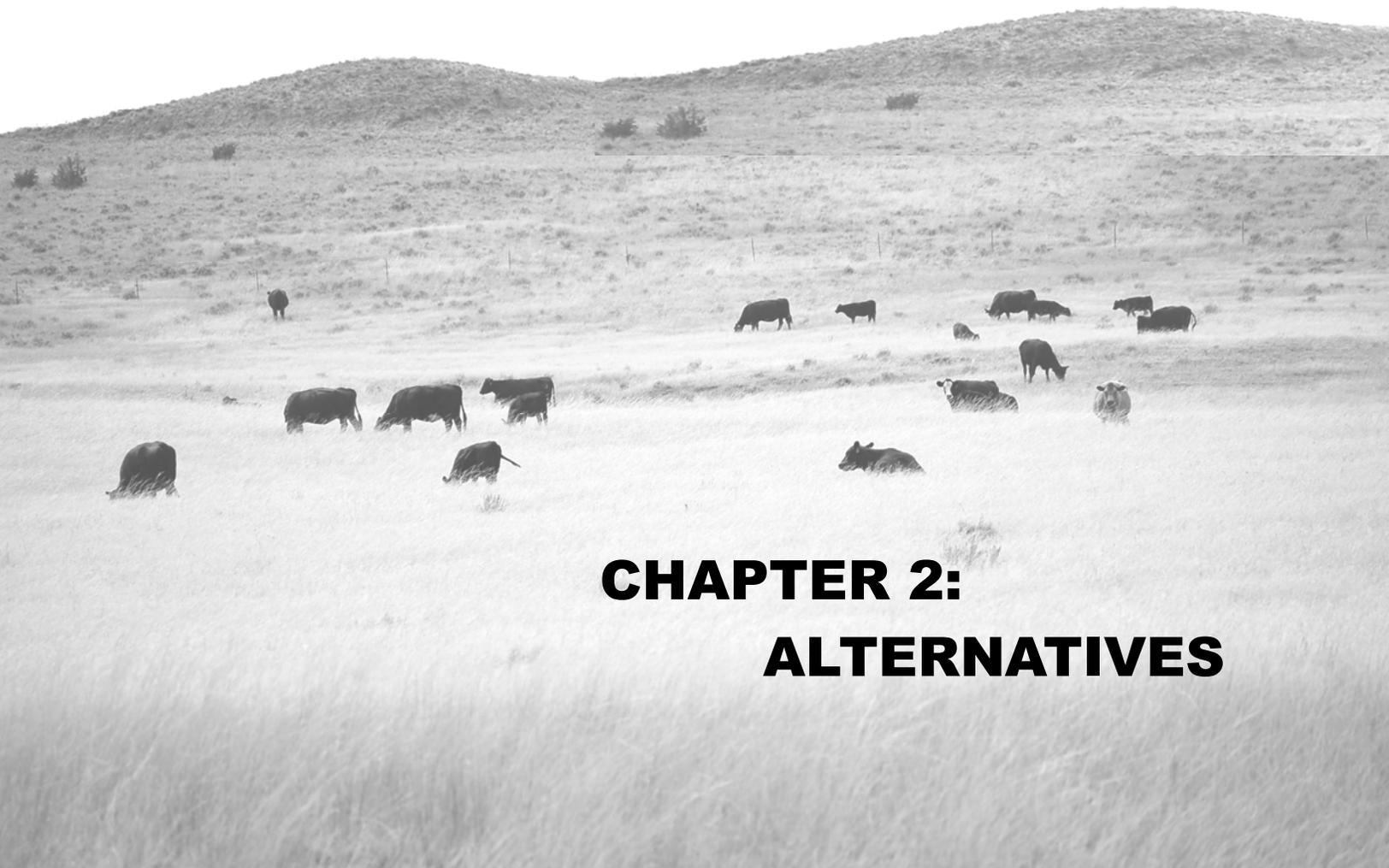


**Miles City Field Office  
Resource Management Plan and  
Environmental Impact Statement**

**BLM**



**CHAPTER 2:  
ALTERNATIVES**

## CHAPTER 2: ALTERNATIVES

### INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 describes the management alternatives and management alternative development process. Table 2-1, *Comparison of Alternatives*, and Table 2-2, *Summary Comparison of Impacts by Alternative*, presents the alternatives.

Table 2-1 is organized into four main categories: *Resources*, *Resource Uses*, *Special Designations*, and *Social and Economic Considerations*. Each category includes the program and its goals and objectives, Management Common to all Alternatives, and Management by Alternative.

Table 2-2, at the end of this chapter, provides a summary of the impacts of management actions proposed under each alternative. For a full description of the effects from each alternative, see Chapter 4.

### MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Management goals and objectives were defined for each resource and resource use that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must address in the planning process. The management goals and objectives are presented in Table 2-1 and apply to all alternatives.

### MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

Management Common to all Alternatives is existing management that would continue regardless of any alternative selection. Where management actions from the current Big Dry and Powder River resource management plans (RMPs), as amended, were found to meet the BLM's current goals and no issue was raised, alternatives to current management were not developed. In these cases, the decisions from the existing RMPs are still appropriate to meet the goals and objectives for management of the public lands. These nonissue actions are considered in the Management Common to all Alternatives sections of Table 2-1. A key component of Management Common to all Alternatives would be carrying forward 13 existing areas of environmental concern (ACECs): Ash Creek Divide (7,921 acres), Bug Creek (3,837 acres), Hell Creek (19,373 acres), and Sand Arroyo (9,052 acres) paleontological ACECs; Big Sheep Mountain (363 acres), Hoe (147 acres), Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres), Powder River Depot (1,401 acres), Seline (80 acres), cultural ACECs; Piping Plover (15 acres) and Black-footed Ferret (11,221 acres) wildlife ACECs; Finger Buttes (1,520 acres) scenic ACEC; and Smoky Butte (80 acres) geological ACEC.

Lands acquired within the planning area would be managed the same as like adjacent lands. The Terry Badlands lands with wilderness characteristics area is acquired lands within the Terry Badlands WSA. These lands would be managed in accordance with BLM Manual 6330, *Management of Wilderness Study Areas*. The area would be managed per VRM Class I, oil and gas leasing would be closed, and surface-disturbing activities in general would not be allowed.

Where routes will remain available for motorized use within wilderness study areas (WSAs), such use will be continued on a conditional basis. Use of the existing authorized routes in the WSA ("primitive routes" when located within WSAs) could continue as long as the use of these routes does not impair wilderness suitability, as provided by BLM Manual 6330, *Management of BLM Wilderness Study Areas*. If Congress designates the area as wilderness, the routes may be closed unless otherwise specified by Congress. In the interim, if use or non-compliance is found through monitoring efforts to impair the area's suitability for wilderness designation, the BLM will take further action to limit use of the routes or close them. The continued use of these routes, therefore, is based on user compliance and non-impairment of wilderness values.

## DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives were developed as a framework to measure impacts that might occur through management. The alternatives do not constitute management decisions; instead, they represent varying approaches to managing public land and activities. Alternative E, the Preferred Alternative, functions as the BLM's draft plan for managing the public land and resources; however, it is subject to change between the Draft RMP and the Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) because of new information the public may raise during the public comment period on the Draft RMP.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

Five alternatives (A through E) were developed to offer a range of management options for resolving issues. Each alternative provides for varying levels of compatible resource use and development opportunities and each is consistent with law, regulation, and policy. Detailed management directions are provided for each alternative in Table 2-1. Where rights-of-way (ROWs) are addressed, renewable energy ROWs are included unless they are addressed separately. A summary of the alternatives is provided below.

**Alternative A (No Action)** would be the continuation of present management in the planning area and provide baseline information from which to identify potential environmental consequences when compared to the other alternatives. If selected, this management option would follow the existing RMPs. Key components of Alternative A include those described below.

- Special status species habitats would continue to be managed to provide for their continued presence in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. There would be no Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority or Restoration Areas under Alternative A.
- Oil and gas leasing would be offered on 5.4 million acres. There would be no areas closed to oil and gas leasing under Alternative A. There would be no oil and gas master leasing plan (MLP) areas identified.
- Livestock grazing would be allowed on 2.7 million acres and prohibited on 240 acres.
- Most development activities would be allowed in riparian areas (unless the riparian areas were classified either functional-at risk with downward trend or nonfunctional).
- Renewable energy ROWs, such as for wind and solar, would be open in the majority of the planning area (98 percent of BLM-administered surface in the planning area).
- Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use would be Open on 2,400 acres; Limited on 2.8 million acres; and Closed on 80 acres.
- The following were designated special recreation management areas (SRMAs) because of their unique recreational values in the planning area: Powder River Depot (162 acres), Calypso (71 acres), and Lewis and Clark Trail (16,350 acres). These areas would be managed as SRMAs for intensive recreation management.
- Lands with wilderness characteristics (5,236 acres) were identified within the Devil's Creek Common area. There would be no actions specifically identified to protect lands with wilderness characteristics. The BLM would manage these lands in accordance with existing decisions: oil and gas leasing would be allowed with lease terms, ROWs would be allowed, and the area would be managed according to VRM Class II (5,127 acres) and VRM Class III (109 acres).
- Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC (121 acres) and Reynolds Battlefield ACEC (324 acres) would not be increased in size.

**Alternative B** would focus on natural processes and other unobtrusive methods for natural resource use and management, conserve the most land area for sensitive and fragile resources, and propose greater opportunities for dispersed non-motorized recreation while offering fewer motorized and developed recreation opportunities. This alternative would emphasize the improvement and protection of wildlife habitat and sensitive plant and animal species, improvement of riparian areas, and implementation of management actions that improve water quality and enhance protection of historic

and cultural sites. Key components of Alternative B include the following:

- Special status species habitats would be managed with an emphasis on maintaining and improving important habitats. A Protection Priority ACEC for sage-grouse habitat would include the interim management areas; Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP) Core Areas (1.3 million acres in which surface-disturbing activities would be prohibited) (Map 2); and two Restoration Areas: Cedar Creek (196,000 acres) and South Carter (64,000 acres) where management would need to be designed to maintain sage-grouse habitat functionality.
- Oil and gas leasing would be offered on approximately 3.3 million acres and not offered on approximately 2.1 million acres.
- An oil and gas MLP to protect important sage-grouse habitat has been identified for an area in Carter County (Carter MLP Area) (Map 3). In the Carter MLP Area, the Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority ACEC would not be offered for oil and gas leasing to protect important sage-grouse values. Oil and gas leasing would be offered in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Area and Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas of the MLP area with a controlled surface use (CSU) stipulation. The best management practices (BMPs) for sage-grouse found in the *Best Management Practices Appendix* would be considered during project implementation (e.g., locate roads to avoid important areas and habitat, place infrastructure in already disturbed locations in which the habitat has not been restored, and control the spread and effects from nonnative plant species). BMPs would be implemented at the discretion of the Miles City Field Office (MCFO) on a project-specific basis, depending on the specific characteristics of the project area and the types of disturbance being proposed. BMPs required would become conditions of approval (COAs) during project implementation. Upon their expiration, existing leases in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority ACEC would not be reoffered for leasing. Lease development of existing leases would be allowed without a cap for surface disturbance because so few acres are currently leased.
- All livestock grazing (except domestic sheep and goats) would be allowed on 2.5 million acres and prohibited on 210,000 acres. Domestic sheep and goats grazing would be allowed on 2.1 million acres and prohibited on 390,000 acres.
- Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in riparian and wetland areas.
- Renewable energy ROWs, such as for wind and solar, would be open on 400,000 acres (14 percent of the BLM-administered surface in the planning area) and excluded on 2.4 million acres.
- OHV use would be Open on 2,900 acres; Limited on 2.8 million acres; and Closed on 35,000 acres.
- The following would be designated special recreation management areas (SRMAs) because of their unique recreational values in the planning area: Powder River Depot (162 acres), Calypso (71 acres), Lewis and Clark Trail (14,499 acres), Howrey Island (592 acres), Matthews (91 acres), Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres), Pumpkin Creek Ranch (21,206 acres), Glendive Short Pine (2,753 acres), Terry (72 acres), Strawberry Hill (4,248 acres), and Moorhead (13 acres) These areas would be managed as SRMAs for intensive recreation management.
- The BLM would manage 5,236 acres within the Devil’s Creek Common area to protect wilderness characteristics as a priority over other multiple uses in the area. Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with an NSO stipulation, surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed if they did not meet the goal identified for lands with wilderness characteristics, and the area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
- Cedar Creek Battlefield (1,022 acres), Long Medicine Wheel (179 acres), Walstein (2,054 acres), Yonkee (40 acres), Battle Butte Battlefield (237 acres), and Reynolds Battlefield (922 acres) would be designated cultural ACECs; and Flat Creek (547 acres) and Powderville (27,151 acres) would be designated paleontological ACECs. Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas (1.3 million acres) would be designated an ACEC under this alternative.

**Alternative C** would allow resource use (e.g., energy and mineral development and other commodity uses) while providing protection to sensitive resources. Alternative C would allow for greater

## CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

production levels of minerals, greater development of public lands, and more livestock grazing than Alternative B. Key components of Alternative C include the following:

- Special status species habitats would be managed to help provide for their continued presence in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. There would be three Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas: North Garfield (171,000 acres), North Rosebud (112,000 acres), and Carter (314,000 acres). Two areas would be designated Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas: Cedar Creek (51,000 acres) and South Carter (64,000 acres). Management in these areas would be restricted to maintain sage-grouse habitat functionality.
- Oil and gas leasing would be offered on all 5.4 million acres.
- An oil and gas MLP to protect important sage-grouse habitat has been identified for an area in Carter County (Carter MLP Area). In the MLP area, oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation. Lease development would be phased: the high and moderate oil and gas development potential areas that overlay the Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Area and Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas would be offered for leasing first (western portion of the MLP). Within a 5-year period after the ROD is signed, the BLM would determine if any wells were drilled and producing. If production were occurring, the BLM would wait to lease the remainder of the MLP until production ceased and the area returned to sage-grouse habitat. The eastern portion of the MLP would then be offered for oil and gas leasing with a CSU stipulation. Under Alternative C, the general Mitigation Guidelines and Objectives found in the *Best Management Practices Appendix* would be considered (e.g., remote telemetry would be used to reduce vehicle traffic on oil and gas operations, two-track [primitive] roads would be used whenever possible, and invasive species would be controlled using an integrated pest management approach).
- All livestock grazing (except domestic sheep and goats) would be allowed on 2.7 million acres and prohibited on 6,800 acres. Domestic sheep and goat grazing would be allowed on 2.7 million acres and excluded on 8,300 acres.
- Surface-disturbing activities would avoid riparian and wetland areas.
- Renewable energy ROWs, such as for wind and solar, would be open on 1.3 million acres (47 percent of BLM-administered surface in the planning area), avoided on 620,000 acres, and excluded on 860,000 acres.
- OHV use would be Open on 660 acres; Limited on 2.8 million acres; and Closed on 550 acres.
- The following would be designated special recreation management areas (SRMAs) because of their unique recreational values in the planning area: Powder River Depot (162 acres), Calypso (71 acres), Lewis and Clark Trail (14,499 acres), Howrey Island (592 acres), Matthews (91 acres), Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres), Pumpkin Creek Ranch (21,206 acres), Glendive Short Pine (2,753 acres), Terry (110 acres), Strawberry Hill (4,248 acres), and Moorhead (13 acres) These areas would be managed as SRMAs for intensive recreation management.
- Lands with wilderness characteristics (5,236 acres) were identified within the Devil’s Creek Common area. Management actions and restrictions from other resource values would contribute to the protection of wilderness characteristics. For example, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation (192 acres) and lease terms (5,044 acres), ROWs would be allowed, and the area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
- Cedar Creek Battlefield (1,022 acres), Long Medicine Wheel (179 acres), Walstein (2,054 acres), Yonkee (40 acres), Battle Butte Battlefield (237 acres), and Reynolds Battlefield (922 acres) would be designated cultural ACECs, and Flat Creek (547 acres) and Powderville (27,151 acres) would be designated paleontological ACECs.

**Alternative D** provides the widest range of uses, emphasizing recreation, mineral, and energy development, and identifies areas most appropriate for these uses. Although similar to Alternative C, Alternative D proposes the least restrictive management actions for energy and commodity development but maintains protections to resources required by laws and regulations. With the exception of sage-grouse habitat management, restrictions to protect resources would be implemented to the extent necessary to meet legal requirements. Key components of Alternative D include the following:

- Special status species habitats would be managed to provide for their continued presence in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. There would be two Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas: North Garfield (171,000 acres) and Carter (314,000 acres). Two areas would be designated Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas: Cedar Creek (21,000 acres) and South Carter (58,000 acres). Management in these areas would be restricted to maintain sage-grouse habitat functionality.
- Oil and gas leasing would be offered on all 5.4 million acres.
- An oil and gas MLP to protect important sage-grouse habitat has been identified for an area in Carter County (Carter MLP Area). Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in the entire MLP area. Leasing would not be phased. The BMPs for sage-grouse found in the *Best Management Practices Appendix* would be considered during project implementation (e.g., locate roads to avoid important areas and habitats, place infrastructure in already disturbed locations in which the habitat has not yet been restored, and control the spread of nonnative plant species). BMPs would be implemented at the discretion of the MCFO on a project-specific basis, depending on the specific characteristics of the project area and the types of disturbance being proposed. BMPs required would become COAs during project implementation.
- Livestock grazing would be allowed on 2.7 million acres and prohibited on 3,100 acres.
- Surface-disturbing activities would avoid riparian and wetland areas.
- Renewable energy ROWs, such as for wind and solar, would be open on 1.7 million acres (62 percent of the BLM-administered surface in the planning area), avoided on 490,000 acres, and excluded on 560,000 acres.
- OHV use would be Open on 2,000 acres; Limited on 2.8 million acres; and Closed on 0 acres.
- No SRMAs would be designated.
- Lands with wilderness characteristics (5,236 acres) were identified within the Devil’s Creek Common area. Management actions and restrictions identified for other resource values would contribute to the protection of wilderness characteristics. For example, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation (192 acres) and lease terms (5,044 acres), ROWs would be allowed, and the area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
- Cedar Creek Battlefield (1,022 acres), Long Medicine Wheel (179 acres), Walstein (2,054 acres), Yonkee (40 acres), Battle Butte Battlefield (237 acres), and Reynolds Battlefield (922 acres) would be designated cultural ACECs; and Flat Creek (547 acres) and Powderville (27,151 acres) would be designated paleontological ACECs.

**Alternative E (Preferred Alternative)** would allow resource use (e.g., energy and mineral development and other commodity uses) while providing protection to sensitive resources. Alternative E would allow for greater production level of minerals, greater development of public lands, and more livestock grazing than Alternative B. Key components of Alternative E include the following:

- Special status species habitats would be managed to help provide for their continued presence in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. There would be three Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas: North Garfield (171,000 acres), North Rosebud (173,000 acres), and Carter (448,000 acres). Four areas would be designated Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas: Decker area (8,300 acres), Cedar Creek (29,000 acres), South Carter (64,000 acres), and a source population area (8,000 acres). Management in these areas would be restricted to maintain sage-grouse habitat.
- Oil and gas leasing would be offered on all 5.4 million acres.
- An oil and gas MLP to protect important sage-grouse habitat has been identified for an area in Carter County (Carter MLP Area). The majority of the MLP area would allow oil and gas leasing with an NSO stipulation to protect important sage-grouse values in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Area. Oil and gas leasing would also be offered in the remainder of the area, which is the Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Area and Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas with a CSU stipulation (Map 4). The general mitigation guidelines and the BMPs for sage-grouse found in the *Best Management Practices Appendix* would be considered during project implementation (e.g., locate roads to avoid important areas and

## CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

habitats, place infrastructure in already disturbed locations in which the habitat has not yet been restored, and control the spread of nonnative plant species). BMPs would be implemented at the discretion of the MCFO on a project-specific basis, depending on the specific characteristics of the project area and the types of disturbance being proposed. BMPs required would become COAs during project implementation.

- Livestock grazing would be allowed on 2.7 million acres and prohibited on 3,125 acres.
- Surface-disturbing activities would avoid riparian and wetland areas.
- Renewable energy ROWs, such as for wind and solar, would be open on 1.5 million acres (55 percent of the BLM-administered surface in the planning area), avoided on 1.2 million acres, and excluded on 12,000 acres.
- OHV use would be Open on 2,000 acres; Limited on 2.8 million acres; and Closed on 2,800 acres.
- The following would be designated special recreation management areas (SRMAs) because of their unique recreational values in the planning area: Powder River Depot (162 acres), Calypso (71 acres), Lewis and Clark Trail (14,499 acres), Howrey Island (592 acres), Matthews (91 acres), Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres), Pumpkin Creek Ranch (19,435 acres), Glendive Short Pine (2,272 acres), Terry (110 acres), Strawberry Hill (4,248 acres), and Moorhead (13 acres) These areas would be managed as SRMAs for intensive recreation management.
- Lands with wilderness characteristics (5,236 acres) were identified within the Devil's Creek Common area. Management actions and restrictions identified for other resource values would contribute to the protection of wilderness characteristics. For example, oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation on 5,236 acres (see the VRM II stipulation in the *Minerals Appendix*), ROWs and other surface-disturbing activities would be allowed by the authorized officer (AO) when they met the goal of lands with wilderness characteristics, and the area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
- Cedar Creek Battlefield (1,022 acres), Long Medicine Wheel (179 acres), Walstein (2,054 acres), Yonkee (40 acres), Battle Butte Battlefield (320 acres), and Reynolds Battlefield (922 acres) would be designated cultural ACECs, and Flat Creek (547 acres) and Powderville (9,518 acres) would be designated paleontological ACECs.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

The following alternatives were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis because they are already part of an existing plan, policy, or administrative function.

### *Reevaluate Wilderness Study Area Recommendations*

The BLM received a proposal requesting the reevaluation of suitability of existing WSAs for wilderness designation. This alternative was considered but not analyzed in detail because Section 603 wilderness recommendations for WSAs are now before Congress and cannot be changed by the BLM. However, the BLM has reevaluated the entire planning area for wilderness characteristics. (See *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics* in Chapter 3 for more information.)

### *Non-energy Leasable Minerals*

Development of non-energy leasable minerals, such as sodium and potash, has never been proposed or permitted in the planning area, and, because the development potential for these resources is minimal to non-existent in the planning area, these actions were considered but not analyzed in detail in the RMP.

### ***Designating Major Transportation and Energy Corridors***

Major transportation and energy corridors were considered but not analyzed in detail. Because federal lands are scattered in a checkerboard land pattern interspersed with private and state lands in most of the planning area, a major transportation or energy corridor would not be feasible to implement. However, in consideration of corridors, the RMP does state in the *Lands and Realty, Management Common to all Alternatives* section, “Whenever possible, ROWs would be constructed within or next to compatible existing ROWs, such as highways and railroads.”

