

SAMPLE ALTERNATIVE TEMPLATE
Comparison of Alternatives Table

Notes:

There are management actions identified in the following sample that may also be appropriate to include in other resource sections of an alternative table (e.g.: livestock grazing, energy and minerals, vegetation). However, for the purpose of identifying various actions specific to the conservation and enhancement of sage-grouse habitat, they are captured in this template for each planning area to consider. Each RMP/field office has the flexibility to organize, format, and/or further define the template.

The information below describes management goals, objectives, and actions that require additional detail/information in the description of alternatives, including those activities that may be allowed as long as they are consistent with the goals and objectives for each priority area.

In order to be consistent in addressing sage-grouse habitat in Management Zone 1 (which includes most of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota) most of the information below must be addressed in each RMP, unless specific local conditions require otherwise.

**Desired Outcomes
(Goals and Objectives)**

[Sage-Grouse Habitat]

Goal (SG 1.0): Provide for the long-term conservation, enhancement and restoration of sage-grouse habitat within the Montana/Dakotas in a manner that supports sustainable sage- grouse populations throughout their current occupied range.

Sage-Grouse Habitat: Protection Priority Areas (priority areas with limited threats – refer to definitions page).

Objective (1.1.1): Within Sage-Grouse Habitat Protection Priority Areas, BLM will manage sage-grouse habitat to maintain or improve sage-grouse populations by maintaining XX percent / XX acres of substantial and high quality sage-grouse habitat (define x for each priority area) (quality to be defined by local planning areas).

Objective (1.1.2) Within Sage-Grouse Habitat Protection Priority Areas, BLM will maximize the integrity and quality of the sage-grouse habitat.

Objective (1.1.3) Within Sage-Grouse Habitat Protection Priority Areas, BLM will restore or enhance potential or degraded sage-grouse habitat (see definition of Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat).

Objective (1.1.4) Within Sage-Grouse Habitat Protection Priority Areas, BLM will manage sage-grouse habitat so that population trends follow the same magnitude of declines or increases as compared to sage-grouse trend area* data, as appropriate to the planning area.

*Trend leks would be within the same geographic area, but without human impacts to serve as a baseline.

Sage-Grouse Habitat - Restoration Priority Areas (areas with ongoing or imminent impacts – refer to definitions page).

Objective (1.2.1): Within Sage-Grouse Habitat – Restoration Priority Areas, BLM will manage habitat so that sage-grouse populations can be restored over the long-term.

Objective (1.2.2): Within sage-grouse habitat – Restoration Priority Areas, BLM will strive for no net loss of sage-grouse habitat within 10 years (or x term).

Objective (1.2.3): Within sage-grouse habitat – Restoration Priority Areas, BLM will restore X percent or X acres of historical habitat functionality within 50 years (or x term) to support sage-grouse populations.

Sage-Grouse Habitat: General Areas (potential sage-grouse range outside priority habitat area).

Objective (1.3.1): Within Sage-Grouse Habitat – General Areas, BLM will maintain habitat for sage-grouse sub-populations to promote movement and genetic diversity. Maintain, restore or enhance sage-grouse habitat and connectivity between sagebrush habitats, with emphasis on those habitats occupied by sage-grouse.

Management Actions Common to All Alternatives (all habitat areas)

Control of West Nile Virus: Manage water developments to reduce the spread of West Nile virus within sage-grouse habitat areas (especially for those water impoundments where water levels are artificially maintained). Utilize the best management practices in Appendix X.

Others as appropriate.

Sage-Grouse Habitat: Protection Priority Areas

Management Common: Insert actions as appropriate by planning area.

Surface disturbing/disruptive activities may be allowed as long as they are consistent with the goals and objectives for the Protection Priority Area (e.g., noxious weed control, habitat restoration projects, predator control activities).

Resource / Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Conservation)	Alternative C	Alternative D (Commodity- Development)
Identification of Protection Priority Areas	No PPAs	X (number/size of Protection Priority Areas (example: 5 PPAs))	XX number/size of Protection Priority Areas (example 2 PPAs)	XX number/size of Protection Priority Areas (example 3 PPAs) OR Same as X
Surface Disturbing and Disruptive Activities (refer to definitions) Examples: energy development; ROWs;		Recommend for withdrawal of certain locatable minerals No Surface Occupancy (NSO) in sage-grouse habitat Protection	Recommend for withdrawal of certain locatable minerals CSU: Surface disturbing or	CSU: Surface disturbing or disruptive activities may be allowed based on % of direct/indirect habitat disturbance – see CSU

