

BLM DILLON FIELD OFFICE
Biological Evaluation for Special Status Fish and Wildlife Species
 Form Revised May 2009 - Updated Oct 2011

Project: East Grasshopper Watershed EA # DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2011-010-EA

Step 1a.	Step 1b.	Step 1c.	Step 2	Step 3.	Step 4.	Step 5.	Step 5.	Step 5.
List of all Special Status Species that are known or suspected to occur on the Dillon Field Office.	Current Management Status of the Species.	Does the species occur on this portion of the Field Office?	Is the species or its habitat found in the surrounding area?	Could this proposal have any effect?	Are Irreversible or Irretrievable Resources involved?	Alt A level of effect	Alt B level of effect	Alt C level of effect
Canada Lynx (<i>Lynx canadensis</i>)	Threatened	N/A	N/A					
Grizzly Bear (<i>Ursus arctos horribilus</i>)	Threatened	N/A	N/A					
Greater Sage Grouse (<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>)	Candidate	Y	Y	Y	N	MIIH	BI	BI
Mammals								
Fisher (<i>Martes pennanti</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
Fringed myotis (<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Gray Wolf (<i>Canis lupus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Great Basin pocket mouse (<i>Perognathus parvus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	MIIH	BI	BI
Long-eared Myotis (<i>Myotis evotis</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Long-legged Myotis (<i>Myotis volans</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
North American Wolverine (<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Pygmy Rabbit (<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	MIIH	BI	BI
Townsend's Big-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus townsendii</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				

(cont.) List of all Special Status Species that are known or suspected to occur on the DFO.	Current Management Status of the Species.	Does the species occur on this portion of the Field Office?	Is the species or its habitat found in the surrounding area?	Could this proposal have any effect?	Are Irreversible or Irretrievable Resources involved?	Alt A level of effect	Alt B level of effect	Alt C level of effect
Birds								
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Black Tern (<i>Chlidonias niger</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Black-backed Woodpecker (<i>Picoides arcticus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	MIIH	NI
Black-crowned Night Heron (<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
Bobolink (<i>Dolichonyx orysivorus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Brewer's sparrow (<i>Spizella breweri</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Burrowing Owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Common Loon (<i>Gavia immer</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Ferruginous Hawk (<i>Buteo regalis</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Flammulated Owl (<i>Otus flammeolus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	BI	NI
Franklin's Gull (<i>Larus pipixcan</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
Golden Eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Great Gray Owl (<i>Strix nebulosa</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	MIIH	NI
Harlequin Duck (<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
Loggerhead Shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Long-billed Curlew (<i>Numenius americanus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				

(cont.) List of all Special Status Species that are known or suspected to occur on the DFO.	Current Management Status of the Species.	Does the species occur on this portion of the Field Office?	Is the species or its habitat found in the surrounding area?	Could this proposal have any effect?	Are Irreversible or Irretrievable Resources involved?	Alt A level of effect	Alt B level of effect	Alt C level of effect
Marbled Godwit (<i>Limosa fedoa</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
McCown's longspur (<i>Calcarius mccownii</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Northern Goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	MIIH	NI
Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Sage Sparrow (<i>Amphispiza belli</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Sage thrasher (<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Sedge Wren (<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
Swainson's Hawk (<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Three-toed Woodpecker (<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	MIIH	NI
Trumpeter Swan (<i>Cygnus buccinator</i>)	Sensitive	N/A	N/A					
White-faced Ibis (<i>Plegadis chihi</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Amphibian/reptiles								
Boreal/Western toad (<i>Bufo boreas</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	N				
Plains Spadefoot (<i>Spea bombifrons</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Northern leopard frog (<i>Rana pipiens</i>)	Sensitive	N	Y	N				
Fish								
Westslope cutthroat trout (<i>Onchorhynchus clarkii lewisi</i>)	Sensitive	Y	Y	Y	N	NI	BI	BI

Definitions of Abbreviations for the Short Form

N/A – “Not Applicable.” Indicates this species does not occur in the project area or that the project would have no bearing on its potential habitat. These species were removed from detailed analysis after field review of existing and potential habitats and consideration of distribution records.

FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES

NE - No Effect

***LAA** - May Effect - Likely to Adversely Affect (formal consultation required)

NLAA - May Effect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect (informal consultation - concurrence with determination - required)

BE - Beneficial Effect (informal consultation - concurrence with determination - required)

SPECIES PROPOSED FOR LISTING

NE - No Effect

NLJ - Not likely to Jeopardize the continued existence of the species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat

***LJ** - Likely to Jeopardize the continued existence of the species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat

SENSITIVE SPECIES

NI - No Impact

MIH - May Impact Individuals or Habitat, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species.

***WIFV** - Will Impact Individuals or habitat with a consequence that the action may contribute to the need for federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species.

BI - Beneficial Impact

* triggers formal consultation process

NARRATIVE of POTENTIAL IMPACTS

LISTED SPECIES:

No impacts are anticipated to any listed Threatened or Endangered species associated with implementation of this decision under any alternative.

CANDIDATE SPECIES:

Greater Sage Grouse: Alternative A the “no action” would maintain the current conditions. Allotments not meeting habitat requirements for nesting and brood rearing would not see any improvements. Alternatives B and C were developed to improve herbaceous conditions and incorporate rest into allotments. Fences constructed to improve livestock management would impact sage grouse by creating collision hazards. All new fences located near known high concentrations of sage grouse would be marked to mitigate collision hazards. This is discussed in further detail under the perspective allotment and alternative in the EGW EA. No alternatives would impact sage grouse to the extent that would lead to listing of this species.

BLM SENSITIVE SPECIES:

Great Basin Pocket Mouse, Pygmy Rabbit: These species are scattered throughout the EGW, although some allotments have higher concentrations than others. Under Alternative A, increased predation is expected due to the reduced herbaceous cover, but would not lead to a decline in the overall population that would lead to listing. These species would benefit under Alternatives B and C with an increase in herbaceous understory in sagebrush steppe habitats, providing increased hiding cover would reduce the potential for predation. Proposed pipeline routes under alternative B and C would be surveyed to minimize burrow disturbance when trenching.

Black-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers: Alternative A and C will not impact these species. Timber harvest under Alternative B could impact these species by removing dead conifers that provide for foraging of wood boring larva and other insects. However, there are thousands of acres of beetle infested trees in adjacent forest that will continue to provide nesting and foraging habitat. Implementing the prescribed fire treatments to reduce conifer colonization under Alternative B will also create snags that will provide a foraging source.

Flammulated Owl: Alternatives A and C would not impact flammulated owls. This species is a cavity nester and prefers open old growth mixed conifer and aspen forest, but will roost in thickets. Foraging often occurs along forest and grassland interface. Alternative B would have a beneficial impact by maintaining the old growth mixed conifer by removing beetle infested trees and leaving snags. Maintaining aspen clones by focusing on removal of the conifer colonization would also be beneficial.

Northern Goshawk and Great Gray Owl: These species would not be impacted under Alternative A or C. Impacts associated with Alternative B would be from removal of timber in the Dry Gulch treatment unit. Surveys will be completed prior to any activity and if nesting is documented the units would be modified to maintain the nest stands. Timing restrictions would also be imposed to minimize disturbance during the nesting season. Any impacts associated with this disturbance would not be sufficient to lead to listing of the species.

West Slope cutthroat trout (WCT): Current management in conjunction with a nonnative removal has allowed the population of WCT in Dyce Creek to increase significantly. However, habitat conditions are being impacted primarily through sediment originating from roads. Under Alternative A, no action would be taken to improve these issues. Alternatives proposed under B and C would improve WCT habitat in Dyce Creek by increasing streambank vegetation and through projects designed to reduce the amount of sediment entering the system. Current WCT population trend is up, reflecting the long term nonnative brook trout removal that was completed in 2011.