### ***Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Sportsmen Area***

An area abutting the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge was identified by 30 sportsmen’s clubs as a high quality fishing and hunting area and named the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Sportsmen Area. The groups designating the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Sportsmen Area are concerned with oil and gas leasing (and potential exploration) and any potential effects to hunting and fishing. Much of the groups’ area of concern is considered and analyzed in the RMP (see proposed management under the *Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas; Wilderness; Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA* [Missouri River portion]; and *ACECs* [existing and proposed] sections). However, restrictions to oil and gas were not analyzed on approximately 65,000 BLM-administered oil and gas acres. To determine if analysis was needed, the BLM referred to the oil and gas potential development scenario, which includes these lands (Map 5). Oil and gas has high, medium, and low development potential in the planning area, and the majority of the 65,000 acres not analyzed are located in areas of low oil and gas development potential (all but approximately 40 acres). However, because development is not likely to occur on these acres, restricting oil and gas development was considered but not analyzed.

### ***Analyzing an Alternative that makes all Lands in the Planning Area Unavailable for Livestock Grazing (No Grazing Alternative)***

An alternative that proposes to make the entire planning area unavailable for livestock grazing would not meet the purpose and need of the Draft RMP. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that agencies study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to recommended courses of action in any proposal that involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. No issues or conflicts have been identified during this land use planning effort that require the complete elimination of livestock grazing within the planning area for their resolution (BLM Washington Office [WO] Instruction Memorandum [IM] 2012-069). Where appropriate, livestock removals and use adjustments have been incorporated in this planning effort. Because the BLM has considerable discretion through its grazing regulations to determine and adjust stocking levels, seasons-of-use, and grazing management activities and to allocate forage to uses of the public lands in RMPs, the analysis of an alternative to entirely eliminate grazing is not needed.

The planning area is located in the northern portion of the Great Plains Ecoregion (USEPA 2012a) and the rangelands in the planning area are classified as mixed-grass prairie. The rangelands of the Great Plains have a long evolutionary history of grazing and grazing is accepted by grassland ecologists as a keystone process of the grassland ecosystem (Fuhlendorf and Engle 2001; Milchunas, Sala, and Lauenroth 1988; Knapp et al. 1999). There is also agreement among many scientists and natural resource managers that some level of grazing disturbance is necessary to assure the ecological integrity of the mixed-grass prairie ecosystem (Parks Canada 2002).

From 1956 through 1972, the BLM conducted a classification of public lands to estimate the amount of available forage within the planning area. These are typically referred to as the “Missouri River Basin Surveys”. From this effort, multiple sub-basin reports were generated, which provided the carrying capacities by animal unit months (AUMs) for all BLM-administered lands at the time of survey.

## CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

The measurement of the available forage for livestock grazing was conducted by trained professionals and involved intensive vegetation sampling (clipping, weighing, and ocular estimation). The BLM, in cooperation with grazing advisory boards, used the information to make adjustments to the AUMs allocated to a grazing permit. This cooperative effort resulted in implementation of appropriate changes to grazing permits in the planning areas. These changes were implemented in a timely manner and completed prior to 1975.

These historical grazing allocations have been included in the existing RMPs and allocation of vegetation generally ranges from 25 to 40 percent for livestock and 75 to 60 percent for other uses (e.g. wildlife, soil protection, and other uses).

Current resource conditions on BLM-administered land, including range vegetation, watershed, and wildlife habitat, as reflected in land health assessments, do not warrant prohibition of livestock grazing throughout the entire planning area. Following initial surveyed forage allocations, land health evaluations, inventories, and monitoring data (vegetative and levels of use) have been the basis for increasing or decreasing permitted use. Through this process the planning area has changed the grazing allocations on allotments to ensure that the healthy ecological systems are provided for future generations.

Livestock grazing is a well-established use within the BLM's multiple use mandate. The BLM considered but did not analyze in detail an alternative that would make all 2.8 million acres of public lands in the planning area unavailable for livestock grazing because such an alternative is not reasonable, viable, or necessary.

In accordance with the BLM's H-1601-1 *Land Use Planning Handbook* and BLM WO IM No. 2012-169, the BLM considered a range of alternatives with respect to both areas that were available or unavailable for livestock grazing and the amount of forage allocated to livestock on an area-wide basis. The range of alternatives considered includes a meaningful reduction in livestock grazing, both through a reduction in areas available to livestock grazing and forage allocation.

The BLM's approach to livestock grazing is described in detail in the *Livestock Grazing Appendix*, which complies with BLM's IM 2012-069 as well as the BLM's *Land Use Planning Handbook*. The BLM developed a range of alternatives that sharply defines the issues and provides a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker. The BLM analyzed closing 390,000 acres to sheep and goat grazing and 210,000 acres to all livestock grazing under Alternative B, in which the BLM identified unresolved conflicts for various uses of available resources (such as between livestock grazing and proposed ACECs).

The BLM also analyzed a range of alternatives that varied the amount of forage allocated to livestock. In areas open to livestock grazing, Alternative B allocates one-third less forage to sheep and goats than Alternative A, existing management. Alternative B also reduces AUMs to meet rangeland health standards. Alternative B also includes other reductions in livestock grazing through the use of forage reserves, voluntary retirement of allotments, limitations on livestock grazing near cultural or recreation sites, and limitations on the use of salt and supplements as well as prohibiting any new range infrastructure.

Livestock grazing is and has been an important use of the public lands in the planning area for many years and is a continuing government program. The Council of Environmental Quality guidelines for compliance with NEPA require that agencies analyze the No Action Alternative in all EISs (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1502.14(d)). For the purposes of this NEPA analysis, the No Action Alternative is to continue the status quo, which includes livestock grazing. For this reason and those stated above, a no grazing alternative for the entire planning area was dismissed from further consideration in the RMP. See the *Livestock Grazing* section in Table 2-1 for alternatives considering a reduction in livestock grazing.

### ***Conservation Groups Alternative***

During the range-wide scoping effort for sage-grouse, several conservation organizations submitted scoping comments and proposed management actions and alternatives for sage-grouse conservation (referred to here as the Conservation Groups Alternative). In summary, the primary intent of these proposed alternatives and management actions was to:

- add additional measures (beyond those conservation measures identified in *A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures*, produced by the Sage-grouse National Technical Team) (BLM 2011a) in order to maintain and increase sage-grouse abundance and,
- designate two additional habitat types, the Greater Sage-grouse ACEC and Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas.

These proposed actions and alternatives submitted by these organizations were determined to be substantially similar to those actions and habitat areas considered within the range of alternatives in this RMP. As described in the *Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species* section in Chapter 2, this RMP delineates three types of sage-grouse habitat areas as part of the planning process, including Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas, Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority, and Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas. Varying degrees of management are considered and analyzed as part of the range of alternatives within each of these proposed habitat areas in order to achieve the goals or objectives for each sage-grouse habitat area, as well as address the conservation measures and management practices to conserve greater sage-grouse consistent with *A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures*, produced by the Sage-grouse National Technical Team (BLM 2011a). Additionally, this RMP includes *Mitigation Measures and Conservation Actions* for greater sage-grouse (see the *Best Management Practices Appendix*). The appendix identifies best practices, design features, and proactive management activities to conserve greater sage-grouse that would be applied during project-specific activities through subsequent environmental review and analysis.

Specific to the organizations’ proposed alternative to designate sage-grouse ACECs and Restoration Areas, this RMP does include, within the range of alternatives for detailed study, a Greater Sage-grouse ACEC (Alternative B) and Restoration Areas for sage-grouse. Table 2-1 provides a summary of the range of acreages for General, Protection Priority, and Restoration Habitat Areas for greater sage-grouse and provides a summary of the range of alternatives for sage-grouse (e.g., allowable uses, constraints, and other actions). This range of alternatives is adequate to compare impacts to sage-grouse from different conservation measures as well as the size of habitat classifications.

In summary, the additional alternatives and actions proposed through the Conservation Groups Alternative were determined to have substantially similar effects to the actions and habitat areas considered within the range of alternatives identified above. For example, the alternatives range from open to fluid mineral leasing and ROW development to a no-lease stipulation for new oil and gas development and exclusion areas for ROWs.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN**

The preferred alternative was selected in consideration of anticipated effects of management actions and available scientific information and studies. However, conditions may change over time, and management actions already implemented can be improved as new technology and information become available. It is also possible that changes in land use would require different management actions in order to protect the resource. To provide management flexibility and address changing conditions using best management practices (BMPs), the Miles City Field Office (MCFO) will monitor and evaluate the approved plan (record of decision or ROD) using a process that provides optimum methods for evaluating effectiveness of management actions. This process will measure the effectiveness of existing actions by monitoring these actions and applying the results of new scientific research when a threshold or “trigger” is met. (See the *Monitoring Appendix* for items monitored and management options if a trigger were reached.)

## **MITIGATION GUIDELINES AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Mitigation measures and conservation actions are BMPs, operating procedures, or design features that have been developed to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for potentially significant adverse environmental impacts associated with surface-disturbing or disruptive activities.

## CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

For the purposes of applying mitigation measures, surface-disturbing and disruptive activities are defined as described below.

Surface-disturbing activities are the physical disturbance or removal of land surface and vegetation. Some examples of surface-disturbing activities include, but are not limited to, construction of roads, well pads, pipelines, power lines, reservoirs, facilities, recreation sites, and mining. Vegetation renovation treatments that involve soil penetration or substantial mechanical damage to plants (plowing, chiseling, chopping, and other activities) are also surface-disturbing activities. This definition is not intended to prohibit all activities or authorized uses. For example, emergency activities (fire suppression, search and rescue, and other activities) or rangeland monitoring, routine maintenance associated with an approved authorization, dispersed recreational activities (hunting, hiking, and other activities), and livestock grazing are not considered surface-disturbing activities.

Disruptive activities are those uses and activities that are likely to alter the behavior of, displace, or cause excessive stress to wildlife populations occurring at a specific location or time. In this context, disruptive activities refer to those actions that alter behavior or cause the displacement of wildlife such that reproductive success is negatively affected or the physiological ability to cope with environmental stress is compromised. This term does not apply to the physical disturbance of the land surface, vegetation, or features. Examples of disruptive activities may include fence construction, noise, vehicle traffic, or other human presence regardless of the activity. The term is used in conjunction with protecting wildlife during crucial life stages (for example, breeding, nesting, birthing, and other activities) although it could apply to any resource value. This definition is not intended to prohibit all activities or authorized uses. For example, emergency activities (fire suppression, search and rescue, and other activities), or rangeland monitoring, routine maintenance associated with an approved authorization, dispersed recreational activities (hunting, hiking, and other activities), and livestock grazing are not considered disruptive activities.

These (and specific sage-grouse) mitigation measures and conservation actions are found in the *Best Management Practices Appendix*. The BLM may add additional mitigation measures as deemed necessary by further environmental analysis and as developed through consultation with other federal, state, and local regulatory and resource agencies.

The BLM will apply appropriate mitigation practices and conservation actions to BLM-authorized activities to minimize impacts if an evaluation of the project area indicated the presence of important wildlife species, seasonal wildlife habitat, or other resource concern. The sequence of mitigation actions will be as described below in three steps.

- **Avoid:** adverse impacts to resources are to be avoided and no action shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative with less adverse impacts.
- **Minimize:** if impacts to resources cannot be avoided, appropriate and practicable steps to minimize adverse impacts must be taken.
- **Compensate:** appropriate and practicable compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable adverse impacts that remain. The amount and quality of compensatory mitigation may not substitute for avoiding and minimizing impacts.

Even after avoiding and minimizing impacts, projects that will cause adverse impacts to resources typically require some type of compensatory mitigation. Compensatory mitigation refers to the restoration, establishment, enhancement, or, in certain circumstances, preservation of resources for the purpose of offsetting unavoidable adverse impacts. The BLM will determine the appropriate form and amount of compensatory mitigation required. Methods of compensatory mitigation include restoration, establishment, enhancement, and preservation.

- **Restoration:** reestablishment or rehabilitation of a resource with the goal of returning natural or historic functions and characteristics to a currently degraded area. Restoration may result in a gain in function, acres, or both.
- **Establishment (creation):** the development of a resource in areas in which that resource did not previously exist through manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of the

- site. Successful establishment results in a net gain in acres and function.
- Enhancement: activities conducted within existing resource that heighten, intensify, or improve one or more functions. Enhancement is often undertaken for a specific purpose such as to improve water quality, floodwater retention, or wildlife habitat. Enhancement results in a gain in function, but does not result in a net gain in acres.
- Conservation: the permanent protection of ecologically important resources through the implementation of appropriate legal and physical mechanisms (i.e., conservation easements, title transfers, or other methods). Preservation may include protection of areas adjacent to resource location as necessary to ensure protection or enhancement of the ecosystem. Preservation does not result in a net gain of acres and may only be used in certain circumstances, including when the resources to be preserved contribute significantly to ecological sustainability.

There are times when mitigating project impacts through on-site mitigation alone may not be possible or sufficient to adequately mitigate impacts and achieve resource objectives; in these cases, it may be appropriate to consider off-site mitigation as a feature of one or more of the alternatives in the impact analysis. Off-site mitigation is generally appropriate when the AO determines that impacts cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level onsite and it is expected that the land use authorization as submitted would not be consistent with the BLM's resource objectives. The BLM may expressly condition its approval of an action on the applicant's commitment to take actions, and the BLM may, if necessary, seek appropriate enforcement action to ensure the terms of the contract are met.

Because of site-specific circumstances, some mitigation measures and conservation actions may not apply to some activities (e.g., a resource or conflict is not present on a given site) or may require slight variations from measures and actions described in the *Best Management Practices Appendix*. Proposed variations will be addressed as site-specific mitigation applied in the permitting process. All variations in mitigation measures and conservation actions will require appropriate analysis and disclosure as part of activity authorization. It is anticipated that variations in the mitigation measures and conservation actions will be approved in very limited circumstances and only in coordination with state wildlife management agencies. Mitigation measures and conservation actions selected for implementation will be identified in the ROD or decision record for those activities. The proponent must implement those identified mitigations because they are commitments made as part of the BLM decision. Because these decisions create a clear obligation for the BLM to ensure any proposed mitigation adopted in the environmental review process is performed, there is assurance that mitigation will lead to a reduction of environmental impacts in the implementation stage and include binding mechanisms for enforcement (CEQ 2011). The determination of adequate application of the mitigation measures and conservation actions for specific projects will remain with the BLM's AO.

## HOW TO READ TABLE 2-1

Each alternative plan is presented in table format by column. To learn about an alternative and potential management actions, read down the table. To compare alternatives, read across the table. All acreage numbers in the table are approximate. All of the management actions considered apply to BLM-administered lands and minerals only. Acre figures may overlap and adding these figures will not result in accurate total acreage. For example, if an action reads "the BLM would make significant cultural sites available for scientific study" this action would apply to BLM-administered lands only. If conflicting management actions are proposed for the same acreage (and the resources for that action are present) within an alternative, then the most restrictive action would be implemented (unless a safety hazard was identified or the action were to conflict with existing law and regulation). For example, if an alternative prohibits surface-disturbing activities in a 200-acre area of crucial winter range but a later action in the same alternative allows a surface-disturbing activity (and crucial winter range is present), the activity would not be allowed. This would also apply if an alternative prohibits surface-disturbing activities but hazards to the public were found on the same acreage; in this case, the BLM would allow the removal or elimination of the hazard, including any necessary surface disturbance.

Some management actions have additional details, which are included in footnotes at the end of the table.

All stipulations for oil and gas can be found in the *Minerals Appendix*.

CHAPTER 2  
ALTERNATIVES

Where acres are provided in Table 2-1, the data for that resource have been collected; where data are incomplete, an assumption is made regarding the acre numbers (and is found in the *Assumptions to the Analyses* section of Chapter 4). For example, although the BLM is aware that there are sensitive soils in the 2.8 million-acre planning area, not all of these areas are mapped. Where field data have not been collected, the BLM provides acreage assumptions for analysis based on agency professionals' expertise and judgment.

Upon plan approval (ROD), valid existing rights would not be changed by the decisions in this document until a permit or lease expired; following this, the area would be subject to the decisions reached in this document. However, the BLM will continue to coordinate with private surface owners before approving minerals activities under their private surface. Surface owner requirements can be incorporated as COAs prior to approving an action.

## HOW TO READ TABLE 2-2

Table 2-2, *Summary Comparison of Impacts by Alternative*, presents a brief summary of the potential impacts that would occur under each alternative. Each alternative plan is presented in table format by column. To compare impacts by alternative, read down the table. To compare impacts by resource, resource use, special designation area, or topic, read across the table. See Chapter 4, *Environmental Consequences* for complete analysis of each alternative.

For a description of Resources, Resource Uses, Special Designations, and Social and Economic by alternative, see the table below or, for electronic drafts, click on the following link to take you to a specific resource:

[Air Resources and Climate](#), [Back Country Byways](#), [Cultural Resources](#), [Environmental Justice](#), [Facilities](#), [Fish and Wildlife \(Aquatics and Terrestrial\)](#), [Forestry and Woodland Products](#), [Hazardous Materials and Waste](#), [Vegetation – Invasive Species](#), [Lands and Realty](#), [Lands with Wilderness Characteristics](#), [Livestock Grazing](#), [Minerals](#), [National Trails](#), [Paleontological Resources](#), [Recreation](#), [Renewable Energy](#), [Riparian and Wetland](#), [Social and Economic](#), [Soils](#), [Special Designation Areas](#), [Special Status Species](#), [Special Status Species – Plants](#), [SRMAs](#), [Transportation](#), [Travel Management and OHV](#), [Vegetation](#), [Visual Resources](#), [Water Resources](#), [Wilderness](#), and [Wildland Fire Management and Ecology](#).



Glendive Short Pine Off-Highway Vehicle Area parking in Dawson County

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>RESOURCES</b>					
<b>AIR RESOURCES AND CLIMATE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain or enhance air quality and air quality related values (AQRVs) in the planning area and at sensitive areas (e.g., Class I areas) in and near the planning area.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions when feasible.</i>					
<i>Goal 3 – Evaluate the observed and anticipated long-term dynamic of climate change and minimize the impact of GHGs from projects to the degree practicable and reasonably foreseeable.</i>					
<i>Goal 4 – Provide for diverse, healthy ecosystems that are resilient to stressors such as climate change.</i>					
<i>Goal 5 – Provide for flexible, adaptable management that allows for timely responses to changing climatic conditions.</i>					
<i>Goal 6 – Maintain or improve the ability of BLM-administered lands to reduce (sequester) atmospheric GHGs.</i>					
<b>Objective 1 – Comply with the requirements of the Clean Air Act (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 7401 et seq.).</b>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Air Resources and Climate</b>	<b>Action 1 –</b> The BLM would participate in local, state, tribal, and federal ambient air quality monitoring programs.				
	<b>Action 2 –</b> Air resource and climate change monitoring would be conducted as described in the <i>Monitoring Appendix</i> and in the <i>Air Resources and Climate Appendix</i> (see also Map 6).				
	<b>Action 3 –</b> Prescribed burning activities would be managed in accordance with Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) regulations and USEPA guidance.				
	<b>Action 4 –</b> Emission reduction BMPs would be considered during project-level planning.				
	<b>Action 5 –</b> Methane emissions from proposed new or expanded coal mines would be estimated as part of project-level planning, and emission reduction measures would be considered.				
	<b>Action 6 –</b> Actions that reduced or mitigated GHG emissions by actions such as enhanced energy efficiency, use of lower GHG-emitting technologies, and the capture or beneficial use of fugitive methane emissions would be prioritized.				
	<b>Action 7 –</b> The BLM would promote vegetative capture and storage of carbon, with consideration for resource objectives, by using Standards for Rangeland Health and Montana forestry and rangeland BMP guidelines at the project-planning and implementation level.				
	<b>Action 8 –</b> The BLM would adjust the timing of BLM-authorized activities as needed to accommodate long-term changes in seasonal weather patterns while considering the impacts to other resources and resource uses.				
	<b>Action 9 –</b> Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported air quality, water quality, properly functioning uplands and riparian areas, diverse vegetation, and wildlife habitat would be achieved for all resource uses by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
	<b>Action 10 –</b> The BLM would follow the <i>Memorandum of Understanding Among the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Regarding Air Quality Analyses and Mitigation for Federal Oil and Gas Decisions Through the National Environmental Policy Act Process.</i>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>SOILS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain or improve the chemical, physical, and biotic properties of soil.</i>					
<b>Soils</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Prevent, if possible, or limit accelerated soil loss, minimize degradation of soils, and control sedimentation.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Maintain or improve adequate vegetation and ground cover (including biological soil crusts and litter) to promote soil health, productivity, and stability.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Soils</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Prior to authorization of surface-disturbing activities, the BLM would evaluate the activity on a case-by-case basis and, if necessary, apply measures (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ), relocate the activity to a more suitable soil type, or deny the authorization. If necessary, an on-site inspection would evaluate the activity.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Approved surface-disturbing activities would include reclamation plans as described in the <i>Reclamation Appendix</i> . These would be site-specific plans that incorporated the project’s complexity, environmental concerns, and reclamation potential.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Monitoring would occur as described in the <i>Monitoring Appendix</i> .				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported air quality, water quality, properly functioning uplands and riparian areas, diverse vegetation, and wildlife habitat would be achieved for all resource uses by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Soils</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – Mechanical treatment of vegetation on slopes greater than 15% would be avoided (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of the soil resource on slopes 25% or greater would not be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing activities on slopes 25% or greater would be avoided unless the activity could be effectively designed to limit impacts to an acceptable level. <sup>2,4</sup>		
	Use of ground-based harvest and slash-treating equipment would be limited to 40% slopes and less	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation on slopes 25% or greater. <sup>1</sup>	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on slopes 25% or greater. <sup>1</sup>		

