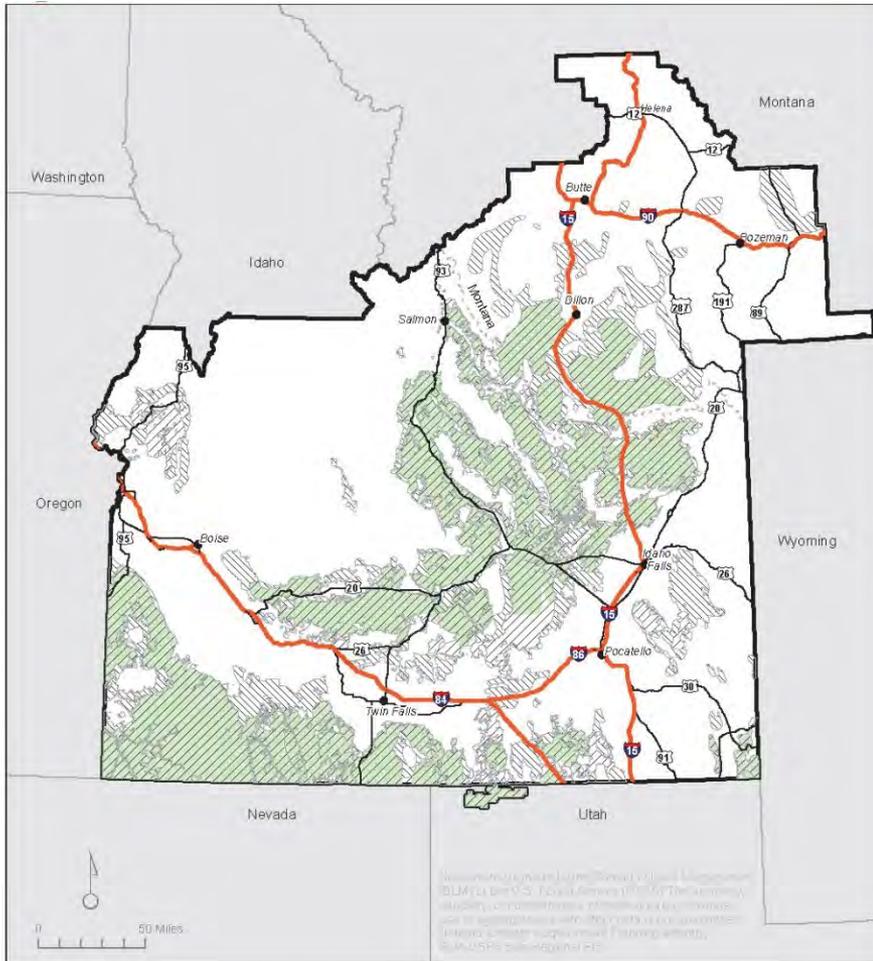


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IDAHO AND SOUTHWESTERN MONTANA SUB-REGION



Sub-regional GRSG Habitat Overview



- GRSG COT PAC
- Priority Habitat
- General Habitat
- Analysis Boundary
- Interstate highway
- US highway
- Major Cities

Land Management by Habitat (In Millions of Acres)			
	BLM	FS	Total
Planning Area	12.7	17.5	30.2
Priority (PPH)¹	7.3	1	8.3
General (PGH)²	2	1.1	3.1

¹PPH: Preliminary Priority Habitat

²PGH: Preliminary General Habitat

Idaho / Southwestern Montana GRSG Habitat Overview

- **Total Habitat Area:** 11 million acres
- **Land management:**
 - BLM: 82% of habitat (9 million acres)
 - FS: 18% of habitat (2 million acres)
- **Land Use Plan (LUP) Revisions:**
 - 21 BLM LUPs
 - 8 Forest Service LUPs



Identified Threats to GRSG Habitat

Threat	Effect on GRSG Habitat in the ID & SW MT Sub-region
Invasive Species	Conversion of GRSG habitat (e.g. to cheatgrass)
Wildfire	Loss of GRSG habitat due to wildfire
Conifer Invasion	Encroachment of pinyon and/or juniper
Infrastructure	Habitat fragmentation from right-of-ways and renewable energy development
Climate Change	Habitat fragmentation due to climate stress
Grazing	Loss of habitat components due to livestock and wild horse and burro use
Hard Rock Mining	Habitat fragmentation due to mineral exploration and development
Oil and Gas Development	Habitat fragmentation due to mineral exploration and development
Human Uses	Habitat fragmentation and/or modification of GRSG behavior due to human presence and activities (e.g. recreation and OHV use)



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternative*	Description
Alternative A	No Action
Alternative B	Based on conservation measures in the National Technical Team (NTT) Report
Alternative C	Based on recommendations from individuals and conservation groups
Alternative D	BLM and FS subregional alternative; DEIS co-preferred alternative
Alternative E	Idaho and Utah State alternatives for lands in Idaho and Utah, respectively; Montana management same as Alternative A; DEIS co-preferred alternative
Alternative F	Based on recommendations from individuals and conservation groups

*Alternative A identifies PPH and PGH, but does not apply new management to those areas. Alternatives B - F propose new management to protect GRSG habitat. Depending on the alternative, proposed management actions apply to different categories of GRSG Management Areas.