**Biological Evaluation for
Special Status Plants on BLM Lands in the East Grasshopper Watershed
(East Grasshopper Watershed Environmental Assessment)
DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2011-010-EA**

Prepared by
Kelly Urresti, Rangeland Management Specialist/TES Plants
June 2012

None of the plants currently listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act inhabit BLM lands in the Dillon Field Office. However, Ute ladies' tresses, which is listed as threatened in Montana, is known to occur on private and state lands in Beaverhead, Madison, Gallatin, and Jefferson counties. Fifty-three sensitive plant species inhabit BLM-administered lands within the Dillon Field Office. Ten of those species are known to occur within the Cumulative Impact Area of the East Grasshopper Watershed (EGW) Environmental Assessment. The potential effects that the various alternatives may have on these species are summarized in the following table. A detailed discussion of predicted effects and potential impacts to special status plant species and their habitat is provided in the attached "Supplemental Information on Special Status Plants on BLM Lands in the East Grasshopper Watershed."

Definitions of Abbreviations used in the Table.

NI - No Impact

BI - Beneficial impact to populations or habitat

MIH - May impact individuals or habitat, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species.

* **WIFV** - Will impact individuals or habitat with a consequence that the action may contribute to a trend toward federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the population or species.

* Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be initiated if an alternative is selected that may contribute to a loss of viability to a population of species reviewed in this evaluation.

Biological Evaluation Summary for Special Status Plants for the East Grasshopper Watershed Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2011-010-EA)

Common Name <i>Genus species</i>	Does the species occur on Public Lands within the East Grasshopper Watershed?	Is the species or its habitat found in the Cumulative Impact Area?	Are irreversible or irretrievable resources involved?	What effect could this proposal have? *		
				Alt. A	Alt. B	Alt. C
Ute Ladies' Tresses <i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Cusick's Horse-mint <i>Agastache cusickii</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Western joepywe-weed <i>Ageratina occidentalis</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Tapertip onion <i>Allium acuminatum</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Sitka Columbine <i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Sapphire Rockcress <i>Arabis fecunda</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Painted Milkvetch <i>Astragalus ceramicus var. apus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Lesser Rushy Milkvetch <i>Astragalus convallarius var. convallarius = A. junciformis</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Bitterroot Milkvetch <i>Astragalus scaphoides</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI	MIH	MIH
Railhead Milkvetch <i>Astragalus terminalis</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Large-leafed Balsamroot <i>Balsamorhiza macrophylla</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Red Sage <i>Bassia americana</i>	NO	YES	NO	--	--	--
Mojave brickellbush <i>Brickellia oblongifolia</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Idaho Sedge <i>Carex idaho</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Lesser Indian paintbrush <i>Castilleja minor ssp. minor</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Fendler Cat's-eye <i>Cryptantha fendleri</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Beavertip Draba <i>Draba globosa</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Wind River Draba <i>Draba ventosa</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Beaked spikerush <i>Eleocharis rostellata</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Long-sheath waterweed <i>Elodea bifoliata</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Idaho Fleabane <i>Erigeron asperugineus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Linearleaf Fleabane <i>Erigeron linearis</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		

Common Name <i>Genus species</i>	Does the species occur on Public Lands within the East Grasshopper Watershed?	Is the species or its habitat found in the Cumulative Impact Area?	Are irreversible or irretrievable resources involved?	What effect could this proposal have? *		
				Alt. A	Alt. B	Alt. C
Buff Fleabane <i>Erigeron parryi</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Mat Buckwheat <i>Eriogonum caespitosum</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Railroad Canyon Wild Buckwheat <i>Eriogonum soliceps</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Hiker's gentian <i>Gentianopsis simplex</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Many-flowered Viguirea <i>Heliomeris multiflora</i> var. <i>multiflora</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Prostrate Hutchensia <i>Hornungia procumbens</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Ballhead Ipomopsis <i>Ipomopsis congesta</i> ssp. <i>crebrifolia</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Simple Bog Sedge <i>Kobresia simpliciuscula</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Beautiful Bladderpod <i>Lesquerella pulchella</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Sand Wildrye <i>Leymus flavescens</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Taper-tip Desert-parsley <i>Lomatium attenuatum</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Marsh Felwort <i>Lomatogonium rotatum</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Dwarf purple monkeyflower <i>Mimulus nanus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Primrose monkeyflower <i>Mimulus primuloides</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Low northern – rockcress <i>Neotorularia humilis</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Small-flowered pennycress <i>Noccaea parviflora</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Meadow Lousewort <i>Pedicularis crenulata</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Lemhi Beardtongue <i>Penstemon lemhiensis</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Whipple's Beardtongue <i>Penstemon whippleanus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Hoary Phacelia <i>Phacelia incana</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Slender-branched Popcorn Flower <i>Plagiobothrys leptocladus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Spiny skeletonweed <i>Pleiacanthus spinosus</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--