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>(BLM 2003k).</p> <p>Surface-disturbing activities on slopes 30% or greater would be avoided unless the activity can be mitigated (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on slopes over 30% (BLM 1985c).<sup>1</sup></p>				
<b>Soils</b>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Mechanical treatment of vegetation on highly erodible soils would be avoided (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing on sensitive soils would be offered with lease terms.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of sensitive soils would not be allowed.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on sensitive soils.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities on sensitive soils would be avoided unless the activity could be effectively designed to limit impacts to an acceptable level.<sup>2,3</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on sensitive soils.<sup>1</sup></p>		
<b>WATER RESOURCES</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain or enhance the beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater.</i>					
	<b>Objective 1</b> – Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and standards.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Support natural surface water flow regimes.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Protect water resources from point source and nonpoint source pollution.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Water</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would consult and coordinate activities with other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies as required by the Watershed Protection and Flood Control Act (16 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) and the Clean Water				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).				
<b>Water</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM activities conducted would meet or exceed Montana water quality standards. The BLM would manage or control contributions of nonpoint source pollution from federal lands and BLM-authorized activities to all receiving waters. The BLM would establish or maintain vegetated buffer zones to protect water resources.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would file water rights with the State of Montana for water-related BLM projects on public land.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All wells and associated facilities authorized by the BLM would be designed to protect groundwater systems.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported air quality, water quality, properly functioning uplands and riparian areas, diverse vegetation, and wildlife habitat would be achieved for all resource uses by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Water</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on 100-year floodplains of major rivers. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of the floodplain would not be allowed on 100-year floodplains.  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on 100-year floodplains. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of the floodplain would be avoided on 100-year floodplains unless no other practicable alternative existed, in which case the activities would only be allowed with measures to minimize impacts. <sup>2,4</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on 100-year floodplains. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would avoid floodplains. If avoidance were not possible, surface-disturbing activities would be approved with specialized design features to maintain or improve the functionality and resiliency of the floodplain. <sup>2,4</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on floodplains. <sup>1</sup>	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Water	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on waterbodies and streams.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of the waterbody or stream would not be allowed on waterbodies and streams.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on waterbodies and streams.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that did not benefit the functionality of the waterbody or stream would be avoided on waterbodies and streams and only allowed with measures to minimize impacts.<sup>2, 5</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on waterbodies and streams.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed on waterbodies and streams with measures to minimize impacts.<sup>2, 3</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on waterbodies and streams.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing activities that impacted or did not benefit the functionality of the perennial or intermittent stream (as indicated by obligate wetland species or hydric soils), lake, pond, or reservoir would be avoided on these areas. If avoidance were not possible, surface-disturbing activities would be approved with specialized design features to minimize impacts to water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on perennial or intermittent streams (as indicated by obligate wetland species or hydric soils), lakes, ponds, and reservoirs.<sup>1</sup></p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Water	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface water impoundments would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – New surface water impoundments would be allowed only if the natural flow regime and watershed functionality would be maintained within the 6<sup>th</sup> order watershed. It must be shown that all of the following would occur:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peak flows would be sufficient to maintain healthy channel characteristics and sediment transport;</li> <li>2. Riparian vegetation would not decline;</li> <li>3. Aquatic wildlife habitat would not decline; and</li> <li>4. Watershed functionality would not be reduced (see</li> </ol>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface water impoundments would be allowed with measures designed to maintain the natural flow regime and watershed functionality.<sup>2</sup></p>		<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface water impoundments would be allowed with measures designed to maintain the natural flow regime, water quality, and riparian and watershed functionality and resiliency.<sup>2</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		the <i>Best Management Practices</i> and <i>Reclamation Appendices</i> ).			
<b>Water</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Flow-control devices on all existing and new water wells and spring developments on BLM-administered land would be installed on a case-by-case basis.	<b>Action 10</b> – Flow-control devices would be installed on all existing and new water wells and spring developments on BLM-administered land. All spring developments would be designed to ensure that the riparian community was maintained or improved and adequate water left at the source for wildlife.	<b>Action 10</b> – Flow-control devices would be installed on all new water wells and spring developments on BLM-administered land. New spring developments would be designed to ensure that the riparian community was maintained or improved and adequate water left at the source for wildlife.		<b>Action 10</b> – New water wells would be designed to conserve water and protect resources at the outfall. New spring developments would be designed to ensure that the riparian community and water quality was maintained or improved and adequate water left at the source for wildlife.
<b>VEGETATION</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Manage vegetation communities to restore, maintain, or enhance vegetation community health, connectivity, and diversity.</i>					
<b>Vegetation</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Native plant communities that exist in a diversity of plant associations (including multi-aged stands of trees and shrubs and healthy understory vegetation and sufficient diversity in structure, age class, and species composition) to support nutrient cycling and energy flows.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Vegetation that demonstrates health, vigor, and reproductive success. Shrub overstory in a variety of spatial arrangements and sizes across landscapes that include large contiguous blocks, islands, and corridors.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Plant communities that reflect the potential natural community or the desired plant community appropriate for the site in the context of climate change.				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Adequate organic matter (ground litter and standing dead material) in sufficient quantities to control erosion, replenish nutrients, maintain soil health, and meet the needs of wildlife.				
	<b>Objective 5</b> – Maintain healthy vegetation (primarily forest, grassland, and riparian communities) while providing for plant resiliency.				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<b>Objective 6</b> – Rehabilitate or restore shrub and shrub or grassland communities that do not meet desired future condition because of habitat fragmentation or encroachment by conifers, decadent woody species, invasive species, or undesirable species.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Vegetation</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported wildlife, water quality, and fisheries would be achieved by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Vegetative manipulation (or prescriptive) treatments (chemical, fire, biological, manual, and mechanical) would be consistent with the guidelines stated in the <i>Final and ROD Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement</i> (BLM 2007d and 2007g), <i>Vegetation Treatments on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report</i> (BLM 2007c), <i>Final and ROD Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States</i> (BLM 1991a), <i>Northwest Area Noxious Weed Program Environmental Impact Statement</i> (BLM 1985a), <i>Supplement to the Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program Final Environmental Impact Statement</i> (BLM 1987), and BLM manuals and handbooks H-1740-1, H-1740-2, 1740, 1745, 4180, Technical Reference 1730-1 <i>Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations</i> (Elzinga, Salzer, and Willoughby 1998), and 6840, <i>Special Status Species Management</i> , as appropriate.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Seeding and planting projects would be conducted with locally gathered native materials (seed, seedlings, or other materials) or, if local materials were not available, appropriate non-local native or nonnative materials.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Treatments (fertilization, mechanical treatments, or other activities) would be prioritized in areas in which restoration would enhance special status species habitats, establish (wildfire) fuel breaks, and restore wildlife habitats.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Guidelines from the <i>National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy</i> (BLM 2004i) and the <i>Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage-grouse in Montana—Final</i> (Montana Sage-grouse Work Group 2005) would be incorporated in vegetation treatments and habitat restoration projects conducted in sage-grouse habitats.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Monitoring would be conducted as described in the <i>Monitoring Appendix</i> .				
	<b>Action 7</b> – Special status plant species would be maintained by occurrence according to distribution from the Montana Natural Heritage Tracker program. Protection and mitigation measures would address site-specific impacts.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Haying, nonnative</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Harvesting of nonnative hay or seed would be allowed when consistent with	<b>Action 8</b> – Unless the actions were warranted for fuel reduction, harvesting of nonnative hay or	<b>Action 8</b> – Harvesting of nonnative hay or seed would not be allowed in sage-grouse habitat but	<b>Action 8</b> – Harvesting of nonnative hay or seed would be allowed when consistent with	<b>Action 8</b> – Unless the actions were warranted for fuel reduction or wildlife habitat enhancement,

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	allotment objectives. The BLM would have the option to reduce AUMs during the year the hay is cut if the cutting of hay would result in a reduction of the carrying capacity for the allotment.	seed would not be allowed in the planning area.	would be allowed in the remainder of the planning area. Livestock grazing would be excluded and AUMs suspended only in the areas in which harvesting of nonnative hay or seed occurs. The hay would be sold on a per acre basis according to fair market value as established by the Montana Department of Agricultural Statistics.	allotment objectives. The BLM would have the option to reduce AUMs during the year the hay was cut if the cutting of hay resulted in a reduction of the carrying capacity for the allotment.	harvesting of nonnative hay or seed would not be allowed in the planning area.
<b>Haying, native</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – Harvesting of native hay or seed would be allowed when consistent with allotment objectives.	<b>Action 9</b> – Unless the actions were warranted for hazardous fuels reduction (or wildlife habitat enhancement), harvesting of native hay would not be allowed. Harvesting of native seed would be allowed for the purposes of seed collection for the Seeds of Success project and reclamation,	<b>Action 9</b> – Harvesting of native hay would only be allowed where the area to be hayed was included or fenced into private lands harvested for native hay and used for agricultural purposes. The hay would be sold on a per acre basis according to fair market value as established by the Montana	<b>Action 9</b> – Harvesting of native hay or seed would be allowed when consistent with allotment objectives.	<b>Action 9</b> – Unless the actions were warranted for hazardous fuels reduction (or wildlife habitat enhancement), harvesting of native hay would not be allowed. Harvesting of native seed would be allowed for purposes of collecting seed and for reclamation, restoration, and emergency

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		restoration, and emergency stabilization and rehabilitation projects.	Department of Agricultural Statistics.		stabilization and rehabilitation projects.
<b>HARDWOOD DRAWS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Protect, maintain, restore, and enhance hardwood draw communities to achieve multi-aged stands that are healthy, structurally diverse, and reproductively successful. Rejuvenate older stands and enhance seedling recruitment. Management actions would be dependent on the species found in a particular plant association (green ash, buffaloberry, chokecherry, skunkbush sumac, quaking aspen, cottonwoods, and other shrub species).</i>					
<b>Hardwood Draws</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – A desired future condition of healthy and resilient hardwood draw communities and plant associations within suitable habitats. Vigorous and reproductively successful plant species associated with hardwood draws that demonstrate diversity in age, class, and structure, provide habitat for wildlife, and exhibit a tendency to spread into suitable but unoccupied habitats.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Manage existing stands of hardwood draw species to achieve mixed-age classes in the planning area over the long term.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Focus treatment programs on reestablishment, recruitment, seedling and sapling survival, and achievement of a healthy and diverse community structure.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Hardwood Draws</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would approximate a natural disturbance regime in selected hardwood draws using, but not limited to, a combination of treatments, including prescribed fire, wildfire, manual cutting, mechanical removal, root ripping, herbicides, and managed herbivory.				
<b>SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES PLANTS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain or improve the quality of special status plant species and their habitat by managing known occurrences and public land activities to benefit those species.</i>					
<b>Hardwood Draws</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Maintain the natural diversity and composition of special status species plant communities on a landscape scale while recognizing the impacts of natural processes (e.g., fire).				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Require assessments (including surveys and evaluations) for special status plant species prior to project implementation to determine the presence or absence of special status species if suitable habitat were present.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Manage land tenure adjustments, easements, and interagency cooperation to conserve and improve habitat connectivity.				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Ensure that the reproductive viability and habitat needs of special status plants are not affected by the BLM management actions that would contribute to their decline or listing.				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Special Status Species Plants</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would consider potential adverse effects and recommend mitigation measures for affected special status plant species in site-specific, project-level planning documents.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would cooperate and collaborate with federal, tribal, and state agencies and private landowners to actively conserve and improve special status plant species habitats and populations. The BLM would educate and promote awareness of special status plant species.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – When potential special status plant species might be affected, the BLM would adjust management activity to protect or enhance the species occurrences.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would complete its obligations under applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq., including completion of any required procedures for conference or consultation. <sup>1</sup>				
<b>RIPARIAN AND WETLAND AREAS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Manage riparian and wetland systems to be healthy, diverse, and functional.</i>					
<b>Riparian and Wetland Areas</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Improve functional-at risk riparian and wetland areas toward proper functioning condition (PFC) or a higher ecological status.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Improve nonfunctional riparian and wetland areas toward PFC or a higher ecological status.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Maintain or exceed PFC in riparian and wetland areas. Some riparian and wetland areas would be managed for conservation at a higher ecological status than PFC.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Riparian and Wetland Areas</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would establish or maintain vegetated buffer zones to protect riparian and wetland areas from activities outside of these areas.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would ensure that standards for water quality, properly functioning riparian areas, and habitat requirements for special status species, wildlife, and fisheries were met or exceeded.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would, on a case-by-case basis, use temporary or permanent enclosures (e.g., in woody draw or riparian areas) to promote species diversity, recruitment, and ecosystem functionality.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Riparian and Wetland Areas</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within riparian areas. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in riparian and wetland areas.	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would avoid riparian and wetland areas. If avoidance were not possible, surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be authorized in riparian and wetland areas with approved specialized design features to improve or maintain PFC. <sup>2,6</sup>	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing activities, if feasible, would avoid riparian and wetland areas and be avoided within 300 feet of the boundary of riparian	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	Linear underground facilities crossing wetlands, perennial streams, intermittent streams, or riparian areas would be allowed.	Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in riparian and wetland areas.	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in riparian and wetland areas. <sup>1</sup>		and wetland areas. If avoidance were not feasible, surface-disturbing activities would be allowed with approved specialized design features to maintain or exceed functionality and resiliency. <sup>2,7</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in riparian and wetland areas. <sup>1</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation within 300 feet of riparian and wetland areas. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Riparian and Wetland Areas</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – New spring developments would be authorized and fenced.		<b>Action 6</b> – New spring developments would not be authorized in riparian and wetland areas.	<b>Action 6</b> – New spring developments would be designed to maintain or exceed the integrity, functionality, and resiliency (including water quality and habitat for fisheries and wildlife) of the associated wetland, riparian area, stream, or creek.	
	<b>Action 7</b> – No trough or tank would be installed in areas containing	<b>Action 7</b> – New livestock water developments (troughs or tanks)	<b>Action 7</b> – New livestock water developments (troughs or tanks) would be located at least 0.25 miles from perennial and intermittent streams. This would not	<b>Action 7</b> – New livestock water developments (troughs or tanks)	<b>Action 7</b> – New livestock water developments (troughs or tanks)

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>important riparian and wetland vegetation unless no possible alternative site exists (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Troughs or tanks would be installed in riparian and wetland areas on a case-by-case basis (BLM 1985c).</p>	would be located at least 0.25 miles from riparian and wetland areas, waterbodies, and streams.	include ephemeral streams or reservoirs. Approved deviations would be allowed if the water development benefited resources.		would be located and designed to maintain or exceed the integrity, functionality, and resiliency (including water quality and habitat for fisheries and wildlife) of the associated wetland, riparian area, stream, or creek.
<b>INVASIVE SPECIES</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Manage vegetation communities to restore, maintain, or enhance vegetation community health and diversity.</i>					
<b>Invasive Species</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Manage for healthy native plant communities by reducing, preventing expansion of, or eliminating the occurrence of invasive species.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Manage uses on BLM-administered wetlands, waterbodies, and other water resources consistent with Montana state law to minimize the potential spread of aquatic invasive species.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Invasive Species</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would manage invasive species in accordance with the Final (and Record of Decision) <i>Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement</i> (BLM 2007d and 2007g), which provides an integrated approach designed to improve the overall quality of public lands for wildlife, watershed, recreation, and livestock forage.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Pest management would utilize Integrated Weed/Pest Management (using, but not limited, to manual, mechanical, prescribed fire, chemical, biological, cultural, and educational methods) and work within federal guidelines, laws, statutes, plans, and regulations to manage infestations of invasive species on the BLM, Montana, and local invasive species lists.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Weed management prescriptions would be included in all new treatment projects and incorporated into existing contracts, agreements, task forces, designated weed-free management areas, and land use authorizations that resulted in ground-disturbing activities.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Certified weed-seed-free forage (hay, grains, cubes, pelletized feeds, straw, and mulch) would be used or authorized on BLM-administered lands.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The BLM would evaluate the effectiveness of weed management activities at project- and field-office levels.				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Contractor and BLM equipment would be power-washed to remove weed seeds and plant parts before entering and leaving ground-disturbing project areas when necessary or as required. All boats and other aquatic recreation vehicles would be power-washed to remove weed seeds, plant parts, and invasive species before entering and leaving waterbodies on BLM-administered lands.</p>				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Invasive Species</b>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed on BLM-administered lands in areas of invasive species infestations.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed on BLM-administered lands in areas of invasive species infestations.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed on BLM-administered lands in areas of invasive species infestation only with approved mitigation measures in place.<sup>2</sup></p>		
	<p><b>Action 8</b> – There would be no priority treatment areas identified. Invasive species would continue to be treated on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Priority treatment areas would be any areas in which Montana-designated invasive species were present.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Using Early Detection Rapid Response, priority treatment areas would be designated in publicly accessible areas, riparian areas, and special status species habitat areas.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Priority treatment areas would be areas in which the surrounding private lands were within an active invasive species treatment area and in which the respective private landowners were actively controlling invasive species.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Using Early Detection Rapid Response, treatment areas would be prioritized in publicly accessible areas, riparian areas, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation areas, and special status species habitat areas. The rest of the public lands in the planning area would be next in priority.</p>
<b>FISH AND WILDLIFE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide functional wildlife habitat.</i>					
<b>Fish and Wildlife</b>	<p><b>Objective 1</b> – Maintain and enhance habitats to support well-distributed, healthy, and diverse populations of wildlife and fish species.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 2</b> – Cooperate with entities to identify decommissioned power lines for potential removal.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 3</b> – Cooperate with entities to identify existing power lines that do not meet the most recent guidance</p>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	from the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (currently 2006).				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Incorporate habitat objectives into coordinated resource management, habitat management, surface-disturbance-related plans, or allotment management plans (AMPs) for the improvement or maintenance of wildlife habitat.				
	<b>Objective 5</b> – Prioritize installment of fish screens on all diversions within 10 years.				
	<b>Objective 6</b> – Prioritize making all culverts, oil skimmers, and road and trail crossings fish passable within 10 years.				
	<b>Objective 7</b> – Manage prairie streams and rivers according to federal and state laws, scientific principles, and proactive management to protect, maintain, and enhance healthy populations of aquatic wildlife including fish, amphibians, reptiles, bivalves, and aquatic arthropods (invertebrates and crustaceans).				
	<b>Objective 8</b> – Manage for healthy native aquatic, stream, and riparian communities by reducing or preventing the expansion of or eliminating the occurrence of nonnative invasive species.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Fish and Wildlife</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would maintain, restore, or improve habitat for sensitive, threatened, endangered, and candidate species for federal listing.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would manage prairie streams to meet or exceed PFC and provide functional and resilient habitat for aquatic species (see the Chapter 3, <i>Riparian and Wetland Areas</i> section for a more complete description of PFC).				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported air quality, water quality, properly functioning uplands and riparian areas, diverse vegetation, and wildlife habitat would be achieved for all resource uses by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Fish and Wildlife, Aquatics</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of designated reservoirs with fisheries (4,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>  Geophysical exploration would be allowed within	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs unless the activities were beneficial to aquatic wildlife habitat (10,000 acres). <sup>2,7</sup>	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be avoided in and within 0.25 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs and would only be approved with design features to minimize impacts (3,800 acres). <sup>2,4</sup>	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed adjacent to designated sport-fish reservoirs with BLM-approved design features to minimize impacts (170 acres). <sup>2,4</sup>  Oil and gas leasing	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be avoided in and within 0.25 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs and would only be approved with design features to mitigate impacts to fishery resources and the user

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	those acres.	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs (10,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs (4,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	would be offered by designated sport-fish reservoirs with design features to minimize impacts (CSU) (167 acres). <sup>1</sup>	experience (3,800 acres). <sup>2,4</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of designated sport-fish reservoirs (4,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>
Fish and Wildlife, Aquatics	<b>Action 6</b> – Fish passage would be required on a case-by-case basis for new culverts, oil skimmers, and road and rail crossings.	<b>Action 6</b> – Newly constructed or replacement stream-crossing structures (culverts, oil skimmers, and road and trail crossings) would be built to enable fish passage and protect habitat from erosion and damming streams.		<b>Action 6</b> – Fish passage would be required on a case-by-case basis for new culverts, oil skimmers, and road and rail crossings.	<b>Action 6</b> – Newly constructed or replacement stream-crossing structures (culverts, oil skimmers, and road and trail crossings) would be built to enable fish passage and protect habitat from erosion and damming streams. There may be instances where the BLM uses culverts or road crossings to block nonnative invasive species from migrating upstream or downstream.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Fish and Wildlife, Terrestrial</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – For migratory bird conservation and to restore, enhance, and maintain habitats for all birds, the BLM would use the 2010 MOU between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and BLM, <i>To Promote the Conservation of Migratory Birds</i> , and Executive Order 13186 (January 1, 2001). The <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> outlines the recommended strategies for migratory birds.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Predator control would be permitted subject to the stipulations outlined in the annual <i>Montana Wildlife Services Animal Damage Management Work Plan and Fiscal Year Summary Report for the Bureau of Land Management</i> . Predator control areas not subject to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Damage Control would be subject to the same stipulations that apply to those counties where predators are managed by the USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Overhead power lines, where authorized, would follow the recommendations in the most recent guidance from the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, currently 2006.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would follow and utilize wildlife conservation and management plans in which the BLM was a signatory in concert with its partners.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Refer to the <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> section for management actions concerning wildlife habitat.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 7</b> – Healthy sustainable rangelands that supported air quality, water quality, properly functioning uplands and riparian areas, diverse vegetation, and wildlife habitat would be achieved for all resource uses by meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Fish and Wildlife, Terrestrial</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Power lines would not be required to be buried (BLM 1996).  Within the Powder River RMP area, low-voltage power lines associated with oil and gas would be buried if feasible (BLM 2008i).	<b>Action 8</b> – The BLM would not authorize aboveground power lines unless burying the power lines was not technologically feasible.	<b>Action 8</b> – Power lines would be allowed with specialized design features to maintain the capability of habitats to support diverse and viable populations of all wildlife species associated with the specific habitat type.		