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternatives Comparison by Resource Area						
Resource Area	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Vegetation	Maintain current management.	Restore native plants to benefit GRSG.	Same as Alternative B with additional restoration.	Rehabilitate areas with potential to improve GRSG habitat.	Prioritize conifer removal; establish a habitat mitigation bank	Similar to Alternative B.
Fire	Maintain current management.	Emphasis on protecting existing sagebrush ecosystems.	Same as Alternative B.	Emphasis on maintaining, protecting, and expanding sagebrush ecosystems.	Improved suppression and prevention planning and restoration	Same as Alternative B.
ACECs¹	Maintain current ACECs on 350,000 acres.	Same as Alternative A.	Designate 2.5 million acres of GRSG habitat as new ACECs.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Designate 8.3 million acres of BLM ACECs and Forest Service Zoological Areas.

¹ACECs: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern



DEIS Proposed Alternatives

Alternatives Comparison by Resource Uses

Resource Use Area	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Grazing	Maintain current management.	Incorporate GRSG management objectives	Close all allotments containing GRSG habitat to grazing.	Similar to Alternative B.	Prioritize allotments for permit renewal.	25% reduction in occupied habitat.
Lands and Realty	Maintain current management.	Exclude new ROWs in PPMA; avoid in PGMA	Exclude all new ROWs in GRSG habitat.	ROW avoidance with exclusions and RDFs in PPMA.	ROW avoidance with mitigation	Same as Alternative C.
Locatable Minerals	Maintain current management.	Petition for withdrawal in PPMA.	Petition for withdrawal in all GRSG habitat.	Require 3809 plans.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B.
Fluid Minerals	Maintain current management.	Close PPMA to leasing.	Close all GRSG habitat to leasing.	Moderate /high potential open with NSO and CSU stipulations and TL. Other areas closed.	Open with NSO	Same as Alternative B.
Travel	Maintain current management.	Manage PPMA as limited to existing routes.	Manage all GRSG habitat as limited to existing routes.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.



Selecting a Preferred Alternative

- The agencies selected a preferred alternative based on:
 - meeting the purpose and need
 - the agencies' multiple use and sustained yield missions
 - interdisciplinary team recommendations
 - environmental consequences analysis of the alternative
 - comments on the Administrative Draft EIS
- The BLM and Forest Service will develop the proposed plan as part of the Final EIS, which could include elements of any of the alternatives.



Co-Preferred Alternatives

Alternative D

GRSG Habitat Protection Measures

- No net unmitigated loss of PPMA
- Robust adaptive management strategy
- Increase fire suppression and restoration
- Adjust livestock grazing standards to achieve GRSG habitat objectives
- Decrease surface disturbance from new ROWs and cross-country OHV use
- Eliminate future surface disturbance from wind and solar energy development



Co-Preferred Alternatives

Alternative E

GRSG Habitat Protection Measures

- Robust adaptive management strategy
- Increase fire suppression and restoration
- Prioritize conifer removal
- Mitigation bank of GRSG habitat restoration projects
- Reduce disturbances from resource uses



Summary of Effects

from GRSG habitat protection measures by action alternative

Effects Comparison by Program Area

Program Area	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D (preferred)	Alternative E	Alternative F
Vegetation	Enhanced conditions	Potential impacts from fire	Enhanced conditions	Enhanced conditions	Enhanced conditions
Fire	Reduced threat	Increased threat	Reduced threat	Reduced threat	Reduced threat
Grazing	Maintained opportunities	Eliminated opportunities	Maintained opportunities	Maintained opportunities	Decreased opportunities
Lands and Realty	Decreased development opportunities	No new development opportunities	Decreased development opportunities	Decreased development opportunities	Little to no development opportunities
Locatable Minerals	Decreased new development opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities	Maintained development opportunities	Maintained development opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities
Fluid Minerals	Decreased new development opportunities	No new opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities	Decreased new development opportunities	No new opportunities
Travel	Decreased travel opportunities				



View the Document

Online:

<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/sagegrouse/idaho.html>

In Person:

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1387 S. Vinnell Way
Boise, ID 83709



Submitting Comments

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US Mail:

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Boise, ID 83709

Deadline to submit comments on the DEIS:

January 29, 2014.

Timeline of Critical Steps

Action	When
Draft EIS Released	November 1, 2013
90-day Public Comment Period Ends	January 29, 2014
Final EIS/LUPA Released	June 2014*
Record of Decision Signed	September 2014*

* Dates are subject to change.