<p>OHV/travel mgmt; range improvements; etc.</p> <p>Note: CSUs apply to all surface disturbing or disruptive activities (not limited to O&G)</p>		<p>Priority Areas</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Close to future oil and gas leasing and other surface disturbing and disruptive activities (wind energy, ROW exclusion area)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>A combination of NSO and closures.</p> <p>(e.g.; this could be applied to make lands available for exploration and development from outside of the sage-grouse habitat: Protection Priority Area using directional or horizontal drilling, or other techniques).</p>	<p>disruptive activities may be allowed based on density and % of direct/indirect habitat disturbance – see CSU.</p> <p>COAs for existing leases will be based on CSUs</p>	<p>COAs for existing leases will be based on CSUs</p>
		<p>Require successful establishment of desired vegetation on new surface disturbances (mineral and energy facility developments, livestock management, recreation facilities, etc.).</p>	<p>Require successful establishment of desired vegetation on new surface disturbances (mineral and energy facility developments, livestock management, recreation facilities, etc.).</p>	<p>Comply with office seeding requirement within xx timeframe</p>
		<p>Identify existing disturbance areas and initiate restoration opportunities on X acres/percent annually.</p>	<p>Identify existing disturbance areas and initiate restoration opportunities on X acres/percent annually.</p>	<p>Identify existing disturbance areas and initiate restoration opportunities on X acres/percent annually.</p>
		<p>Restore areas dominated by invasive species with desirable vegetation to minimize fragmentation of habitat.</p>		<p>Enhance areas dominated by invasive species by increasing percentage of sage-brush and desired native plant species.</p>
		<p>Bury existing and new power</p>	<p>Bury new power lines.</p>	<p>Bury power lines within</p>

		lines. Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.	Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.	1 mile of leks. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.
Refer to document “Management Actions” for a list of other actions for local planning offices to consider/vary by alternative for the Sage-Grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas.				
Sage-Grouse Habitat – Restoration Priority Areas				
Management common as appropriate.				
Surface disturbing/disruptive activities may be allowed as long as they are consistent with the goals and objectives for the Restoration Priority Area (e.g., noxious weed control, habitat restoration projects, predator control activities).				
Resource	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Conservation)	Alternative C	Alternative D (Commodity- Development)
Identification of Restoration Priority Areas	No RPAs	X (number/size of Restoration Priority Areas (example: 5 RPAs))	XX number/size of Restoration Priority Areas (example 2 RPAs)	XX number/size of Restoration Priority Areas (example 3 RPAs) OR Same as XX
Lek sites (breeding activities):		No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within 1 mile of leks from March 15 – May 15. Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed.	No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within 0.6 mile of leks from March 15 – May 15. Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed	No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within ¼ mile of leks from March 15 – May 15. Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed
Sage-grouse habitat (breeding, nesting, brood-rearing and wintering):		Require a CSU within all sage-grouse habitat, including leks, that would address noise,	4-mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance,	1-mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance,

		<p>disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation). (this alternative assumes sage-grouse habitat has been mapped).</p> <p>COAs for existing leases will be based on CSUs</p>	<p>mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation). (4 miles: approach to protect 80% of the sage-grouse nests – (reference: Holloran and Anderson)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>6 mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation). (6 miles: aggressive approach to protect 97% of the sage-grouse nests - reference)</p> <p>COAs for existing leases will be based on CSUs</p>	<p>mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2-mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation).</p> <p>COAs for existing leases will be based on CSUs</p>
		<p>Bury new and existing power lines and remove decommissioned power lines. Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.</p>	<p>Bury all power lines within 1 mile of a lek. Remove decommissioned power lines. Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to</p>	<p>Bury power lines within ¼ mile of leks. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.</p>

			the power lines.	
		Require successful establishment of desired vegetation on new or historic surface disturbances (mineral and energy facility developments, livestock management, recreation facilities, etc.).	Require successful establishment of desired vegetation on new surface disturbances (mineral and energy facility developments, livestock management, recreation facilities, etc.).	Comply with office seeding requirement within xx timeframe.
Refer to document “Management Actions” for a list of other actions for local planning offices to consider/vary by alternative for the Sage-Grouse Habitat – Restoration Priority Areas.				
Sage-Grouse Habitat – General Habitat				
Management Actions Common to Action Alternatives:				
Surface disturbing/disruptive activities may be allowed as long as they are consistent with the goals and objectives for the General Habitat Area (e.g., noxious weed control, habitat restoration projects, predator control activities).				
Other actions as appropriate.				
Resource	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B (Conservation)	Alternative C	Alternative D (Commodity- Development)
Lek Sites (breeding activities):		No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within 1mile of leks from March 15 – May 15 Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed	No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within 0.6 mile of leks from March 15 – May 15 Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed	No surface disturbing or disruptive activities within ¼ mile of leks from March 15 – May 15 Temporary disruptive activities may be allowed
Sage-grouse habitat (breeding, nesting, brood-rearing and wintering):		A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation).	4-mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation). 6-mile buffer from the lek:	1-mile buffer from the lek: A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation). 2-mile buffer from the lek:

			A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation).	A CSU would address noise, disturbance, mechanical movement, permanent and temporary structures and expected use periods (see attached CSU stipulation).
		Bury new power lines within 1 mile of a lek. Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.	Bury new power lines within ¼ mile of a lek. Where burying power lines is not possible, above ground power lines will be located to minimize predation by raptors and sage-grouse collisions. Power poles will be designed to prevent raptors from perching on the poles and reflectors attached to the power lines.	Same as A.