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Big Game Crucial Winter Range</b>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from December 1 to March 31 within Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (2,500,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on those acres during that same period (1,600,000 geophysical acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (1,600,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 2,300,000 mineral material acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (2,500,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas with specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the habitat (1,600,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 2,300,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (2,500,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas with specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the habitat (1,600,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 2,300,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (2,500,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed within Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas with specialized design features to maintain the habitat capable of supporting the long-term populations of wintering big game associated with this winter range (1,600,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 2,300,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation within Big Game Crucial Winter Range areas (2,500,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>
<b>Sharp-tailed Grouse Leks and Nesting Habitat</b>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Surface disturbance (other than water developments and fences) would not be authorized within 0.25 miles</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed on and within 4 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks with specialized</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks with</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks with specialized design</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks with</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<p>of sharp-tailed grouse leks (21,000 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Disturbance would not be authorized within 2 miles of a lek from March 1 to June 15 (700,000 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks (42,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from March 1 to June 15 within 2 miles of a lek (1,500,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>design features to maintain the functionality of the sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat and lek site (1,300,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 3,000,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 4 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks (3,000,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat and lek site (700,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 1,400,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks (1,500,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>features to maintain the functionality of the sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat and lek site (700,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 1,400,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks (1,500,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>specialized design features to maintain the sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat and lek site at a level capable of supporting the long-term populations associated with the lek (700,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 1,400,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 2 miles of sharp-tailed grouse leks (1,500,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>
<b>Colonial Waterbirds (except interior least tern; see below)</b>	<b>Action 11</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of Double-crested	<b>Action 11</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of	<b>Action 11</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed with specialized design	<b>Action 11</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed with specialized design features to minimize	<b>Action 11</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>Cormorant and Great Blue Heron rookeries (90 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with lease terms (50 acres).</p>	<p>waterbird nesting colonies unless the project proponent submitted a plan that showed that the effects could be minimized.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or within 0.25 miles of waterbird nesting colonies (300 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>features to minimize disturbance to waterbird nesting colonies.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in waterbird nesting colonies (50 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>disturbance to waterbird nesting colonies.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in waterbird nesting colonies (50 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>waterbird nesting colonies if the project proponent submitted a plan that showed that the effects could be minimized (260 acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of waterbird nesting colonies (300 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>Bighorn Sheep Range</b> (68,000 BLM-administered surface acres; 56,000 locatable mineral acres; 98,000 mineral material acres; 98,000 oil and gas acres)</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within the designated Bighorn Sheep Range.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in the designated Bighorn Sheep Range.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered in the designated Bighorn Sheep Range with an NSO stipulation.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in the Bighorn Sheep Range with specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the habitat.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered in the designated Bighorn Sheep Range with a CSU stipulation.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in the Bighorn Sheep Range with specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the habitat.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered in the designated Bighorn Sheep Range with a CSU stipulation.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would require a plan to maintain bighorn sheep habitat and avoid or minimize habitat loss. The plan would need to be prepared by the proponent and approved by the AO.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					stipulation in the designated Bighorn Sheep Range. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Bighorn Sheep Range</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – Grazing permits for domestic sheep or goats would be renewed on a case-by-case basis within the Bighorn Sheep Range (68,000 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – Grazing permits for domestic sheep or goats would not be renewed and grazing applications for domestic sheep or goats would not be approved in or within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range (400,000 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – Grazing permits for domestic sheep or goats would not be renewed and grazing applications for domestic sheep or goats would not be approved in or within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range where the BLM administers 51% or more of the pasture.	<b>Action 13</b> – Grazing permits for domestic sheep or goats would be renewed and grazing applications for domestic sheep or goats would be approved in and within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range where the BLM administers 51% or more of the pasture.	<b>Action 13</b> – Grazing permits for domestic sheep or goats would be renewed on a case-by-case basis within the Bighorn Sheep Range (68,000 acres) and within a 14.3-mile buffer area.
	<b>Action 14</b> – Grazing of domestic sheep or goats for invasive species control would be approved within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range (400,000 acres).	<b>Action 14</b> – Grazing of domestic sheep or goats for invasive species control would not be approved in or within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range (400,000 acres).	<b>Action 14</b> – Grazing of domestic sheep or goats for invasive species control would be allowed with specialized design features in and within 14.3 miles of the Bighorn Sheep Range to effectively mitigate the potential impacts of interactions between domestic sheep and goats and wild bighorn sheep (400,000 acres). <sup>2</sup>		
<b>Prairie Falcon</b>	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing stipulation from March 1 to August 1 within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the	<b>Action 15</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of prairie falcon nest sites active within the past 7 years	<b>Action 15</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of prairie falcon nest sites active within the past 7 years with specialized design	<b>Action 15</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of prairie falcon nest sites active within the past 2 years with specialized design	<b>Action 15</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of prairie falcon nest sites active within the past 7 years with

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	past 2 years (190,000 acres) (BLM 1996). <sup>1</sup>	(10,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 28,800 BLM-administered mineral acres).  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (18,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	features to minimize disturbance to the nest site and maintain functionality of the habitat (10,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 29,000 BLM-administered mineral acres). <sup>2</sup> Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (18,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	features to minimize disturbance to the nest site and maintain functionality of the habitat (10,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 29,000 BLM-administered mineral acres). <sup>2</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 2 years (18,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	specialized design features that maintained the habitat so that prairie falcons would not be precluded from using the nest site (10,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 29,000 BLM-administered mineral acres). <sup>2</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (18,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>
<b>SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES, FISH AND WILDLIFE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain, enhance, or restore habitats for special status fish and wildlife species.</i>					
<b>Special Status Species, Fish and Wildlife</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Conserve and enhance habitat for listed species so that BLM actions contribute to their delisting (6840, <i>Special Status Species Management</i> ).				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Conserve the needs of special status species and do not authorize any actions that may contribute to the need to list special status species (6840, <i>Special Status Species Management</i> ).				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Special Status Species, Fish and Wildlife</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would continue participation in the development and implementation of recovery plans, management plans, and conservation strategies for special status species (see the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> and the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> for more information).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would utilize the <i>Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan</i> and the <i>Montana Bald Eagle Management Guidelines: An Addendum to Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan</i> (Montana Bald Eagle Working Group 1994 and 2010).				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – The MCFO would work with the Montana Black-footed Ferret and Prairie Dog Working Groups to identify potential black-footed ferret reintroduction sites in the planning area.</p> <p><b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would complete its obligations under applicable requirements of the ESA, as amended, including completion of any required procedures for conference or consultation.<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Action 5</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).</p>				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<p><b>Special Status Species Raptors</b> (burrowing owl, bald eagle, golden eagle, ferruginous hawk, Swainson’s hawk, peregrine falcon, and northern goshawk)</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.5 miles of ferruginous hawk nest sites active within the past 2 years (50,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.5 miles of bald eagle nest sites active within the past 7 years and within bald eagle nesting habitat in riparian areas (49,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in peregrine falcon</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the past 7 years (61,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 89,000 mineral material acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (90,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the past 7 years with specialized design features to minimize disturbance to the nest site and maintain functionality of the habitat (61,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 89,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (90,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the past 2 years with specialized design features to minimize disturbance to the nest site and maintain functionality of the habitat (61,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 89,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 2 years (90,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 1</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in and within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the past 7 years with specialized design features that maintained the habitat so that raptors would not be precluded from using the nest site (61,000 BLM-administered surface acres and 89,000 mineral material acres).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of nest sites active within the past 7 years (90,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>nesting sites and within 1 mile of identified peregrine falcon nesting sites (0 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing stipulation from March 1 to August 1 within 0.5 miles of raptor nest sites active within the past 2 years (190,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p>				
<p><b>Piping Plover</b> (also see <i>Piping Plover ACEC</i>)</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as piping plover habitat (50,000).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as piping plover habitat (730 BLM-administered surface acres and 11,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as piping plover habitat unless the functionality of the habitat were maintained (730 BLM-administered surface acres and 11,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within wetlands identified as piping plover habitat (50,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in piping plover habitat if the habitat were maintained at a level capable of supporting long-term piping plover populations associated with the habitat (730 BLM-administered surface acres and 11,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing</p>	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		as piping plover habitat (50,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>			would be offered with a CSU stipulation in piping plover habitat (5,400 acres). <sup>1</sup>
<b>Interior Least Tern</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as interior least tern habitat (56,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as interior least tern habitat (9,300 BLM-administered surface acres and 73,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as interior least tern habitat (56,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as interior least tern habitat unless the functionality of the habitat were maintained (9,300 BLM-administered surface acres and 73,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of wetlands identified as interior least tern habitat (56,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>		<b>Action 8</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be avoided in and within 0.25 miles of interior least tern habitat (9,300 BLM-administered surface acres and 73,000 BLM-administered mineral acres).  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of interior least tern habitat (56,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Black-footed Ferrets</b>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Prior to surface disturbance, potential black-footed ferret habitat (prairie dog colonies [towns] and complexes 80 acres or more in size and not designated black-footed ferret reintroduction sites) would be examined to determine the absence or presence of black-footed ferrets. The findings of this examination may preclude use and occupancy or result in some restrictions to the operator’s plans.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with the above CSU.<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Action 10</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).</p>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Black-tailed Prairie Dogs</b>	<b>Action 11</b> – Management of black-tailed prairie dog colonies on public lands would be subject to the <i>Conservation Plan for Black-tailed and White-tailed Prairie Dogs in Montana</i> (Montana Prairie Dog Working Group 2002).				
	<b>Action 12</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Black-tailed Prairie Dogs</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – In the absence of black footed ferrets, oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (11,000 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – In the absence of black-footed ferrets, surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies.  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies (280,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 13</b> – In the absence of black-footed ferrets, surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.25 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies.  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.25 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies (96,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 13</b> – In the absence of black-footed ferrets, surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in black-tailed prairie dog colonies with specialized design features to maintain the functionality of the habitat. <sup>2</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in black-tailed prairie dog colonies (11,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 13</b> – In the absence of black-footed ferrets, surface-disturbing activities would be allowed within active or inactive black-tailed prairie dog colonies with specialized design features that maintained habitat capable of supporting the long-term population levels of the wildlife species associated with this habitat.  Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in black-tailed prairie dog colonies (11,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Pallid Sturgeon</b>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on waterbodies, streams, and 100-year floodplains of major rivers (500 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat (14,000 BLM-administered surface acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat (20,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat (14,000 BLM-administered surface acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat (20,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat unless the functionality of the habitat was maintained (14,000 BLM-administered surface acres).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of river and stream centerline identified as pallid sturgeon habitat (20,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities in and within 0.5 miles of rivers and streams identified as pallid sturgeon habitat would require a plan to maintain pallid sturgeon habitat (17,000 BLM-administered surface acres). The plan would need to be prepared by the proponent and implemented upon approval by the AO.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation. Prior to surface-disturbing or disruptive activities occurring in or within 0.5 miles of river or stream shorelines identified as pallid sturgeon habitat, a plan to maintain pallid sturgeon habitat would be prepared by the proponent and</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					implemented upon approval by the AO (24,000 acres). <sup>1</sup>
<b>SAGE-GROUSE</b>					
<p><i>Goal 1 – Provide for the long-term conservation, enhancement, restoration, and connectivity of the sagebrush steppe/mixed grass complex in a manner that supports sustainable sage-grouse populations and a healthy diversity and abundance of wildlife species.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 2 – Manage wet meadows to maintain a component of perennial forbs with diverse species richness relative to site potential (e.g., reference state) to facilitate brood rearing. Also conserve or enhance these wet meadow complexes to maintain or increase the amount of edge and cover within that edge to minimize elevated mortality during the late brood-rearing period. Where riparian areas and wet meadows meet PFC, strive to attain reference state vegetation relative to the ecological site description.</i></p>					
<b>Sage-grouse</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Identify opportunities for native plant restoration and initiate on an average of 500 acres annually.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Design and implement fuels treatments with an emphasis on protecting existing sagebrush ecosystems.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would identify areas in which acquisitions (including subsurface mineral rights) or conservation easements benefited sage-grouse habitat.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat</b> (see the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> for more information about sage-grouse habitat classifications)	<b>Action 3</b> – In the allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> ), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met and livestock grazing was a causal factor and site-specific analyses demonstrated that Standards for Rangeland Health could be achieved, grazing permits	<b>Action 3</b> – The allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> ), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met (including Sage-grouse Habitat), and livestock grazing was a causal factor in the failure to meet these standards, would be eliminated and closed to livestock grazing.	<b>Action 3</b> – The allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> ), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met (including Sage-grouse Habitat), livestock grazing was a causal factor in the failure to meet these standards, and there was no progress towards meeting Standards for Rangeland Health in the allotments within 5 years of the initial determination would be eliminated and closed to livestock grazing.		

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>would be issued with specific grazing seasons and livestock numbers and other terms and conditions designed to make progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.</p>				
<p><b>Sage-grouse</b></p>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – There would be no priority habitats. Sage-grouse habitat would be managed uniformly throughout the planning area.</p>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would designate the areas described below (see Map 7 and the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i>).</p> <p>General Habitat Areas would include approximately 1.1 million surface acres and 2.0 million oil and gas acres.</p> <p>Protection Priority Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim Management Areas and MFWP Core Areas (approximately</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would designate the areas described below (see Map 8 and the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i>).</p> <p>General Habitat Areas would include approximately 760,000 surface acres and 1.6 million oil and gas acres.</p> <p>Protection Priority Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Garfield Area (approximately 171,000 surface</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would designate the areas described below (see Map 9 and the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i>).</p> <p>General Habitat Areas would include approximately 560,000 surface acres and 1.0 million oil and gas acres.</p> <p>Protection Priority Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Garfield Area (approximately 171,000 surface</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would designate the areas described below (see Map 4 and the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i>).</p> <p>General Habitat Areas would include approximately 400,000 surface acres and 800,000 oil and gas acres.</p> <p>Protection Priority Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Garfield Area (approximately 171,000 surface acres and</li> </ul>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>1,067,000 surface acres and 2,077,000 oil and gas acres.</p> <p>Restoration Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cedar Creek Area (approximately 196,000 surface acres; 220,000 oil and gas acres); and</li> <li>• South Carter Area (approximately 64,000 surface acres and 169,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul>	<p>acres and 389,000 oil and gas acres);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Rosebud Area (approximately 112,000 surface acres and 150,000 oil and gas acres); and</li> <li>• Carter Area (approximately 314,000 surface acres and 530,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul> <p>Restoration Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cedar Creek Area (approximately 51,000 surface acres and 69,000 oil and gas acres); and</li> <li>• South Carter Area (approximately 64,000 surface acres and 169,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul>	<p>acres and 389,000 oil and gas acres); and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carter Area (approximately 314,000 surface acres and 530,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul> <p>Restoration Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cedar Creek Area (approximately 21,000 surface acres and 25,000 oil and gas acres); and</li> <li>• South Carter Area (approximately 58,000 surface acres and 133,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul>	<p>389,000 oil and gas acres);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Rosebud Area (173,000 surface acres and 238,000 oil and gas acres); and</li> <li>• Carter Area (approximately 448,000 surface acres and 776,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul> <p>Restoration Areas would include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decker area (approximately 8,300 surface acres and 69,000 oil and gas acres);</li> <li>• Cedar Creek Area (approximately 29,000 surface acres and 43,000 oil and gas acres);</li> <li>• South Carter Area (approximately 64,000 surface acres and 169,000 oil</li> </ul>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					and gas acres); and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a source population area (approximately 8,000 surface acres and 8,000 oil and gas acres).</li> </ul>
<b>SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT – GENERAL HABITAT AREAS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Within General Habitat Areas, maintain habitat for viable sage-grouse populations to promote movement and genetic diversity. Maintain, restore, or enhance sage-grouse habitat and connectivity between sagebrush habitats with emphasis on habitats occupied by sage-grouse.</i>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Maintain the integrity of sage-grouse habitat and promote movement and genetic diversity to support sustainable sage-grouse populations.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Enhance general sage-grouse habitat to replace population declines in areas elsewhere within the habitat.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas</b> (see the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> for more information about sage-grouse habitat classifications)	<b>Action 1</b> – Where deemed effective, water developments would be managed to reduce the spread of West Nile virus (see BMPs identified in the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Where restoration of disturbed areas was required, the BLM would follow the guidelines in the <i>Fish and Wildlife</i> and <i>Reclamation Appendices</i> .				
	<b>Action 3</b> – High-voltage power lines would be allowed (see the <i>Lands and Realty</i> section for further guidance).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Riparian communities would continue to be managed to meet Standards for Rangeland Health (Standard 2) to ensure riparian areas and wetlands were in PFC. The BLM would enhance or restore riparian composition and structure beyond PFC in riparian areas where and when appropriate for other resource values (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface disturbance (other than water developments and fences) would not be authorized	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would not be allowed on or within	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would not be allowed on or	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would not be allowed on or	<b>Action 6</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be avoided on and within 2

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (5,000 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Disturbance would not be authorized within 2 miles of a lek from March 1 to June 15 (220,000) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (11,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing stipulation from March 1 to June 15 in sage-grouse nesting habitat within 2 miles of a lek (540,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from</p>	<p>4 miles of leks except when the activity maintained sage-grouse habitat functionality.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 4 miles of leks (1,100,000 BLM-administered surface acres; 2,000,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>within 3.1 miles of leks except when the activity maintained sage-grouse habitat functionality.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 3.1 miles of leks (760,000 BLM-administered surface acres; 1,600,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>within 2 miles of leks except when the activity maintained sage-grouse habitat.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 2 miles of leks (560,000 BLM-administered surface acres; 1,000,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>miles of leks except when the activity maintained sage-grouse habitat.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation on and within 2 miles of leks (400,000 BLM-administered surface acres; 800,000 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<p>December 1 to March 31 within crucial winter range for wildlife (68,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Locatable mineral entry and location would be open (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Renewable energy would be open (solar or wind) (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>ROWs would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Season-of-use and livestock numbers for grazing permits would be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>No continuous noise restrictions would be applied except for</p>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>programmatic guidance as outlined in the Supplement to the Montana Statewide Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Amendment of the Powder River and Billings Resource Management Plans (e.g., restrict noise levels from production facilities to 50 decibels; 4,100,000 acres) (BLM 2008i). There would be no noise restrictions in the remainder of the planning area.</p> <p>Use of heavy equipment that exceeds 50 decibels would be restricted within 2 miles of a lek from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. during April 1 to</p>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>June 30 (300,000 acres) (BLM 2008i).</p> <p><b>Action 7</b> – Power lines would not be required to be buried (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas low-voltage power lines would be buried if feasible (BLM 2008i).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – The BLM would not authorize aboveground low-voltage power lines on sage-grouse winter occurrence points, winter concentration areas, leks, and within 4 miles of leks (1,000,000 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – All low-voltage power lines would be buried on sage-grouse winter occurrence points, winter concentration areas, leks and within 3.1 miles of a lek unless the power lines could be sited or designed in a manner that maintained the functionality of the habitat (760,000 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – All low-voltage power lines would be buried on sage-grouse winter occurrence points, winter concentration areas, leks and within 2 miles of a lek unless not technologically feasible (560,000 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Low-voltage power lines would be buried on and within 2 miles of a lek if technologically feasible (560,000 acres).</p>
<p><b>SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT – PROTECTION PRIORITY AREAS</b></p>					
<p><i>Goal 1 – In cooperation with other conservation partners, maintain or increase sage-grouse abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing, or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which populations depend.</i></p>					
<p><i>Goal 2 – Where suitable conservation actions cannot be achieved, seek to acquire state and private lands with intact subsurface mineral estate by donation, purchase, or exchange in order to best conserve, enhance, or restore sage-grouse habitat.</i></p>					
<p><b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</b> (see the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> for more information about sage-grouse habitat classifications)</p>	<p><b>Objective 1</b> – Manage sage-grouse habitat to maintain or increase sage-grouse populations.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 2</b> – Maximize the integrity and quality of the sage-grouse habitat through the management of direct and indirect impacts.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 3</b> – Restore or enhance degraded sage-grouse habitat.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 4</b> – Initiate restoration on 500 acres annually.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 5</b> – To maintain or increase current populations, manage or restore priority areas so that at least 70% of the land cover provides adequate sagebrush habitat to meet sage-grouse needs.</p>				
	<p><b>Objective 6</b> – Prioritize implementation of restoration projects based on environmental variables that improve the probability of project success in areas most likely to benefit sage-grouse.</p>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Where deemed effective, water developments would be managed to reduce the spread of West Nile virus (see BMPs identified in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Where restoration of disturbed areas was required, the BLM would follow the guidelines in the <i>Fish and Wildlife and Reclamation Appendices</i> .				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Where the federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in nonfederal ownership, the BLM would apply appropriate fluid mineral BMPs (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ) to surface development.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The BLM would approve withdrawal proposals not associated with mineral activity when the land management was consistent with sage-grouse conservation measures (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ). Withdrawal proposals would be evaluated at the project level.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – In areas with minority federal ownership, an additional, effective mitigation agreement would be included for any disposal of federal land. As a final preservation measure, consideration should be given to pursuing a permanent conservation easement.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – Motorized travel would be limited to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails, at a minimum, until travel management was complete and routes were either designated or closed.				
	<b>Action 8</b> –The BLM would emphasize management of the transportation system to reduce impacts to natural resources from authorized roads and trails (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ). The BLM would also stress closing and restoring unauthorized user-created roads and trails to prevent resource damage.				
	<b>Action 9</b> –Priority for travel planning could change through implementation and monitoring based on resource needs, special status species (including greater sage-grouse), funding, and staffing.				
	<b>Action 10</b> – New roads and trails determined to be necessary for permanent or long-term use as part of BLM’s transportation system would be constructed subject to NEPA and approved engineering standards. Consideration would be given to use demands, location, safety, and resource constraints when determining the level of road necessary, in accordance with BLM Manuals 9113 and 9114.				
	<b>Action 11</b> – Special status species (including greater sage-grouse) would be included as one of the criteria used in making route designations (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 12</b> – The BLM would issue special recreation use permits as appropriate for commercial, competitive, and special events subject to guidelines in BLM Handbook 2930, resource capabilities, social conflict concerns, professional qualifications, public safety, and public needs. For example, applications for special recreation permits in greater sage-grouse priority habitat areas may be denied if approval of the permit would adversely impact sage-grouse or sage-grouse habitat.				
	<b>Action 13</b> – New ROW facilities would be located within or adjacent to existing ROWs to the extent practical.				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Existing power lines identified for electrocution or collision problems for wildlife or those that did not meet APLIC standards on public lands would be modified to prevent wildlife electrocution. The BLM would consider opportunities to remove or modify existing power lines (e.g., burying, anti-perching devices, or line location).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 15</b> – Terms and conditions for ROW corridors and development areas would incorporate BMPs and conservation actions as applicable (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 16</b> – Upon project completion, roads used for commercial access on public lands would be reclaimed unless, based on site-specific analysis, the route provided specific benefits for public access and did not contribute to resource conflicts.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 17</b> – Site-specific greater sage-grouse habitat and management objectives would be developed for BLM-administered land. These objectives would be incorporated into the respective AMPs or livestock grazing permits as appropriate. Specific objectives would be developed through NEPA analysis conducted in accordance with the permit or lease renewal process to conserve, enhance, or restore sage-grouse habitat based on ecological site descriptions and assessments (including within wetland and riparian areas). See the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> for mitigation practices and conservation actions to be included as appropriate in permit renewals and AMPs, descriptions of land health evaluations, and seasonal habitat considerations.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 18</b> – Cooperative efforts to utilize permittee or lessee monitoring and integrated ranch planning would be emphasized where opportunities occurred.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 19</b> – Temporary stocking rate adjustments would be completed in response to changing conditions (drought, fire, and other circumstances) and desired vegetative response (e.g., livestock use to modify vegetation).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 20</b> – Riparian communities would continue to be managed to meet Standards for Rangeland Health (Standard 2) to ensure that riparian areas and wetlands were in PFC. The BLM would enhance or restore riparian composition and structure beyond PFC in riparian areas where and when appropriate for other resource values (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 21</b> – Forage treatments that conserved, enhanced, or restored greater sage-grouse habitat would be allowed (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 22</b> – Range improvements would be constructed to manage use of vegetation to support multiple use resource management.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 23</b> – Existing structural range improvements and location of supplements (salt or protein blocks) would be evaluated to make sure that they conserved, enhanced, or restored sage-grouse habitat. Fences in high-risk areas (based on proximity to leks, lek size, and topography) would be removed, modified, or marked to reduce outright sage-grouse strikes and mortality. The presence of invasive species associated with existing range improvements would be monitored and treated.</p>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</b></p>	<p><b>Action 24</b> – If monitoring data demonstrated that livestock use on an allotment was adversely affecting sage-grouse or their habitat, the terms and conditions of grazing permits may be modified (43 CFR 4130.3, 4130.3-1, 4130.3-2), or changes in active use (43 CFR 4110.3-3) could be considered to meet the Standards for Rangeland Health as described in 43 CFR 4180, the field office Standards for Rangeland Health and guidelines for livestock grazing management, or to otherwise manage, maintain, or improve sage-grouse habitat. Length (duration) of rest from livestock grazing would be considered following fire events.</p>				
	<p>Allotments wholly located within Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Area habitat would be considered for retirement where the base property owner relinquished their preference.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 25</b> – Throughout the planning area, BLM-authorized activities associated with all resource and resource use programs would be subject to mitigation or minimization guidelines and BMPs found in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 26</b> – Terms and conditions would be applied to mining activities (within the constraints of the Mining Law) to meet land health standards for uplands, riparian and wetland areas, water quality, air quality, and native plant and animal species (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 27</b> – Area-wide terms, conditions, or other special considerations needed to protect sage-grouse values would be implemented through coal screen criteria (43 CFR 3461).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 28</b> – The BLM would include mitigation practices and conservation actions as permit COAs when approving exploration and development activities through completion of the environmental record of review (43 CFR 3162.5), including appropriate documentation of compliance with NEPA.</p>				
<p>Overall consideration would be given to minimizing the impacts to sage-grouse through a project design that avoided, minimized, reduced, rectified, or adequately compensated for direct and indirect impacts to sage-grouse habitat or use and included applicable and technically feasible COAs (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i>). Selection and application of these measures would be based on current science and research on the effects to important breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and wintering areas. For proposed operations, the surface use plan of operations (SUPO) (see 43 CFR 3162-1(f)) would address, at a minimum, the anticipated noise, density and amount of disturbance, mechanical movement (e.g., pump jacks), permanent and temporary facilities, traffic, phases of development over time, off-site mitigation, and expected periods of use associated with the proposed project. Seasonal habitats or project features related to potential sage-grouse impacts that are not addressed in the SUPO based on site-specific or project-specific considerations would be noted in the project file along with a rationale for not including them. In this process the following, among other items, would be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the conservation measure is “reasonable” (43 CFR 3101.1-2) and consistent with valid existing rights,</li> <li>• whether the action is in conformance with the approved RMP, and</li> </ul>					