Common Name <i>Genus species</i>	Does the species occur on Public Lands within the East Grasshopper Watershed?	Is the species or its habitat found in the Cumulative Impact Area?	Are irreversible or irretrievable resources involved?	What effect could this proposal have? *		
				Alt. A	Alt. B	Alt. C
Alkali Primrose <i>Primula alcalina</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Mealy Primrose <i>Primula incana</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
James Stitchwort <i>Pseudostellaria jamesiana</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Lemmon's Alkaligrass <i>Puccinellia lemmonii</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
White-stemmed Globe-mallow <i>Sphaeralcea munroana</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Silver Chicken Sage <i>Sphaeromeria argentea</i>	YES	YES	NO	NI		
Rocky Mountain Dandelion <i>Taraxacum eriophorum</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Alpine Meadowrue <i>Thalictrum alpinum</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--
Slender Thelypody <i>Thelypodium sagittatum</i>	YES	YES	NO	MIH	BI	BI
Showy Townsendia <i>Townsendia florifera</i>	NO	NO	--	--	--	--

* The livestock management and project proposals are not consistent across alternatives. For example, the season of use for one allotment under Alternative B may not be the same as the season of use for another allotment under the same alternative. For the purposes of this biological evaluation if a proposed grazing treatment (numbers, duration, time of year, frequency of rest), project or vegetative treatment within a given alternative is likely to adversely affect a sensitive plant or its habitat, then that effect is reflected in the table.

Supplemental Information on Special Status Plants on BLM Lands in the East Grasshopper Watershed

The Dillon Resource Management Plan provides guidance that requires project sites in high probability habitats to be surveyed for sensitive plants prior to any ground disturbing activities. This reduces the possibility that sensitive plant species would be accidentally or inadvertently impacted by BLM activities.

No impacts from any of the three alternatives considered in the EA are anticipated for Bitterroot milkvetch, railhead milkvetch, Idaho sedge, linearleaf fleabane, Railroad Canyon wild buckwheat, beautiful bladderpod, taper-tip desert-parsley, Lemhi beardtongue, and silver chicken sage. These populations are being maintained under currently authorized livestock management, occupy habitats not normally frequented by cattle or are located far enough away from the project area that the livestock management, range improvement projects or vegetation treatments proposed on allotments in the East Grasshopper Watershed will be of little or no consequence.

Slender thelopody is palatable and is sensitive to intensive grazing, especially during spring and early summer. Under alternative A this species or its habitat may be impacted in the Taylor-Buffalo Allotment due to continued spring use, which can lead to population declines. The restoration systems proposed under alternative B and C should benefit this sensitive species.

There is high probability habitat for Bitterroot milkvetch within the proposed pipeline project areas in the Reservior Creek AMP Allotment. These sites will require a survey for sensitive plants prior to any ground disturbing activity. Mitigation measures may be necessary. The proposed grazing management for alternative B and C should benefit this plant species.

Cumulative Considerations:

High probability habitats will be surveyed for sensitive plants prior to any ground disturbing activities on federal land but botanical surveys aren't required on private and state lands even on cooperative projects (e.g. a pipeline that crosses multiple ownerships). It's possible that sensitive plant species could be accidentally or inadvertently impacted by construction or placement of range improvement projects on non-federal lands.

The invasion of introduced species and noxious weeds near and into special plant species habitat across all ownerships poses a direct threat to these plants through competition, habitat degradation and the potential impact of herbicides. The use of insecticides on private lands within the EGW to control grasshoppers or other insects may affect pollinators that visit sensitive plant species on BLM lands.

Signed, Kelly Urresti

Signature

June 21, 2012

Date

Printed Name and Title: Kelly Urresti, Rangeland Management Specialist/TES Plants