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation practices and conservation actions. See the <i>Minerals Appendix</i> for information about COAs.</li> </ul>				
Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas	<b>Action 29</b> – The BLM would protect sensitive status species habitat during suppression and prescribed fire activities as described in the national fire suppression guidelines and the current fire management plan (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 30</b> – Treatments to enhance special status species habitats would be prioritized.				
	<b>Action 31</b> – BMPs and techniques included in the BLM’s <i>Integrated Vegetation Management Handbook H-1740-2</i> would be used.				
	<b>Action 32</b> – Restoration of roads, primitive roads, and trails not designated in travel management plans would be conducted. This would also include primitive routes or roads that were not designated in WSAs and in lands with wilderness characteristics that have been selected for protection.				
	<b>Action 33</b> – Site-specific travel planning within Protection Priority Areas would be completed within a 5-year period following the signing of the ROD.				
	<b>Action 34</b> – Appropriate seed mixes would be used when restoring, reclaiming, or reseeded, and the use of transplanted shrubs (such as sagebrush) to meet habitat objectives for sensitive status species would be considered.				
	<p><b>Action 35</b> – The use of native species would be the preferred method of revegetating disturbed sites. Non-invasive introduced species that posed little threat of displacing adjacent native vegetative communities could be used to restore vegetation, including under (but not limited to) the circumstances described below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency rehabilitation is needed to control erosion or weed invasion and native seed is not available.</li> <li>A nonnative nurse crop is needed to establish native vegetation.</li> <li>The presence of a sensitive soil (as defined in the <i>Glossary</i>) or severe loss of topsoil on a disturbed site makes reestablishment of native vegetation unlikely (see the <i>Best Management Practices and Reclamation Appendices</i> for more information).</li> </ul>				
	<b>Action 36</b> – Any mechanical treatments within big sagebrush habitat crucial to sagebrush-obligate species would be used to enhance that resource (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> ).				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas	<b>Action 37</b> – An ACEC would not be designated for sage-grouse. Surface disturbance (other than water developments and	<b>Action 37</b> – Protection Priority Areas would be designated an ACEC. Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs)	<b>Action 37</b> – An ACEC would not be designated for sage-grouse. Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be allowed	<b>Action 37</b> – An ACEC would not be designated for sage-grouse. Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be allowed	<b>Action 37</b> – An ACEC would not be designated for sage-grouse. Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be avoided.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>fences) would not be authorized within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (5,600 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Disturbance would not be authorized within 2 miles of a lek from March 1 to June 15 (260,000 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (29,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing stipulation from March 1 to June 15 in sage-grouse nesting habitat within 2 miles of a lek (timing; 1,000,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>would not be allowed.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (2,100,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Upon expiration or termination of existing leases, nominations, or expressions of interest for parcels would not be accepted. Where drainage is likely, the BLM may issue new leases with an NSO stipulation with appropriate waiver, exception, and modification (WEM) criteria.</p> <p>Locatable mineral entry would be recommended for withdrawal subject to valid existing rights.</p>	<p>with the below restriction.</p> <p>The BLM would authorize 1 surface disturbance per 640 acres with a cumulative, direct, and indirect disturbance of no more than 3% of the sagebrush habitat per 640 acres from the point of the disturbance, as long as functional sage-grouse habitat and the associated populations were maintained at the same levels as trend areas. Disturbed areas would have to be fully reclaimed to pre-disturbance conditions or to a desired plant community before additional disturbance would be approved.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation (1,100,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>with the below restriction.</p> <p>The BLM would authorize surface disturbance with a cumulative, direct, and indirect disturbance of no more than 10% of the sagebrush habitat per 640 acres from the point of the disturbance, as long as functional sage-grouse habitat and the associated populations were maintained at the same levels as trend areas. Disturbed areas would have to be fully reclaimed to pre-disturbance conditions or to a desired plant community before additional disturbance would be approved.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation (920,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (1,400,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals and a notice of intent (NOI) and plan of development (POD) submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims (CFR 3809.100) or consider buyout.</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from December 1 to March 31 within crucial winter range for wildlife (68,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Locatable mineral entry and location would be open (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Renewable energy would be open (solar or wind) (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>ROWs would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Season-of-use and livestock numbers for grazing permits would be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p>		<p>Locatable mineral entry and location would be open.</p>	<p>Locatable mineral entry and location would be open.</p>	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>No continuous noise restrictions would be applied except for programmatic guidance as outlined in the SEIS (e.g., restrict noise levels from production facilities to 50 decibels) (BLM 2008i).</p> <p>Use of heavy equipment that exceeds 50 decibels would be restricted within 2 miles of a lek from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. during April 1 to June 30 (580,000 BLM-administered surface acres) (BLM 2008i).</p> <p>Power lines would not be required to be buried (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas low-voltage power lines</p>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	would be buried if feasible (BLM 2008i).				
<b>SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT – RESTORATION AREAS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Continue to allow for permitted uses while maintaining habitat for source populations of sage-grouse over the long term.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Manage habitat conditions needed to maintain sage-grouse populations in affected areas to facilitate future recovery of populations.</i>					
<i>Goal 3 – Maintain or expand habitats to promote sage-grouse movement and genetic diversity to ensure connectivity between sage-grouse habitat.</i>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Restore 5,000 acres or 100 acres per year of historical habitat to a point capable of supporting sage-grouse populations within 50 years.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Strive for no net loss of sage-grouse habitat within 10 years.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Manage habitat for viable populations in restoration areas.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Where deemed effective, water developments would be managed to reduce the spread of West Nile virus (see BMPs identified in the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Where restoration of disturbed areas was required, BLM would follow the guidelines in the <i>Fish and Wildlife and Reclamation Appendices</i> .				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Areas</b> (see the <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> for more information about sage-grouse habitat classifications)	<b>Action 4</b> – Surface disturbance (other than water developments and fences) would not be authorized within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (1,800 acres) (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 4</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be prohibited in sections within 1 mile of a lek that contained 3 or fewer wells.	<b>Action 4</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be allowed subject to maintenance of sage-grouse habitat functionality. <sup>8</sup>	<b>Action 4</b> – Surface-disturbing activities (including ROWs) would be allowed subject to timing and distance (60 days/200 meters).	<b>Action 4</b> – Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities (including ROWs) would be avoided in sage-grouse habitat unless the activities improved or maintained sage-grouse habitat.
	Disturbance would not be authorized within 2 miles of a lek from March 1	Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would be allowed in sections within 1 mile of a	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation that maintained sage-	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (160,000 acres).	Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation that

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>to June 15 (50,000 acres) (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (4,500 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing stipulation from March 1 to June 15 in grouse nesting habitat within 2 miles of a lek (140,000) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from December 1 to March 31 within crucial winter range for wildlife (68,000 acres) (BLM 1996).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Locatable mineral entry and location would be open</p>	<p>lek that contained 4 or more wells.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing for sections within 1 mile of a lek that contained 3 or fewer wells would be offered with an NSO stipulation (400,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Sections within 1 mile of a lek that contained 4 or more wells would be open for leasing with a CSU that maintained sage-grouse habitat functionality.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>grouse habitat functionality (200,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p>		<p>maintained sage-grouse habitat (289,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in the entire source population area (8,000 acres) and on leks in the entire Restoration Area.<sup>1</sup></p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<p>(BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Renewable energy would be open (solar or wind) (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>ROWs would be allowed (BLM 1985c).</p> <p>Season-of-use and livestock numbers for grazing permits would be determined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>No continuous noise restrictions except for programmatic guidance as outlined in the SEIS (e.g., restrict noise levels from production facilities to 50 decibels) (BLM 2008i).</p>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>Use of heavy equipment that exceeds 50 decibels would be restricted within 2 miles of a lek from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. during April 1 to June 30 (89,000 acres) (BLM 2008i).</p> <p>Power lines would not be required to be buried (BLM 1996).</p> <p>Oil and gas low-voltage power lines would be buried if feasible (BLM 2008i).</p>				
<b>SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT COMPENSATION</b> (compensation would be for Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas, Protection Priority Areas, and Restoration Areas).					
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Sage-grouse Habitat Compensation</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Habitat compensation would not be required.	<b>Action 1</b> – For surface-disturbing activities that did not improve sage-grouse habitat, habitat compensation would be required.	<b>Action 1</b> – For surface-disturbing activities that did not improve sage-grouse habitat, habitat compensation would be required.	<b>Action 1</b> – For surface-disturbing activities that did not improve sage-grouse habitat, habitat compensation would be required.	<b>Action 1</b> – Habitat compensation would not be required.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>Implementation guidelines for Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 5% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section, and</li> <li>• 1:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation guidelines for the Protection Priority ACEC and Restoration Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 5% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section,</li> </ul>	<p>Implementation guidelines for Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 3% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section, and</li> <li>• 1:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation guidelines for Protection Priority and Restoration Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 3% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section,</li> </ul>	<p>Implementation guidelines for Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 10% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section, and</li> <li>• 1:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation guidelines for Protection Priority and Restoration Areas would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat,</li> <li>• 10% surface disturbance cap for sage-grouse habitat per section,</li> </ul>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		and • 5:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.	and • 5:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.	and • 5:1 Habitat Compensation Ratio.	
<b>WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT AND ECOLOGY</b>					
<b>Fuels Management/Prescribed Fire</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide for firefighter and public safety by reducing hazardous fuel loads (risk) within the wildland urban interface.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Use naturally occurring and prescribed fire and mechanical, chemical, and biological treatments to protect or sustain the ecological health and function of fire-adapted ecosystems; reduce the risk of high severity wildfires to watersheds and ecosystems; and benefit, protect, maintain, sustain, and enhance natural and cultural resources (including wildlife habitat).</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Fuels Management/ Prescribed Fire</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Woody and non-woody vegetation mechanical thinning, biomass removal, and chemical and biological treatments would be allowed to reduce hazardous fuels or improve wildlife habitat.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Fuel treatment projects would be conducted in areas with high social or natural resource values (including wildlife habitat) as well as areas adjacent to wildland urban interface areas considered a priority area for treatment.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Fuels Management/ Prescribed Fire</b>	<b>Action 3</b> – Prescribed fire would be allowed in Category B and C Fire Management Categories (BLM 2003k).	<b>Action 3</b> – Prescribed fire would not be allowed on approximately 2,500,000 acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.	<b>Action 3</b> – Prescribed fire would be allowed throughout the planning area.		
	<b>Action 4</b> – Sites in Condition Class 3 (53,000 acres) would have pre-commercial and commercial material removed or treated prior to prescribed fire activities (BLM 2003k).	<b>Action 4</b> – Areas in Condition Class 3 (53,000 acres) would be evaluated on a site-specific basis to determine if mechanical treatments or pre-commercial or commercial thinning were necessary to reduce heavy fuel loadings or remove merchantable forest products prior to prescribed fire activity. Prescribed fire would be implemented as a management tool to improve forest health by reducing fuels and the likelihood of stand-replacing crown fires and to improve the resiliency and ecological functions of BLM-administered forests across the planning area.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT</b>					
<p><i>Goal 1 – Place public and firefighter safety first in any wildfire management action.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 2 – Manage wildfire (unplanned ignitions) for the protection of public health, safety, property, and resource values while implementing cost-containment strategies that result in minimum suppression costs.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 3 – Use a naturally occurring event such as wildfire to enhance vigor, vegetation production, reduce hazardous fuels, and maintain a desired mix of seral stages within the following communities: sagebrush (silver and Wyoming species), forest and woodlands, grasslands, riparian and wetland areas, and native species communities.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 4 – Create and maintain landscape-level fuel breaks using fire management, grazing, range improvements, transportation corridors, terrain features, and vegetation communities to provide suppression opportunities.</i></p>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would prioritize fire management activities according to potential risks to life and property across the planning area. Wildfires adjacent to or near wildland urban or industrial interface would have the highest priority for fire suppression.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Fire suppression on public lands would be guided by national fire suppression guidelines.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would follow the most recent modification to the <i>Guidance for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy</i> (USFS, BLM, BIA, USFWS, and NPS 2009).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would follow all national, state, and local BLM policy with regard to fire suppression actions and authorizations.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Coal seam (subsurface) fires that pose an immediate threat to surface fire spread would be managed with the intent of minimizing the loss of improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing the spread of fire onto private property, and minimizing fire suppression costs.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – The BLM would follow the most recent policy for delivery of fire chemicals (retardant and foam) near waterways: <i>Policy for Aerial Delivery of Wildland Fire Chemicals near Waterways</i> and the <i>Guidelines for Aerial Delivery of Retardant or Foam near Waterways</i> (USFS et al. 2009 and 2000).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – The BLM would use the management response consistent with Fire Management Categories A through D for all human-caused and natural fires. The BLM would retain	<b>Action 7</b> – Fire management units and fire workload areas would be consistent with current wildfire management guidance and delineated and developed based on vegetation types and condition, predominate historical fire regime groups, and management constraints, objectives, and strategies.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>the current fire management zones delineated and managed in the <i>MCFO Fire Management Plan</i> (BLM 2004g) (Map 10).</p>				
<p><b>Wildland Fire Management</b></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives would not be authorized in the planning area unless it falls within management categories C (310,000 acres) and D (0 acres) (BLM 2003k) (Map 10).</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives would be authorized in the planning area. There would be no areas for management categories A through D as described in Alternative A. Management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives would be limited to areas of BLM-administered lands adjacent to lands administered by the Custer National Forest (13,000 acres) and lands administered by the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (350,000 acres) that also</p>			<p><b>Action 8</b> – Management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives would be authorized in the planning area. There would be no areas for management categories A through D as described in Alternative A.</p> <p>Management of wildfire to meet multiple objectives would be authorized on any BLM-administered lands in the planning area. Areas would be delineated based on RMP goals.</p> <p>Wildfire management implementation plans for natural ignition to meet multiple objectives would be developed for areas identified to benefit from fire.</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>allow management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives on their jurisdictional lands. Areas would be delineated based on goals stated above.</p> <p>Wildfire management implementation plans (natural ignitions to meet multiple objectives) would be developed for areas identified to benefit from fire (Map 10).</p>			
<p><b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b> (See Management for Cultural ACECS under <i>Special Designation Areas</i>)</p> <p><i>Goal 1 – Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources on BLM-administered lands and ensure that they are available to present and future generations for appropriate uses such as scientific studies, public education, and recreation.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 2 – Provide American Indian access to enable tribes to maintain traditional values intrinsic to their cultural identities.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 3 – Preserve and protect cultural resources.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 4 – Reduce threats to cultural resources.</i></p>					
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Avoid disturbance and protect significant cultural properties and districts and their settings. Avoid disturbance or inadvertent impacts to these resources.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Protect national historic sites and national historic landmarks (NHLs) and the setting or viewshed in which they occur.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Avoid disturbance and protect cultural properties, districts, and their settings. Avoid disturbance and protect cultural properties (and the settings in which they occur), designated traditional cultural properties (TCPs), those designated for traditional use, and those determined to be of particular importance to American Indian groups.				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Protect national historic trails and the setting or viewshed in which they occur.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.) for all federal undertakings. <sup>1</sup>				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would avoid impacts to significant cultural resources by redesigning projects or mitigating adverse impacts.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would investigate and prosecute unauthorized use or destruction of significant cultural properties.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would design cultural resource awareness programs to enhance the public appreciation of cultural resource values.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The BLM would make significant cultural sites available for scientific study.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – The BLM would conduct Class I, II, or III cultural inventories for lands that included surface disturbance as part of the action.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – After the BLM issues a ROD, cultural resource management plans will begin to be prepared for each of the cultural ACECs, NHLs, TCPs, and NHLs listed with properties to develop first for the most significant sites within the planning area.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – All cultural properties in the planning area would be allocated to one of the following categories: scientific use, conservation for future use, traditional use, public use, experimental use, or discharged from management. Identified cultural resources would be assigned to cultural resource use categories and defined in the <i>Cultural Resources Appendix</i> .				
	<b>Action 9</b> – Management proposed for all alternatives would identify, monitor, protect, and preserve significant cultural resources in accordance with Sections 106 and 110 of NHPA.				
	<b>Action 10</b> – Adverse impacts from federal undertakings to cultural sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) would be avoided if possible by project abandonment, project redesign, or as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts through data recovery or other alternative means.				
	<b>Action 11</b> – The BLM would consult with appropriate entities and interested publics per the BLM’s WO IM 2012-108, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and 36 CFR 800 regulations as well as American Indian Tribes as Sovereign nations in a government-to-government relationship per the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, Archeological Resources Protection Act, and Executive Order 13007. The BLM would consult with interested tribes to identify cultural values or religious beliefs that would be affected by proposed BLM actions.				
<b>Action 12</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).					
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed within the planning area.	<b>Action 13</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of sites if the activities affected or had an	<b>Action 13</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of sites if the activities affected or had an	<b>Action 13</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed with an attached stipulation that would state that, prior to surface	<b>Action 13</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed in significant cultural sites as long as the activities would not

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>impact on the quality and setting of designated sites or areas or sites or areas that met the criteria for allocation for designation.</p> <p>This action would also include the area surrounding the existing cultural ACECs.</p>	<p>impact on the quality and setting of designated sites or areas or sites or areas that met the criteria for allocation for designation.</p> <p>Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed. This action would also include the area surrounding the existing cultural ACECs.</p> <p>Surface-disturbing activities that would not degrade the values of the sites and that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality (e.g., erosion control or reseeded), enhance the values of the sites, and have beneficial outcomes would be allowed.</p>	<p>disturbance, a SUPO and a cultural site mitigation plan, which must be approved by the AO, would be required for all surface-disturbing activities in the cultural resource or designated site and for those within 300 feet of boundaries of cultural resources or designated sites or areas or sites or areas that meet the criteria for allocation for designation.</p> <p>Surface-disturbing activities would be avoided whenever possible. If the surface-disturbing activity could not be avoided, approved measures would be applied to minimize the impact to the cultural resource.</p>	<p>affect or have an impact on the quality and setting of sites.</p>
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that	<b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that	<b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation that	<b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>restricted surface-disturbing activities in the site and within 0.5 miles of site boundaries if the activities affected or had an impact on the quality and setting of designated sites or areas or sites or areas that met the criteria for allocation for designation (including cultural resources, NRHP-eligible properties and districts, and TCPs) (except for those sites in <i>Action 16</i> below).<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3, <i>Cultural Resources</i>, and the <i>Glossary</i> for a definition of designated site or area. This action includes the area surrounding the existing cultural ACECs.</p>	<p>restricted surface-disturbing activities in the site and within 300 feet of site boundaries if the activities affected or had an impact on the quality and setting of designated sites or areas or sites or areas that met the criteria for allocation for designation (including cultural resources, NRHP-eligible properties and districts, and TCPs).<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3, <i>Cultural Resources</i>, and the <i>Glossary</i> for a definition of designated site or area. This action includes the area surrounding the existing cultural ACECs.</p>	<p>stated that, prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and a cultural site mitigation plan, which must be approved by the AO, would be required for all surface-disturbing activities in the cultural resource or designated site and for those within 300 feet of boundaries of cultural resources or designated sites or areas or sites or areas that met the criteria for allocation for designation (including cultural resources, NRHP-eligible properties and districts, and TCPs).<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3, <i>Cultural Resources</i>, and the <i>Glossary</i> for a definition of designated site or area.</p>	<p>restricted surface-disturbing activities in significant cultural sites if the activities affected or had an impact on the quality and setting of the sites (including significant cultural resources, NRHP-eligible properties and districts, and TCPs).<sup>1</sup></p>
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms,	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or within 3.5 miles of	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation that	<b>Action 15</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	except in areas in which oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation.	the Fort Union Historic Site NHL or in or within 0.5 miles of NHLs and historic battlefields.	and within 3.5 miles of the Fort Union Historic Site NHL and in and within 300 feet of NHLs and historic battlefields. <sup>1</sup>	would state that, prior to surface disturbance or use, a SUPO and a cultural site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all activities in or within 3.5 miles of the Fort Union Historic Site NHL and in or within 300 feet of NHLs and historic battlefields. <sup>1</sup>	NHLs and historic battlefields. <sup>1</sup>
<b>PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> (for management of Paleontological ACECs, see <i>Special Designation Areas</i> , the ACEC section) <i>Goal 1 – Identify, preserve, and protect significant paleontological resources and ensure that they are available to present and future generations for appropriate uses such as scientific studies and public education.</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Subject to consistency with other laws and policies, casual collecting of invertebrates and plant fossils would be allowed and permits required for collection of paleontological resources (vertebrate fossils). Commercial collecting would not be allowed or permitted.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would follow the 2007 IM No. 2008-009, Potential Fossil Yield Classification System for Paleontological Resources on Public Lands (see the <i>Paleontological Resources Appendix</i> ).				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would avoid impacts to significant paleontological remains through project redesign, project abandonment, or mitigation of adverse impacts using scientific recovery and analysis.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would prepare paleontological resource awareness programs designed to enhance the public appreciation of paleontological resource values.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The BLM would encourage scientific use of paleontological resources by qualified institutions.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities	<b>Action 7</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed as long as the activities

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>activities would be allowed except for 171 acres of paleontological locality special management areas where geophysical exploration would not be allowed.</p>	<p>would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of the localities if the activities would impact the paleontological localities, future paleontological localities, or areas that meet the criteria for designation. Surface-disturbing activities that did not degrade the locality and that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality (e.g., erosion control or reseeded), enhanced the values of the paleontological localities (or areas), and had beneficial outcomes would be allowed.</p>	<p>would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of localities if the activities would impact the paleontological localities, future paleontological localities, or areas that meet the criteria for designation. Surface-disturbing activities that did not degrade the locality and that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality (e.g., erosion control or reseeded), enhanced the values of the paleontological localities (or areas), and had beneficial outcomes would be allowed.</p>	<p>would not impact the quality and setting of significant paleontological localities or areas that met the criteria for designation.</p>	
<p><b>Paleontological Resources</b></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that restricted surface-disturbing activities in and within 0.5</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that restricted surface-disturbing activities in and within 300</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation that stated that, prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and a</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation that restricted surface-disturbing activities in localities.<sup>1</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		miles of localities. <sup>1</sup>	feet of localities. <sup>1</sup>	paleontological site mitigation plan, which must be approved by the AO, would be required for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of significant localities. <sup>1</sup>	
<b>VISUAL RESOURCES</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Maintain scenic qualities consistent with the management of resources and uses.</i>					
<b>Visual Resources</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Manage visual resources according to established guidelines for visual resource management (VRM) class objectives.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
(See <i>Recreation and Special Designation Areas</i> sections for VRM in specific areas)	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would continue to prepare rehabilitation plans to address landscape modifications on a case-by-case basis. The visual contrast rating system would be used during project-level planning to determine recommended measures to reduce impacts from visual contrasts (including the use of BMPs) and the proposed activity’s compliance with VRM objectives.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – WSAs would be managed as VRM Class I. <sup>1</sup> See the <i>Wilderness</i> section.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Visual Resources</b>	<b>Action 3</b> – VRM would be managed according to VRM Class I (97,000 acres), VRM Class II (400,000 acres), VRM Class III (380,000 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,900,000 acres) (Map 11) objectives. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 3</b> – VRM would be managed according to VRM Class I (95,000 acres), VRM Class II (580,000 acres), VRM Class III (640,000 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,400,000 acres) (Map 12). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 3</b> – VRM would be managed according to VRM Class I (95,000 acres), VRM Class II (410,000 acres), VRM Class III (700,000 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,600,000 acres) (Map 13). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 3</b> – VRM would be managed according to VRM Class I (95,000 acres), VRM Class II (360,000 acres), VRM Class III (740,000 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,600,000 acres) (Map 14). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 3</b> – VRM would be managed according to VRM Class I (94,000 acres), VRM Class II (410,000 acres), VRM Class III (690,000 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,600,000 acres) (Map 15). <sup>1</sup>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Protect, preserve, and maintain areas’ wilderness characteristics by maintaining a high degree of naturalness and provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive, unconfined recreation.</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Devil’s Creek Common Area</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Remove unnatural features and rehabilitate unauthorized human disturbances. Remove unauthorized facilities consistent with regulations.				
<b>Devil’s Creek Common Area</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – Monitor for development and disturbances, as well as visitor use, to identify and address potential impacts to wilderness characteristics.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Lands acquired within WSAs, such as the Terry Badlands WSA, would be managed the same as the WSA (see the narrative portion of Chapter 2 for further information).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Devil’s Creek Common Area</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with lease terms (5,236 acres).	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with an NSO stipulation (5,236 acres).	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with a CSU stipulation on 5,236 acres (see the VRM II stipulation in the <i>Minerals Appendix</i> ).		
	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs would be allowed (5,236 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would not be allowed, including ROWs (5,236 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – Surface-disturbing activities would be allowed, including ROWs, as long as they meet the goals of lands with wilderness characteristics (5,236 acres).		
	<b>Actions 6</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (5,127 acres) and VRM Class III (109 acres).	<b>Actions 6</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II.			
<b>RESOURCE USES</b>					
<b>FACILITIES</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide adequate administration and recreation (and other) facilities to allow for management needs through facilities management based on analysis such as the Asset Business Plan to maintain, replace, construct, lease, or dispose of sites.</i>					
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Ensure that Universal Accessibility Standards are met for all new developed facilities and the retrofitting of existing facilities, where feasible.				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Facilities (includes administration, recreation and communication sites buildings and dams) would be maintained, according to BLM standards, to enhance visitor experiences and meet public health and safety requirements, reduce deferred maintenance costs, and provide universal accessibility as appropriate.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Comprehensive condition assessments would be conducted for all maintained facilities on an established schedule in accordance with BLM policy. Managers would review the results of the condition assessments and determine the need for reconstruction, maintenance, or disposal.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – New facilities would be constructed subject to approved engineering standards. Consider use demands, location, safety, and resource constraints when determining the proposed location for the facility. New facilities would be constructed to meet energy and sustainability requirements.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Construction and maintenance priorities for hazard class dams would be in conformance with past planning documents. Emergency Action Planning would be performed as required in accordance with BLM policy.				
<b>FORESTRY AND WOODLAND PRODUCTS</b> (see also <i>Vegetation</i> )					
<i>Goal 1 – Promote healthy, resilient, and vigorous forestland communities. Forestland mosaics would be managed for diversity of stand structures and species components that complemented other resource values, including (but not limited to) recreation, wildlife, rangelands, fisheries, and wood production.</i>					
<b>Forestry and Woodland Products</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Provide woody and non-woody biomass consistent with other resource uses as part of an ecologically healthy system and consistent with the principles of multiple use.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Develop management strategies and implement treatments to improve the health, sustainability, resiliency, and productivity of forests, woodlands, and the desired vegetative community based on scientifically sound principles and an environmentally responsible level of timber sales.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Manage forest vegetation structure, species composition, patch size, pattern, and distribution in a manner that reduced the occurrence of severe wildfires and forest insect and disease outbreaks.				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Implement selective treatments on forests and woodlands that mimic natural disturbance regimes to enhance resiliency to wildfires and insect and disease outbreaks. Manage forest resources to improve resiliency to catastrophic events and maintain and enhance their ability for the long-term sequestration of carbon.				
	<b>Objective 5</b> – Maintain and promote forest stand structures with large trees appropriate to forest types and successional stages.				
	<b>Objective 6</b> – Promote forest and woodland vegetation regeneration and recovery on forested lands after management treatments, insect and disease outbreaks, and wildfire events.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Forestry and Woodland Products</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – All forest management activities would meet or exceed Montana’s Streamside Management Zone Law (77 5-301 et seq. Montana Code Annotated) and the <i>Water Quality BMPs for Montana Forests</i> (Logan 2001) (see the <i>Forestry and Woodland Products Appendix</i> ).				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 2</b> – Woody and non-woody biomass product removal would be allowed in all forest and juniper woodland types, with the exception of designated WSAs and ACECs that prohibited the removal of forest products.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – Forest health restoration projects that reduced hazardous fuel loadings and improved forest resiliency to disturbances from wildfires, insects, and diseases would be the highest priority (including timber salvage opportunities).</p>				
	<p><b>Action 4</b> – All management activities that removed dead or live trees would take into consideration other resources values (such as wildlife habitat, watershed health, soils stability, snag recruitment and large tree retention, local economic opportunities, public safety, hazardous fuels, visual integrity, and any other relevant concerns).</p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b></p>					
<p><b>Forestry and Woodland Products</b></p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Forestlands in the planning area with 10% or more canopy cover per acre would be managed for the enhancement of other resources, not for the production of forest products or sawtimber (BLM 1996).</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Forestlands would not be managed for forest products or sawtimber, except for trees deemed safety hazards.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Forestlands would be managed to enhance the health and resiliency of forest and woodland resources (e.g., tree growth, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, forage production, and other criteria) and for a diversity of forest products.</p>		
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Wood product sales for post and poles, Christmas trees, and firewood would be allowed in the Knowlton, Pine Unit, Missouri Breaks, and all other areas allowed under the <i>Fire/Fuels Management Plan</i></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Wood product sales for post and poles, Christmas trees, and firewood would not be allowed in the planning area.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Sales for other forest products (e.g., post and poles, Christmas trees, firewood, juniper boughs, and other materials) would be allowed in all areas that supported these products and met management objectives. These areas would be delineated in accordance with the management goals and objectives stated above.</p>		

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Environmental Assessment/Plan Amendment for Montana and the Dakotas</i> (BLM 2003k).				
<b>Forestry and Woodland Products</b>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Sales for sawtimber would not be allowed except for salvage harvest of ponderosa pine affected by insects, fire, or other natural causes (BLM 1996).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Sales for sawtimber would not be allowed except salvage harvest of ponderosa pine affected by insects.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Sales for sawtimber would be allowed for sustainable resource health and forest products production.</p> <p>Probable sale quantity (PSQ) for commercial sawtimber would be allowed up to 650 thousand board feet per year (mbf/year).</p> <p>PSQ values may be adjusted based on monitoring evaluations; in response to unforeseen events (such as wildfires); current inventories; and insect, disease, or climate conditions.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Sales for sawtimber would be allowed for sustainable resource health and forest products production.</p> <p>PSQ for commercial sawtimber would be allowed up to 1,100 mbf/year.</p> <p>PSQ values may be adjusted based on monitoring evaluations; in response to unforeseen events (such as wildfires); current inventories; and insect, disease, or climate conditions.</p>	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Cottonwood Trees</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Harvest of cottonwood would be allowed on public lands only when human safety was a factor or disease or insect infestations were threatening cottonwood stands (BLM 1996).		<b>Action 8</b> – Harvest of cottonwood would be allowed only to restore the health and resiliency of cottonwood stands or to remove hazard trees.		
<p><b>LIVESTOCK GRAZING</b></p> <p><i>Goal 1 – Provide forage for livestock grazing consistent with other resources and uses as part of an ecologically healthy system consistent with multiple use and sustained yield.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 2 – Utilize grazing activities to manage for the biological integrity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems to sustain vegetation, fish, and special status species, while providing for multiple uses of BLM-administered lands.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 3 – Provide opportunities for livestock grazing to support and sustain local communities while providing habitat for native plants, fish, and animals (including special status species) and meeting or exceeding PFC for uplands and riparian areas and Montana’s air and water quality standards.</i></p>					
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Maintain sustainable forage levels for livestock and to provide for wildlife habitat.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Using grazing BMPs, maintain existing desirable rangeland conditions or improve rangeland health.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Management actions that included grazing use, grazing activity plans and systems, range improvements, and vegetation treatment would be designed to maintain or improve vegetation conditions or achieve desired habitats.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Increases or decreases in grazing preference AUMs would be implemented based on resource conditions within an allotment.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Livestock grazing use adjustments in response to drought, fire, flood, and insect infestations would be made on a case-by-case basis and consistent with the BLM’s <i>Policy for Administering Public Land Grazing in Montana, North and South Dakota during Periods of Drought</i> .				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Allotment categorization would use criteria found in Handbook 1740-1 and WO IM 2009-018 (BLM 2008d) and new criteria outlined in the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> . Allotment category designations would be changed as new information becomes available, such as monitoring, Standards for Rangeland Health assessments, habitat assessments, and special status species data. Changes in allotment categorizations would be documented via plan maintenance.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Fence construction or modification specifications would follow standards in the BLM Fencing Manual Handbook H-1741-1. Deviations would be allowed if environmental analysis showed a resource benefit.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – The BLM would follow the BLM’s 1997 <i>Record of Decision for Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Final Environmental Impact Statement for Montana and North and South Dakota</i> .				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Livestock Grazing Authorization</b>	<p><b>Action 7 –</b> Approximately 2,700,000 acres and an estimated 546,508 AUMs would be open to livestock grazing (see Table 2 in the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i>; Map 16 on the Map CD).</p>	<p><b>Action 7 –</b> Approximately 2,500,000 acres and an estimated 502,706 AUMs would be open to all livestock grazing except domestic sheep and goats. From the available acres, 2,100,000 acres and an estimated 422,903 AUMs would be open to domestic sheep and goats.</p>	<p><b>Action 7 –</b> Approximately 2,700,000 acres and an estimated 545,189 AUMs would be open to livestock grazing, except domestic sheep and goats. From the available acres, 2,700,000 acres and 544,578 AUMs would be open to domestic sheep and goats.</p>	<p><b>Action 7 –</b> Approximately 2,700,000 acres and an estimated 545,943 AUMs would be open to livestock grazing.</p>	<p><b>Action 7 –</b> Approximately 2,700,000 acres and an estimated 544,709 AUMs would be open to livestock grazing.</p>
	<p><b>Action 8 –</b> Livestock grazing would be excluded on approximately 240 acres (62 AUMs) (Map 17).</p>	<p><b>Action 8 –</b> Approximately 210,000 acres (43,000 AUMs) would be excluded from all livestock grazing. Domestic sheep and goat grazing would be excluded on 390,000 acres (79,803 AUMs) (Map 18).</p>	<p><b>Action 8 –</b> Approximately 6,800 acres (1,300 AUMs) would be excluded from all livestock grazing. Domestic sheep and goat grazing would be excluded on 8,300 acres (611 AUMs) (Map 19).</p>	<p><b>Action 8 –</b> Livestock grazing would be excluded on 3,100 acres (627 AUMs) (Map 20).</p>	<p><b>Action 8 –</b> Livestock grazing would be excluded on 3,125 acres (1,257 AUMs) (Map 21).</p>
	<p><b>Action 9 –</b> In the allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i>), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met and</p>	<p><b>Action 9 –</b> The allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i>), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met</p>	<p><b>Action 9 –</b> The allotments in Table 1 (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i>), in which the Standards for Rangeland Health were not met (including Sage-grouse Habitat), livestock grazing was a causal factor in the failure to meet these standards, and there was no progress towards meeting Standards for Rangeland Health in the allotments within 5 years of the ROD of the RMP, would be eliminated and closed to livestock grazing. These lands would no longer be chiefly valuable for grazing.</p>		

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	livestock grazing was a causal factor and site-specific analyses demonstrated that Standards for Rangeland Health could be achieved, grazing permits would be issued with specific grazing seasons and livestock numbers and other terms and conditions designed to make progress toward meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.	(including Sage-grouse Habitat), and livestock grazing was a causal factor in the failure to meet these standards, would be eliminated and closed to livestock grazing (190,000 acres and 39,113 AUMs).			
<b>Livestock Grazing Authorization – Locatable Mining, Oil and Gas, and Coal</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would continue to be allowed within areas with active locatable mining.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be excluded in areas with active locatable mining for the life of the activity.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be suspended on affected acres within active locatable mining areas. Grazing would resume as areas were reclaimed and Standards for Rangeland Health were met.		
	<b>Action 11</b> – Livestock grazing would continue to be allowed within areas with oil and gas development if Standards for Rangeland Health were being met.	<b>Action 11</b> – In grazing allotments with oil and gas development, AUMs would be suspended commensurate with the direct loss of AUMs.			

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Livestock Grazing Authorizaion – Locatable Mining, Oil and Gas, and Coal</b></p>	<p><b>Action 12 –</b> Livestock grazing would be cancelled during coal development for the life of the mine (BLM 1996).  Livestock grazing would be allowed within areas with coal development (BLM 1985c).</p>	<p><b>Action 12 –</b> Livestock grazing would be suspended during coal development for the life of the mine.</p>	<p><b>Action 12 –</b> Livestock grazing would be suspended on affected areas during coal development. Grazing prior to bond release would be allowed if Standards for Rangeland Health were being met.</p>		
<p><b>Livestock Grazing Authorization – Land Treatments</b></p>	<p><b>Action 13 –</b> Livestock grazing would be deferred on a case-by-case basis with permittee or lessee cooperation to ensure adequate fuel is present to carry a prescribed fire.</p>	<p><b>Action 13 –</b> Livestock grazing would be suspended until vegetative conditions allowed for adequate fuel for a prescribed fire.</p>		<p><b>Action 13 –</b> Livestock grazing would be deferred on a case-by-case basis with permittee or lessee cooperation to ensure adequate fuel to carry a prescribed fire.</p>	<p><b>Action 13 –</b> Livestock grazing would be deferred or suspended in identified fuels treatment areas until vegetative conditions allowed for adequate fuel for a prescribed fire.</p>
<p><b>Action 14 –</b> BLM-administered lands would be temporarily closed for at least 1 growing season after a prescribed or wildfire (BLM 1996).  Grazing would be deferred or temporarily closed</p>		<p><b>Action 14 –</b> BLM-administered lands would be temporarily closed to grazing after wildfire, prescribed fire, or non-fire vegetative treatments for at least 2 growing seasons.</p>	<p><b>Action 14 –</b> BLM-administered lands would be closed to livestock grazing after wildfire, prescribed fire, or non-fire vegetative treatments until the area attained identified vegetative objectives.</p>	<p><b>Action 14 –</b> BLM-administered lands would be closed after wildfire, prescribed fire, or non-fire vegetative treatments until established seed set the next growing season.</p>	<p><b>Action 14 –</b> BLM-administered lands would be closed to livestock grazing after wildfire, prescribed fire, or non-fire vegetative treatments until the area attained treatment or rehabilitation plan resource objectives.</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	on a case-by-case basis (BLM 1985c).				
<b>Livestock Grazing Authorization – Reserve Common Allotments (RCAs)</b>	<b>Action 15</b> – There would be no RCAs.	<b>Action 15</b> – RCAs would be designated and managed according to the criteria listed in the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> .	<b>Action 15</b> – RCAs would be designated and managed to ensure grazing authorizations were available only to those permittees who were legal residents of the county in which the RCA was located.	<b>Action 15</b> – RCAs would not be designated in the planning area.	<b>Action 15</b> – RCAs would be designated and managed according to the criteria listed in the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> .
<b>Livestock Grazing – Allotment Prioritization</b>	<b>Action 16</b> – The BLM would monitor and evaluate the appropriate management actions (grazing systems and range improvements) for permit renewals to ensure range condition and objectives were met on I allotments and maintained on M and C allotments.	<b>Action 16</b> – Priority allotments for monitoring and land health evaluations would be allotments that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health;</li> <li>2. contain special status species habitat; or</li> <li>3. contained nonfunctional or functional-at-risk with downward trend riparian areas.</li> </ol>	<b>Action 16</b> – Priority allotments for monitoring and land health evaluation would be allotments that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health.  In addition, other priority allotments would be those allotments in which the BLM administers 51% or more of the lands in an allotment or pasture and also contained: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. special status species habitat of high priority</li> </ol>	<b>Action 16</b> – Priority allotments for monitoring and land health evaluations would be allotments that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health.	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			(e.g., sage-grouse); or 2. nonfunctional or functional-at risk with downward trend riparian areas.		
<b>Livestock Grazing – Permit/Lease Renewals and Transfers</b>	<b>Action 17 –</b> Permits or leases would be transferred or renewed on a case-by-case basis.	<b>Action 17 –</b> Grazing permits or leases would be transferred or renewed for C category grazing allotments in which the new grazing permit or lease contained the same kind of livestock and the active use previously authorized was not exceeded. These allotments would be documented to be meeting Rangeland Health Standards (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> for a screening criteria checklist).	<b>Action 17 –</b> Grazing permits or leases would be transferred or renewed for C and M category grazing allotments in which the new grazing permit or lease contained the same kind of livestock and the active use previously authorized was not exceeded. These allotments would be documented to be meeting Rangeland Health Standards (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> for a screening criteria checklist).	<b>Action 17 –</b> Grazing permits or leases would be transferred or renewed for all grazing allotments in which the new grazing permit or lease contained the same kind of livestock and the active use previously authorized was not exceeded. These allotments would be documented to be meeting Rangeland Health Standards (see the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> for a screening criteria checklist).	<b>Action 17 –</b> Grazing permits or leases would be transferred or renewed for grazing allotments documented to meet Rangeland Health Standards when no additional impacts were present on adjacent allotments and when there were no proposed changes to permitted kind or number of livestock, authorized active use (AUMs), or season of use (as described in the screening criteria in the <i>Livestock Grazing Appendix</i> ). A documentation of NEPA adequacy would be prepared that would tier to

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					existing NEPA documentation.
<p><b>Livestock Grazing – Carrying Capacity</b></p>	<p><b>Action 18</b> – Livestock grazing carrying capacity would be calculated according to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cow or bull over 6 months of age – 1 AUM;</li> <li>• Horse over 6 months of age – 1 AUM;</li> <li>• Five sheep or goats over 6 months of age – 1 AUM; and</li> <li>• Yearling cattle – 1 AUM.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 18</b> – AUM conversions in types of livestock would be considered on a case-by-case basis through an environmental analysis. Such changes would be consistent with wildlife, watershed, riparian, special status species, and vegetation objectives.</p>			<p><b>Action 18</b> – Livestock grazing carrying capacity would be calculated according to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cow or bull over 6 months of age – 1 AUM;</li> <li>• Horse over 6 months of age – 1 AUM;</li> <li>• Five sheep or goats over 6 months of age – 1 AUM; and</li> <li>• Yearling cattle – 1 AUM.</li> </ul>
<p>Alternatives considering prohibiting range improvement projects in specific allotments are addressed in the <i>Recreation</i> and the <i>Special Designations</i> sections.</p>					
<p>Alternatives considering closing specific allotments to livestock grazing or changing the season of use are addressed in the <i>Recreation</i>, <i>Special Designations</i>, <i>Wildlife</i>, and <i>Fish and Wildlife, Aquatics</i> sections.</p>					
<p><b>MINERALS</b> <i>Goal 1 – Provide opportunities for mineral use in the area.</i></p>					

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Coal</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Identify federal coal acceptable for further leasing consideration.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Manage the federal coal resource to provide for the development of federal coal in an orderly and timely manner and consistent with the federal coal management program and policies, environmental integrity, and national energy needs.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Areas identified in the Big Dry and Powder River RMPs (BLM 1996 and 1985c) as acceptable for further consideration for coal leasing would be carried forward:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powder River RMP: “Future development will come from current leases covering 39,391 acres (3.43 billion tons) those unleased areas determined acceptable for further consideration in the 1979 MFP Update and 1982 Amendment covering 91,700 acres (7.83 billion tons) and unleased areas determined acceptable for further consideration from new planning covering 869,600 acres (54.37 billion tons). The combined total is 1,000,691 acres (65.63 billion tons). Emergency leases will be issued to maintain production or avoid a bypass situation on a case-by-case basis. Exchanges will be considered for existing leases, by direction of legislation, and for leases located in alluvial valley floors. Other exchanges will be considered on a case-by-case basis” (BLM 1985c, p. 2).</li> <li>• Big Dry RMP: “Pending application of the surface-owner consultation screen, coal will be acceptable for further consideration for leasing or exchange on 580,547 public mineral acres containing 6.18 billion tons of coal” (BLM 1996, p. 12).</li> </ul>				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All coal leasing and coal exchange proposals would be evaluated for their suitability for leasing through application or reapplication of the unsuitability criteria or coal screening process. Surface owner consultation would be initiated, if needed, during site-specific planning for a lease application.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing and development would be offered with an NSO stipulation within existing coal leases with approved mining plans. <sup>1</sup>				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Oil, Gas, and Geothermal</b> (Maps 22 through 26)	<b>Action 1</b> – COAs, BMPs, and other measures would be used when developing oil and gas resources (see the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> , <i>Fish and Wildlife Appendix</i> , and <i>Minerals Appendix</i> under <i>Oil and Gas Conditions of Approval and Mitigation Measures</i> and <a href="http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/oil_and_gas/best_management_practices/technical_information.html">http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/oil_and_gas/best_management_practices/technical_information.html</a> .)				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 8% of BLM-administered oil and gas mineral acres in the planning area would be unavailable for leasing in the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge (except for two grandfathered oil wells), Fox Lake Game Management Area, Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, and Fort Keogh Livestock Experiment Station (nondiscretionary closures). See the <i>Minerals Appendix</i> for more information about unavailable lands.				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Oil, Gas, and Geothermal</b>	<b>Action 3</b> – To resolve drainage situations, lands closed to leasing would be leased with an NSO stipulation. See the <i>Minerals Appendix</i> for more information.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing in Makoshika State Park would be managed according to the Big Dry RMP, as amended (1999a). In summary, oil and gas development would be allowed with NSO stipulations on 9,900 BLM- and Dawson County-administered mineral acres while oil and gas leasing would be allowed with lease terms on 1,200 BLM-administered mineral acres. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Coal bed natural gas (CBNG) development in the Decker area (Maps 4, 7, 8, and 9) would be conducted in accordance with the BLM’s 2008 <i>Record of Decision for the Final Supplement to the Montana Statewide Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Amendment of the Powder River and Billings RMPs</i> . All other management, including leasing, is found in this table.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Oil, Gas, and Geothermal</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with an NSO stipulation on approximately 304,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 7</b> – Leasing and development would be allowed with an NSO stipulation on 2,025,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 7</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with an NSO stipulation on approximately 150,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 7</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with an NSO stipulation on approximately 1,119 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 7</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with an NSO stipulation on approximately 1,373,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.
	<b>Action 8</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with a timing stipulation or a CSU stipulation on approximately 4,019,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 8</b> – Leasing and development would be allowed with a CSU stipulation on approximately 963,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 8</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with a CSU stipulation on approximately 4,404,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 8</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with a CSU stipulation on approximately 4,374,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 8</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with a CSU stipulation on approximately 3,110,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.
	<b>Action 9</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with lease terms on approximately	<b>Action 9</b> – Leasing and development would be allowed with lease terms on approximately	<b>Action 9</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with lease terms on approximately	<b>Action 9</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with lease terms on approximately	<b>Action 9</b> – Leasing and development would be offered with lease terms on approximately

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	968,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	185,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	737,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	916,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	808,100 BLM-administered mineral acres.
<b>Oil, Gas, and Geothermal</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – No additional BLM-administered mineral acres would be closed to leasing and development.	<b>Action 10</b> – Leasing and development would not be offered on approximately 2,119,000 BLM-administered mineral acres.	<b>Action 10</b> – No additional BLM-administered mineral acres would be closed to leasing and development.		
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on approximately 370,000 BLM-administered surface acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on approximately 2,500,000 BLM-administered surface acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on approximately 780,000 BLM-administered surface acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on approximately 700,000 BLM-administered surface acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on approximately 12,000 BLM-administered surface acres and allowed in the remainder of the planning area.
<b>Proposed Carter MLP Area</b> (139,000 surface; 282,500 oil and gas)	<b>Action 12</b> – No areas in the planning area would be identified for an MLP.	<b>Action 12</b> – The Carter MLP would be identified.			
	<b>Action 13</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation within 0.25 miles of sage-grouse leks (6,800 acres). <sup>1</sup>  Oil and gas leasing would be offered	<b>Action 13</b> – The Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority ACEC would not be offered for oil and gas leasing because of important sage-grouse values (250,000 acres). Oil and gas leasing would be offered in	<b>Action 13</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in the MLP area (282,500 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation in the MLP area (282,500 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be allowed with an NSO stipulation in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Area in the MLP area (250,000 acres). Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>with a timing stipulation from March 1 to June 15 in sage-grouse nesting habitat within 2 miles of a lek (timing; 190,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a timing restriction from December 1 to March 31 within crucial winter range for wildlife (150,000 acres).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms on 180,000 acres.</p>	<p>the Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Area and Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas with a CSU stipulation (36,000 acres). The BMPs for sage-grouse found in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> would be considered during project implementation. Upon their expiration, existing leases in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority ACEC would not be reoffered for leasing.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms on 5 acres.</p>			<p>stipulation in the Sage-grouse Habitat – Restoration Area (36,000 acres) and a CSU stipulation in the Sage-grouse Habitat – General Habitat Areas (Map 4) (1,400 acres). The general Mitigation Guidelines and BMPs for sage-grouse found in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> would be considered during project implementation.</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms on 5 acres.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Carter MLP Area</b></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be phased.</p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be phased beginning in the western portion of the MLP. If production were occurring, the BLM would wait to lease the remainder of the</p>		<p><b>Action 14</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be phased. The BMPs for sage-grouse found in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> would be considered during project implementation.</p>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			MLP until production ceased and the area returned to sage-grouse habitat. The eastern portion of the MLP would then be offered for oil and gas leasing with a CSU stipulation. The general Mitigation Guidelines in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> would be considered during project implementation.		
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Locatable Minerals</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Locatable mineral entry and mining would continue to be allowed on lands open to mineral location and would be administered through existing surface and mineral management regulations (43 CFR 3800 and 3809).				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Mineral Material Sales</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Where disposals were considered to be in the public interest, the BLM would issue free use permits and sales contracts while providing for the reclamation of mined lands and preventing the unnecessary and undue degradation of non-mineral resources. Permits and contracts would be issued on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the AO.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 2,500,000 acres would be available to mineral material sales and permits.	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 300,000 acres would be available to mineral material sales and permits.	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 1,100,000 acres would be available to mineral material sales and permits.	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 1,100,000 acres would be available to mineral material sales and permits.	<b>Action 2</b> – Approximately 2,500,000 acres would be available to mineral material sales and permits with restrictions

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	Approximately 32,000 acres would be closed to mineral material sales and permits.	Approximately 2,200,000 acres would be closed to mineral material sales and permits.	Approximately 1,500,000 acres would be closed to mineral material sales and permits.	Approximately 1,500,000 acres would be closed to mineral material sales and permits.	applied.  Approximately 36,000 acres would be closed to mineral material sales and permits.
<p><b>RECREATION</b></p> <p><i>Goal 1 – Provide a diverse array of quality resource-based recreation opportunities while protecting and interpreting the resource values, providing educational opportunities, minimizing use conflicts, and promoting public safety.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 2 – Establish, manage, and maintain quality recreation sites and facilities to balance public demand and protection of public land resources.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 3 – Issue special recreation permits in an equitable manner for specific recreational uses of public lands to minimize user conflicts, control visitor use, protect recreation resources, and provide for private and commercial recreation use.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 4 – Recreation management area designations would be based on recreation demand and issues, recreation setting characteristics, resolving use and user conflicts, compatibility with other resource use, and resource protection needs.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 5 – Promote Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly practices.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 6 – Support events that emphasize collaborative outreach and public awareness.</i></p> <p><i>Goal 7 – Support and utilize volunteers.</i></p>					
<b>Special Recreation Permits</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Manage special recreation permits in accordance with federal regulation, special stipulations, and established terms and conditions.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Special Recreation Permits</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Permit requests by outfitter and guides would be considered on a case-by-case basis throughout the planning area, subject to environmental, social, and public health and safety concerns.	<b>Action 1</b> – Guiding and outfitting would not be allowed on publicly accessible, BLM-administered surfaces located within 5 miles of vehicular access.	<b>Action 1</b> – Guiding and outfitting would not be allowed on publicly accessible, BLM-administered surfaces located within 1 mile of vehicular access.	<b>Action 1</b> – Permit requests by outfitter and guides would be considered on a case-by-case basis throughout the planning area, subject to environmental, social, and public health and safety concerns.	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would continue to issue special recreation use permits as appropriate for commercial, competitive, and special events on a first come basis subject to guidelines in the 2930 Handbook, resource

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					capabilities, social conflict concerns, professional qualifications, public safety, and public needs. Preference for renewal would be given to a permittee seeking renewal when the permittee was in full compliance under the current permit
<b>Special Recreation Permits</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – Authorization of commercial camping activity would be considered throughout the planning area on a case-by-case basis, subject to resource constraints, management capabilities, social conflicts, and public health and safety concerns.	<b>Action 2</b> – Commercial camping permits within developed recreation sites would not be allowed during the Memorial Day to Labor Day season to reduce user conflicts and resource impacts.		<b>Action 2</b> – Authorization of commercial camping activity would be considered throughout the planning area on a case-by-case basis, subject to resource constraints, management capabilities, social conflicts, and public health and safety concerns.	
<b>SRMAs and Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs)</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Establish SRMAs that would be given management priority to provide quality recreation opportunities and visitor experiences. Establish ERMAs that would require specific management consideration to address recreation use, demand or Recreation and Visitor Service program investments. All remaining lands would be managed as Public Lands not Designated as Recreation Management Areas, which would be managed to meet basic Recreation and Visitor Services and resource stewardship needs. See the <i>Recreation Appendix</i> for more information regarding recreation and visitor experiences.				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Objective 2</b> – Use future recreation management actions to complement existing multiple-use plans and consider ways to reduce adverse impacts to users and adjacent private landowners.</p> <p><b>Objective 3</b> – Prioritize acquisition of legal access to public lands through exchanges, easements, cooperative agreements, permits, donations, or long-term land use agreements.</p> <p><b>Objective 4</b> – Continue to cooperate with MFWP, private landowners, and non-profit organizations to improve hunter access and the availability of public lands for hunting, in accordance with Executive Order 13443 (August 20, 2007).</p> <p><b>Objective 5</b> – Continue to provide a diverse range of quality recreation opportunities and experiences commensurate with public demands, resource considerations, management capabilities, and existing program guidance.</p> <p><b>Objective 6</b> – Management in SRMAs would emphasize interpretive, educational opportunities, fishing access opportunities, historic interpretation, outdoor recreation opportunities, or safe OHV-riding opportunities.</p>				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>SRMAs and ERMAs</b>	<p><b>Action 1</b> – New sites would provide universal accessibility as appropriate to enhance visitor experiences and sites would be developed commensurate with public demand, resource constraints, and management capabilities. New sites with partnership funding strategies consistent with established recreation setting characteristics and SRMA and ERMA management guidelines would be prioritized (See Figure 1 in the <i>Recreation Appendix</i>). If an existing developed recreation site significantly contributed to the failure to meet Rangeland Health Standards, the impacts from the site would be minimized to the extent possible. All new recreation sites would be designed, constructed, and managed to meet, or move toward meeting, Rangeland Health Standards.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 2</b> – Comparable, cost effective, and value-based fee systems would be established for services and facilities provided to public users. A business plan would be developed and updated every 5 years to ensure site fees were appropriate over time using fair market values and cost recovery assessments.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – Recreational target shooting is allowed on lands managed by the BLM unless otherwise posted and as long as such activity is permitted by federal, state, and local laws. All federal, state, and county regulations apply to public lands.</p>				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>SRMAs and ERMAs</b>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – Recreation emphasis would be to develop and maintain opportunities for dispersed recreational activities such as hunting, driving for</p>	<p><b>Action 4</b> – Recreation sites and facilities would be managed to promote protection of resource values, public safety and health, quality facilities, visitor experiences, management efficiency, and value-based returns.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	pleasure, and scenic and wildlife viewing.				
<b>Powder River Depot SRMA (162 acres)</b>	The Powder River Depot SRMA is located within the Powder River Depot ACEC. For management of the ACEC, please see the alternative table under <i>Special Designations</i> for the Powder River Depot ACEC.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Powder River Depot SRMA (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and an NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Powder River Depot would be managed to provide educational and interpretive information on this cultural complex rich in early history. In addition, river access and fishing, camping, wildlife viewing, hunting, and photography would be focal resources and activities to be managed.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Powder River Depot SRMA (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Powder River Depot would continue to be designated a SRMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Powder River Depot SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.		<b>Action 5</b> – Powder River Depot would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Powder River Depot SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.
	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Conns Coulee AMP Allotment (#01327), consisting of 171 acres and 51 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4 and T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 27 and 34), would be closed to	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Conns Coulee AMP Allotment (#01327), consisting of 162 acres and 51 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4 and T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 27 and 34), would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Conns Coulee AMP Allotment (#01327), consisting of 19 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4), would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Conns Coulee AMP Allotment (#01327), consisting of 162 acres and 51 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4 and T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 27 and 34), would be closed to livestock grazing (BLM	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Conns Coulee AMP Allotment (#01327), consisting of 19 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4), would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	livestock grazing (BLM 1996).	authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	1996).	vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).
Powder River Depot SRMA (162 acres)	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.		<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects, only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Powder River Depot SRMA (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (45 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (45 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (45 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (45 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (45 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.		<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II objectives (162 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (162 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (140 acres) and VRM Class III (22 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (140 acres) and VRM Class IV (22 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (162 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Calypso SRMA (71 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Calypso Trail’s viewshed emphasizing the ruggedness and remoteness of the area is a main focus of management for BLM. The Calypso Trail would be managed to emphasize interpretive and educational opportunities and maintain or improve the quality of river-related recreational experience along the Powder River to continue to provide quality recreational experiences and benefits to local residents and visitors to the area.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Calypso SRMA (71 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – Calypso would continue to be designated a SRMA.	<b>Action 2</b> – Calypso SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.		<b>Action 2</b> – Calypso would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 2</b> – Calypso SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.
	<b>Action 3</b> – A portion of the Hines Allotment (#01669), consisting of 71 acres and 11 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 22),		<b>Action 3</b> – A portion of the Hines Allotment (#01669),		<b>Action 3</b> – A portion of the Hines Allotment (#01669),

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	would be closed to livestock grazing.		consisting of 71 acres and 11 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 22), would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	consisting of 71 acres and 11 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 22), would be open to livestock grazing.	consisting of 71 acres and 11 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 50 E., sec. 22), in the undeveloped SRMA would be open to livestock grazing. If developed, livestock grazing may not be allowed except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).
<b>Calypso SRMA (71 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Range improvements would be excluded on 69 acres.	<b>Action 4</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 7</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (71 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 7</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (71 acres).	<b>Action 7</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (71 acres).	<b>Action 7</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (71 acres).	<b>Action 7</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (71 acres).

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Lewis and Clark Trail would be managed to complement its status as part of a national scenic and historical trail emphasizing natural and historical interpretation as a National Trail Management Corridor. It would also be managed to maintain or improve the quality of river-related recreational experience along the Yellowstone River and to continue to provide quality recreational experiences and benefits to local residents and visitors to the area.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Livestock grazing would be permitted, except in areas otherwise designated (Powder River Depot, Calypso, and Matthews).				
	<b>Action 3</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Lewis and Clark Trail would continue to be designated a SRMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.	<b>Action 5</b> – Lewis and Clark Trail would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA would remain and be managed for local and regional public demand.	
	<b>Action 6</b> – The Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA boundary would be at 16,350 acres (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 6</b> – The Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA boundary would be modified to include 14,499 acres.			
	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed where BLM administers both the surface and mineral material	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.		estates. Approvals for mineral material development would be allowed on split estate only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.
<b>Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (23,284 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (23,484 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (23,484 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (23,484 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (23,484 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Lewis and Clark Trail SRMA</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (1,144 acres, overlap with WSAs) and VRM Class II (15,206 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (1,095 acres, overlap with WSAs) and VRM Class II (13,217 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (1,095 acres, overlap with WSAs), VRM Class II (7,954 acres), and VRM Class III (4,820 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (1,095 acres, overlap with WSAs), VRM Class III (7,954 acres), and VRM Class IV (4,820 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (14,499 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Howrey Island ACEC (592 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Howrey Island would be managed to ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreation opportunities and river-related activities and benefits to local residents and visitors to the Howrey Island Recreation Area.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Howrey Island ACEC (592 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – Howrey Island would continue to be designated an ACEC.	<b>Action 2</b> – Howrey Island would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.  Howrey Island would be removed from ACEC designation.		<b>Action 2</b> – Howrey Island would be managed as an ERMA.  Howrey Island would be removed from ACEC designation.	<b>Action 2</b> – Howrey Island would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.  Howrey Island would be removed from ACEC designation.
	<b>Action 3</b> – The Howrey Island Allotment (#10111), consisting of 592 acres and 200 AUMs, would be available for livestock grazing	<b>Action 3</b> – The Howrey Island Allotment (#10111), consisting of 592 acres and 200 AUMs, would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing	<b>Action 3</b> – A portion of the Howrey Island Allotment (#10111), consisting of 117 acres and 37 AUMs (T. 6 N., R. 35 E., sec. 21 and 22), would be closed to	<b>Action 3</b> – The Howrey Island Allotment (#10111), consisting of 592 acres and 200 AUMs, would be available for livestock grazing from December 1 to	<b>Action 3</b> – A portion of the Howrey Island Allotment (#10111), consisting of 117 acres (T. 6 N., R. 35 E., sec. 21 and 22), would be closed to livestock grazing,

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	from May 15 to September 12.	authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	March 1.	except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions). A total of 475 acres and 200 AUMs would be open for livestock grazing.
<b>Howrey Island ACEC (592 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Range improvements would be allowed when they would not degrade the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 4</b> – Range improvements would not be allowed.	<b>Action 4</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.		
	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would not be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed except in designated, developed area.
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use on the existing road would be allowed yearlong from Highway 311 to the Myers Bridge fishing access site. OHV	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use on the existing road would be allowed yearlong from Highway 311 to the Myers Bridge fishing access site. Any OHV use past	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails.		<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to designated roads in the camping and boat ramp area and closed on the east side of the walking

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	use past this point would be closed from February 15 to June 1.	this point would be closed.			trail through the island.
<b>Howrey Island ACEC (592 acres) (no federal mineral ownership)</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Firearm use would be closed from December 16 through August 31 except for shotgun discharge during the State of Montana's spring turkey season.	<b>Action 8</b> – Firearm use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Firearm use would be allowed without restriction.	<b>Action 8</b> – Firearm use would be restricted and allowed only during the State of Montana's hunting seasons.	<b>Action 8</b> – Firearm use would be restricted and allowed only during the State of Montana's hunting seasons with shotgun and archery equipment.
	<b>Action 9</b> - Wood product sales would be allowed with restrictions.	<b>Action 9</b> - Wood product sales would not be allowed	<b>Action 9</b> - Wood product sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> - Wood product sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – Wood product sales would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 10</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II objectives.	<b>Action 10</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II.		<b>Action 10</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III.	<b>Action 10</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Matthews Recreation Area (91 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be managed to ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreation opportunities and benefits to local residents and visitors. In addition, management would restore or enhance the area for water-related recreation activities, fisheries, other recreation activities (such as wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, and hunting), and existing multiple uses for local residents and visitors to the area.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be closed to discharge or use of all firearms and archery equipment with the exception of shotgun use and hunting with archery equipment during the State of Montana's legal upland game bird and waterfowl hunting seasons. Shooting would not be allowed at any time in the picnic or developed area.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Matthews Recreation Area (91 acres)</b>	<b>Action 3</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be managed	<b>Action 3</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.	<b>Action 3</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be managed	<b>Action 3</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be designated	

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	as an ERMA.			as an ERMA.	a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.
<b>Matthews Recreation Area (91 acres)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be closed to livestock grazing.		<b>Action 4</b> – Matthews Recreation Area would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).		
	<b>Action 5</b> – Range improvements would not be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 8</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (78 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 8</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (78 acres).	<b>Action 8</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (78 acres).	<b>Action 8</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (78 acres).	<b>Action 8</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (78 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Dean S. Reservoir would be managed to maintain, restore, or enhance the area for public benefits, focusing on activities that include water-related outdoor activities, fisheries, wildlife values, recreation activities (such as camping, ice skating, and sledding), and existing multiple uses.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an SRMA and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Dean S. Reservoir would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Dean S. Reservoir would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.		<b>Action 5</b> – Dean S. Reservoir would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Dean S. Reservoir would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.
	<b>Action 6</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed.		<b>Action 6</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed.	
	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			special qualities of the resources being managed.		
<b>Dean S. Reservoir (162 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (162 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (162 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (162 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (162 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (162 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II objectives.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV.		<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II.
<b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Convert nonnative vegetation (i.e., hay bottoms) to native habitat.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Pumpkin Creek is an important local recreational area and will be managed to ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreation opportunities and benefits to local residents and visitors to the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on a SRMA and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.</p> <p><b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).</p>				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand (21,206 acres).</p>		<p><b>Action 5</b> – Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA (21,206 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand (19,435 acres).</p>
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – The Rogers Allotment (#00509), contained within the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area, consists of 19,487 acres of public lands. These lands would be available for livestock grazing.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – The Rogers Allotment (#00509), contained within the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area (19,487 acres), would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – The Rogers Allotment (#00509), contained within the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area (on the Pumpkin Creek Side, north and east of Highway 59; approximately 2,200 acres), and a limited OHV area (up to 640 acres) would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., the control of invasive species or a hazardous fuels reduction). A site-</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – The Rogers Allotment (#00509), contained within the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area (19,487 acres), would be available for livestock grazing. A management plan would be developed to describe the grazing activities.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – The Rogers Allotment (#00509), contained within the Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area (on the Pumpkin Creek side, north and east of Highway 59 (approximately 2,200 acres) and a Limited OHV area would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., the control of invasive species or a hazardous fuels reduction). A site-specific</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
			specific management plan would further designate the specific area.		management plan would further designate the specific area.
<b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.		
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms.	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (7,237 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (7,237 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (7,237 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (6,258 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed south and west of Highway 59 and not allowed north and east of Highway 59.
	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to approximately 28 miles of existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to designated roads in the planning area.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails, except in the general area of T. 5 N., R. 49 E., sec. 17 and 18, where up to 640 acres would be designated a Limited OHV use area by creating specific OHV trails. A site-specific management plan would further designate this area.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to approximately 28 miles of existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be designated by travel management planning except in the general area of T. 5 N., R. 49 E., sec. 17 and 18, where up to 640 acres would be designated a Limited OHV use area by creating specific OHV trails.
	<b>Action 13</b> – Developed camping areas would be authorized.	<b>Action 13</b> – Developed camping areas would not be allowed in the planning area.	<b>Action 13</b> – Developed camping areas would be allowed on the northeast side of Highway 59 on	<b>Action 13</b> – Developed camping areas would be authorized.	<b>Action 13</b> – Developed camping areas would be authorized.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			2,000 acres. A site-specific management plan would be implemented for any developed camping areas.		
<p><b>Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area</b></p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Requests for special recreation permits by outfitters and guides would be considered on a case-by-case basis throughout the planning area, subject to environmental, social, and public health and safety concerns.</p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Requests for special recreation permits by outfitters and guides would not be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 14</b> – Requests for special recreation permits by outfitters and guides would be considered on a case-by-case basis throughout the planning area, subject to environmental, social, and public health and safety concerns.</p>		<p><b>Action 14</b> – The BLM would continue to issue special recreation use permits as appropriate for commercial, competitive, and special events on a first come basis subject to guidelines in the 2930 Handbook, resource capabilities, social conflict concerns, professional qualifications, public safety, and public needs. New permits that directly conflict with permitted uses would not be authorized. Existing permittees would be given preference.</p>
	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II</p>	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II</p>	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II</p>	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III</p>	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	(5,417 acres), VRM Class III (1,165 acres), and VRM Class IV (14,585 acres) objectives.	(18,733 acres).	(325 acres), VRM Class III (15,945 acres), and VRM Class IV (2,463 acres).	(325 acres) and VRM Class IV (18,407 acres).	(19,421 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Glendive Short Pine OHV (Map 27)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Glendive OHV Area would be managed to emphasize OHV use, hunting, camping, and snowmobiling along with some dispersed use such as occasional rock collection and hiking.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Glendive Short Pine OHV</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – The Glendive Short Pine OHV area would be managed as an ERMA (3,092 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – The Glendive Short Pine OHV Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand (2,753 acres).		<b>Action 5</b> – The Glendive Short Pine OHV area would be managed as an ERMA (2,753 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – The Glendive Short Pine OHV Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand (2,272 acres).
	<b>Action 6</b> – The Nemitz Individual L Allotment (#01415), consisting of 2,143 acres and 341 AUMs, would be available for livestock grazing from May 1 to January 1.	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Nemitz Individual L Allotment (#01415), consisting of 2,269 acres and 354 AUMs (T. 14 N., R. 55 E., sec 3; sec. 9, E½; sec. 10; and sec. 15), would be closed to livestock	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Nemitz Individual L Allotment (#01415), consisting of 330 acres and 52 AUMs (T. 14 N., R. 55 E., sec. 3, W½), would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing		<b>Action 6</b> – The Nemitz Individual L Allotment (#01415), consisting of 2,143 acres and 341 AUMs, would be available for livestock grazing from November 1 to March 1.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).		grazing from November 1 to March 1 except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions). Sec. 21 E½ would be open for livestock grazing.
<b>Glendive Short Pine OHV</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			special qualities of the resources being managed.		
<b>Glendive Short Pine OHV</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (3,082 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (2,744 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (2,744 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (2,744 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (2,272 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.		
	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV boundary would be T. 14 N., R. 55 E., sec. 3; sec. 9, E½; sec. 10; sec. 14, N½ and SE/SE; sec. 15; and sec. 21, E½.	<b>Action 12</b> – Modify the OHV boundary to T. 14 N., R. 55 E., sec. 3; sec. 9, E½; sec. 10; sec. 14, N½ and SE/SE; and sec. 15 (drop sec. 21, E½).			<b>Action 12</b> – Glendive Short Pine would be sec. 3, 10, 15, and 9; and OHV use would be Open in sec. 3, 10, and 15 and Limited in section 9 (drop half section, sec. 21, E½).
	<b>Action 13</b> – Open OHV use would be allowed on 2,300 acres in accordance with the guidelines found in the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> .	<b>Action 13</b> – OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on 2,753 acres (drop sec. 21, E½).	<b>Action 13</b> – Open OHV use on sec. 3 (640 acres) and OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on 2,100 acres (drop sec. 21, E½).	<b>Action 13</b> – Open OHV use on 1,900 acres and OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on 810 acres (drop sec. 21, E½).	<b>Action 13</b> – OHV use would be Open in sec. 3, 10, and 15 (approximately 1,920 acres) and Limited on sec. 9 (approximately 320 acres) (drop sec. 21, E½).

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Glendive Short Pine OHV	<b>Action 14</b> – The shooting area would be open.	<b>Action 14</b> – The shooting area would be closed.	<b>Action 14</b> – The shooting area would be open.		<b>Action 14</b> – Firearm use would be restricted and allowed only during the State of Montana hunting seasons. The designated shooting area would be removed. Firearm use would not be allowed at any time in the parking/ramp area.
	<b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (2,632 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (2,753 acres).	<b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (165 acres) and VRM Class III (2,588 acres).	<b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (165 acres) and VRM Class IV (2,588 acres).	<b>Action 15</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (2,272 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
Terry OHV Area (Map 28)	<b>Action 1</b> – The main focus and management of the Terry OHV Area is to promote OHV practice and skill development.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
Terry OHV Area	<b>Action 5</b> – The Terry OHV area would be managed as an ERMA (72 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – The Terry OHV Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local	<b>Action 5</b> – The Terry OHV Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local	<b>Action 5</b> – The Terry OHV area would be managed as an ERMA (110 acres).	<b>Action 5</b> – The Terry OHV Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		and regional public demand (72 acres).	and regional public demand (110 acres).		and regional public demand (110 acres).
Terry OHV Area	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Bragg Allotment (#01369), consisting of 72 acres and 10 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10), would be open to livestock grazing from May 15 to October 31.	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Bragg Allotment (#01369), consisting of 72 acres and 10 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10), would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Bragg Allotment (#01369), consisting of 72 acres and 10 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10), would be open to livestock grazing from May 15 to October 31.		<b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Bragg Allotment (#01369), consisting of 110 acres and 19 AUMs (T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 3 and 10), would be open to livestock grazing.
	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.		
Terry OHV Area	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (72 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (72 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (72 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (72 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (72 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.		
	<b>Action 12</b> – Current OHV boundary would remain at T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10 (72 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – Current OHV boundary remains at T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10 (72 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – Modify the OHV boundary to T. 12 N., R. 51 E., sec. 10 (72 acres), and add sec. 3 SW/SW (38 acres), totaling 110 acres.		
	<b>Action 13</b> – Open OHV use on 72 acres (sec. 10).	<b>Action 13</b> – OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on 72 acres (Section 10).	<b>Action 13</b> – OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on sec. 3 and 10 (110 acres, added sec. 3, SW/SW).	<b>Action 13</b> – Open OHV use on sec. 10 (72 acres) and OHV use restricted to existing roads and trails on sec. 3 (38 acres, added SE sec. 3, SW/SW).	<b>Action 13</b> – OHV use would be Open on 72 acres (sec. 10) and Limited on sec. 3.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Terry OHV Area</b>	<b>Action 14</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (101 acres) and VRM Class III (9 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 14</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (72 acres).	<b>Action 14</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (83 acres) and VRM Class III (27 acres).	<b>Action 14</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (83 acres) and VRM Class IV (27 acres).	<b>Action 14</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (110 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Strawberry Hill Recreation Area (4,248 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Strawberry Hill Recreation Area would be managed to maintain, restore, or enhance recreation opportunities to accommodate existing and future uses, including hiking, hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, OHV use, and other uses as appropriate for back to middle country settings.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Strawberry Hill Recreation Area (4,248 acres)</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – Strawberry Hill Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Strawberry Hill Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.		<b>Action 5</b> – Strawberry Hill Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA.	<b>Action 5</b> – Strawberry Hill Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.
	<b>Action 6</b> – The Hay Creek Allotment (#10330), consisting of 3,616 acres and 292	<b>Action 6</b> – The Hay Creek Allotment (#10330), consisting of 3,616 acres and 292 AUMs, would be closed to	<b>Action 6</b> – The Hay Creek Allotment (#10330), consisting of 3,616 acres and 292 AUMs, would be open to livestock	<b>Action 6</b> – The Hay Creek Allotment (#10330), consisting of 3,616 acres and 292 AUMs, would be open to livestock	<b>Action 6</b> – The Hay Creek Allotment (#10330), consisting of 3,616 acres and 292 AUMs, would be open to livestock

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	AUMs, would be open to livestock grazing from May 15 to October 15.	livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).	grazing from December 1 to May 1.	grazing from May 15 to October 15.	grazing.
Strawberry Hill Recreation Area (4,248 acres)	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.			
	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.	<b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Strawberry Hill Recreation Area (4,248 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (2,319 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (2,319 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (2,319 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 10</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation (2,319 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	
	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.
	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be closed beyond the established parking area.	<b>Action 12</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails except in areas otherwise designated by a site-specific management plan.		
	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,348 acres) and VRM Class IV (2,902 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (4,248 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (339 acres), VRM Class III (216 acres), and VRM Class IV (3,693 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (339 acres) and VRM Class IV (3,909 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (4,248 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Moorhead Recreation Area (13 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Moorhead Recreation Area would be managed to emphasize camping, picnicking, and hiking. The campground receives heavy use during hunting season.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.</p> <p><b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would be offered in compliance with the <i>Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States</i> (BLM 2008h).</p>				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Moorhead Recreation Area (13 acres)</b>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Moorhead Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Moorhead Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.</p>		<p><b>Action 5</b> – Moorhead Recreation Area would be managed as an ERMA.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Moorhead Recreation Area would be designated a SRMA and managed for local and regional public demand.</p>
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Sams Allotment (#10526), consisting of 10 acres and 3 AUMs (T. 9 S., R. 48 E., sec. 17 and 18), would be open to livestock grazing. Grazing occurs in accordance with the Sams AMP.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Sams Allotment (#10526), consisting of 10 acres and 3 AUMs (T. 9 S., 48 E., sec. 17 and 18), would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p>		<p><b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Sams Allotment (#10526), consisting of 10 acres and 3 AUMs (T. 9 S., R. 48 E., sec. 17 and 18), would be open to livestock grazing from December 1 to March 1.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – A portion of the Sams Allotment (#10526), consisting of 10 acres and 3 AUMs (T. 9 S., 48 E., sec. 17 and 18), would be closed to livestock grazing except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p>
	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Range improvements that provided for the enhancement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality without long-term effects to visitor experiences and beneficial outcomes would be allowed.</p>			
	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be allowed for</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – Mineral material permits and sales would not be allowed.</p>

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
			purposes of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resources being managed.		
<b>Moorhead Recreation Area (13 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 10</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.
	<b>Action 11</b> – Firearm use would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Firearm use would not be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Firearm use would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Firearm use would be allowed.	<b>Action 11</b> – Firearm use would be restricted and allowed only during the State of Montana's hunting seasons. Firearm

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					use would not be allowed at any time in the fenced area.
<b>Moorhead Recreation Area (13 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (13 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (12 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (12 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (12 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (12 acres).
<b>RENEWABLE ENERGY</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide opportunities for the development of renewable energy resources (from sources such as wind and solar) while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.</i>					
	<b>Objective 1</b> – Provide opportunities for renewable energy development to the extent consistent with other goals, objectives, and requirements of this plan.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The potential for renewable energy in the planning area is based on environmental, physical, and economic criteria in conjunction with policy directives. The BLM would analyze proposals for renewable energy development on a case-by-case basis and authorize those that were consistent with resource management goals. The United States Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) maps and information would be used when considering and evaluating wind and solar project proposals and applications. The NREL web site is available at <a href="http://www.nrel.gov/">http://www.nrel.gov/</a> .				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Wind and solar energy exploration and development authorization would be subject to the same laws, regulations, and guidelines as other commercial ROWs. (See Map 29. See the <i>Minerals</i> section for geothermal leasing and the <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> section for biomass.)				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would not issue ROWs for wind energy or solar development on lands on which wind energy or solar development would be incompatible with specific resource values.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Adopt BMPs and policies related to renewable energy development, including, but not limited to, programmatic policies and BMPs in the Wind Energy Development Program (BLM 2005c and 2005f). See the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i> for wind energy policies and the <i>Best Management Practices Appendix</i> for wind BMPs, and see the BLM website <a href="http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/renewable_energy.html">http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/renewable_energy.html</a> for additional information on renewable energy).				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Wind and solar projects would be excluded from lands that were part of the National Landscape Conservation System (e.g., wilderness areas, WSAs, national monuments, national conservation areas, and national historic and scenic trails).				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<p><b>Action 6 –</b> Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 300 BLM-administered surface acres (less than 1%); excluded on approximately 55,000 surface acres (2%); and allowed on the remaining 2,700,000 open surface acres (98%) in the planning area. Renewable energy ROWs would be excluded on approximately 11,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above surface acres (2%), and allowed on the remaining 540,000 open Wind Class 4 and above surface acres (98%) in the planning area. See Map 30 for Potential Wind Development Areas.</p>	<p><b>Action 6 –</b> Renewable energy ROWs would be excluded on approximately 2,400,000 acres (86%), and allowed on the remaining 400,000 open surface acres (14%) in the planning area. Renewable energy ROWs would be excluded on approximately 484,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above surface acres (88%) and allowed on the remaining 64,000 open Wind Class 4 and above surface acres (12%) in the planning area. See Map 31 for Potential Wind Development Areas.</p>	<p><b>Action 6 –</b> Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 620,000 BLM-administered surface acres (22%); excluded on approximately 860,000 surface acres (31%); and allowed on the remaining 1,300,000 open surface acres (47%) in the planning area. Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 170,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above BLM-administered surface acres (31%); excluded on approximately 140,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above surface acres (25%); and allowed on the remaining 240,000 open Wind Class 4 and above acres (44%) in the</p>	<p><b>Action 6 –</b> Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 490,000 BLM-administered surface acres (18%); excluded on approximately 560,000 surface acres (20%); and allowed on the remaining 1,700,000 open surface acres (62%) in the planning area. Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 140,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above BLM-administered surface acres (26%); excluded on approximately 86,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above surface acres (16%); and allowed on the remaining 320,000 open Wind Class 4 and above acres (58%) in the</p>	<p><b>Action 6 –</b> Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 1,300,000 BLM-administered surface acres (45%); excluded on approximately 15,000 surface acres (less than 1%); and allowed on the remaining 1,500,000 open surface acres (55%) in the planning area. Renewable energy ROWs would be avoided on approximately 290,000 Wind Power Class 4 and above BLM-administered surface acres (54%); excluded on approximately 150 Wind Power Class 4 and above surface acres (less than 1%); and allowed on the remaining 250,000 open Wind Class 4 and above acres (46%) in the</p>

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
			planning area. See Map 32 for Potential Wind Development Areas.	planning area. See Map 33 for Potential Wind Development Areas.	planning area. See Map 34 for Potential Wind Development Areas.
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b> (Road Design and Maintenance)					
<i>Goal 1 – Design and maintain roads, including bridges, culverts, and primitive roads and trails, for public access or administrative needs and safety while maintaining or protecting resource values.</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Roads, primitive roads, and trails would be maintained in accordance with the following: 1) BLM policy, 2) the assigned maintenance intensity (see Table 1 in the <i>Travel and Maintenance Appendix</i> ), 3) consideration of resource issues, and 4) available resources. Mutually beneficial maintenance agreements with state or local governments would be considered on a case-by-case basis. As part of the travel management planning process, the designation will change from limited to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails to limited to designated roads, primitive roads, and trails upon the completion of a travel management plan.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Comprehensive condition assessments would be conducted for all maintained roads and trails in the Facilities Asset Management System on an established schedule in accordance with BLM policy.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Roads, primitive roads, and trails would be constructed at a minimum, subject to approved engineering standards, BLM Manual 9113, 9114, and associated handbooks. Consideration would be given to use demands, location, safety, and resource constraints when determining the type of road necessary.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – If an existing road or primitive road or trail were substantially contributing to resource impacts, the road would be considered for redesign, rerouting, closure, or decommissioning to minimize the adverse impacts.				
<b>TRAVEL MANAGEMENT AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide a balanced approach to travel management that offers a sustained flow of local economic benefits and minimizes or mitigates user conflict, safety concerns, and resource impacts while taking into consideration the unique attributes and values of the various travel management planning areas.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Manage motorized travel to provide recreational experiences while maintaining or protecting resource values in coordination with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and private landowners.</i>					
<b>Travel Management and OHV</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Designate areas as Open, Closed, or Limited for motorized travel to minimize resource impacts and conflicts of use.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Travel Management and OHV</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – In areas designated Limited to OHV use, implementation planning would designate which roads, primitive roads, or trails would allow motorized use.				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Travel Management and OHV</b>	<b>Action 2</b> – One-time, motorized off-road big game retrieval would not be allowed.	<b>Action 2</b> – Big game retrieval would be allowed, in the current hunting districts between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. if the hunter has a Montana permit to hunt from the vehicle (PTHV), on publicly accessible BLM-administered lands during the big game hunting season.  Game retrieval would occur in a minimum timeframe, using the shortest route, and minimizing resource damage.	<b>Action 2</b> – Big game retrieval would be allowed, in the current hunting districts between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., on publicly accessible BLM-administered lands during the big game hunting season.  Game retrieval would occur in a minimum timeframe, using the shortest route, and minimizing resource damage.	<b>Action 2</b> – One-time, motorized off-road big game retrieval would not be allowed.	<b>Action 2</b> – One-time, motorized off-road big game retrieval would not be allowed.
<b>OPEN OHV</b>	<b>Action 3</b> – There would be 2,400 BLM-administered acres Open to OHV use.	<b>Action 3</b> – There would be 2,900 BLM-administered acres Open to OHV use.	<b>Action 3</b> – There would be 660 BLM-administered acres Open to OHV use.	<b>Action 3</b> – There would be 2,000 BLM-administered acres Open to OHV use.	<b>Action 3</b> – There would be 2,000 BLM-administered acres Open to OHV use.
<b>LIMITED OHV</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – OHV use would be Limited on 2,800,000 BLM-administered acres.	<b>Action 4</b> – OHV use would be Limited on 2,800,000 BLM-administered acres.	<b>Action 4</b> – OHV use would be Limited on 2,800,000 BLM-administered acres.	<b>Action 4</b> – OHV use would be Limited on 2,800,000 BLM-administered acres.	<b>Action 4</b> – OHV use would be Limited on 2,800,000 BLM-administered acres.
<b>CLOSED OHV</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be closed on	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be closed	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be closed	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be closed

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	closed on 80 BLM-administered acres <i>See Special Designation Areas:</i> Smoky Butte ACEC.	35,000 BLM-administered acres. <i>See Special Designation Areas:</i> Smoky Butte, Cedar Creek Battlefield, Flat Creek, Powderville Paleontological Area, Long Medicine Wheel, Walstein, and Yonkee ACECs and <i>Recreation:</i> Strawberry Hill and portions of Howrey Island.	on 550 BLM-administered acres. <i>See Special Designation Areas:</i> Flat Creek ACEC.	on 0 BLM-administered acres.	on 2,800 BLM-administered acres. <i>See Special Designation Areas:</i> Smoky Butte, Long Medicine Wheel, Walstein, and Yonkee ACECs and <i>Recreation:</i> portions of Howrey Island.
<b>Travel Management</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Delineate travel management areas (TMAs) (polygons) for completion of travel management planning to address comprehensive motorized travel and associated impacts and motorized and non-motorized recreational opportunities. A planning strategy that prioritizes and sets timeframes for the completion of TMAs will be developed.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Travel Management</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Travel management would be conducted in a manner that would meet, or move toward meeting, Rangeland Health Standards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Except for site-specific TMAs, the BLM’s 2003 <i>Record of Decision, Off-Highway Vehicle Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota</i> would be followed in the interim and for all lands not under proposed future travel management plans.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM objective for route-specific travel planning within individual TMAs would be to use a systematic process that considered the unique resource issues and social environments of each TMA.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would emphasize management of the transportation system to reduce impacts to natural resources from designated roads, primitive roads, and trails. The BLM would also stress closing and restoring unauthorized user-created roads and trails to prevent resource damage. Ecologically sensitive areas within 300 feet of roads and trails would be closed to dispersed camping if resource damage was occurring in these areas.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The following areas would be evaluated and given the highest priority for travel management planning: Pumpkin Creek Ranch and Recreation Area TMA, Strawberry Hill TMA, Glendive Short Pine OHV				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	TMA, Fort Peck-Jordan TMA, Powder River-Carter County TMA, Prairie County-North Custer TMA, and remaining lands in the planning area in which resource damage or user conflicts needed to be addressed. An implementation plan for six TMAs would be initiated.				
<b>Travel Management</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – The BLM would strive to complete travel management planning using a developed strategy that sets timeframes and prioritizes TMAs. TMAs within the priority sage-grouse habitat area would strive to be prioritized and completed within 5 years of the ROD.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – The BLM would create a developed strategy based on information found in the BLM Handbook H-8342, <i>Travel and Transportation</i> . Areas receiving focus and a higher priority would be based on priority sage-grouse habitat areas, heavily used areas, social conflict concerns, resource concerns, and development for administrative or public access.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – The BLM would use an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach during travel management planning. Planning would be outcome based.				
<b>LANDS AND REALTY</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide public lands, interests in land, and authorizations for public and private uses while maintaining and improving resource values.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Reduce the impacts of potential climate change by sequestering carbon dioxide.</i>					
<i>Goal 3 – Adjust public land and mineral ownership to acquire significant resources and consolidate surface or mineral estates to improve management efficiency and accessibility, obtain special designation area inholdings, and enhance significant recreational values.</i>					
<i>Goal 4 – Use withdrawal actions with the least restrictive measures and minimum size necessary to accomplish the required purposes of the withdrawal.</i>					
<i>Goal 5 – Strive to increase and diversify the nation’s sources of both traditional and alternative energy resources, improve the energy transportation network, and ensure sound environmental management in accordance with the national energy policy directives.</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Land Use Authorizations</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Applicants for communication site uses would be encouraged to locate their facilities within existing compatible communication sites.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Nine sites within the planning area have approved communication site management plans (see Table 3-35). Of these nine sites, all would be designated as communication sites except Fort Peck, which is limited in space and adjacent to a larger communication site nearby on private land. These plans would be updated as needed if additional uses were authorized. Any new sites would also be required to have a developed communication site management plan. Environmentally sensitive areas identified during the grant application examination would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – In areas in which ROWs were allowed, stipulations from the BLM Handbook 2801-1 would be used to protect resource values (Map 35).				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Land Use Authorizations</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Requests for solar and wind energy projects, including testing and monitoring sites, in suitable and acceptable areas would be considered under a Title V Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) ROW.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – No corridors are identified or designated because of a fragmented federal land ownership pattern. Whenever possible, major ROWs would be constructed in or next to compatible existing ROWs, such as highways and railroads.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Applications for Section 302 FLPMA leases, permits, and easements for the use, occupancy, and development of public lands would be considered on a case-by-case basis, as would applications for Recreation and Public Purpose Act (R&PP) Leases, after classification, for recreational or public purposes by state and local government and qualified non-profit organizations.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – Unauthorized uses of public land would be resolved in an expeditious manner and would follow requirements of BLM manuals and handbooks 2800, 2900, and 9232.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – Identify opportunities for geophysical carbon sequestration on federal lands, as outlined in national guidance.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Rights-of-Way, Section 302 FLPMA Leases and Permits and R&amp;PP Leases</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other land use authorizations would be avoided on approximately 300 BLM-administered surface acres (less than 1%); excluded on approximately 57,000 BLM-administered surface acres (2%); and allowed on the remaining 2,700,000 surface acres (98%) in the planning area. See Map 36 for ROW Exclude and Avoid areas under this alternative.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other realty-related land use authorizations (including testing for pilot projects for carbon geo-sequestration, see the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i> ) would be excluded on approximately 2,400,000 BLM-administered surface acres (88%) and allowed on the remaining 327,000 (12%) BLM-administered surface acres in the planning area. See Map 37 for	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other realty-related land use authorizations (including testing for pilot projects for carbon geo-sequestration, see the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i> ) would be avoided on approximately 621,000 BLM-administered surface acres (22%); excluded on approximately 888,000 BLM-administered surface acres (32%); and allowed on the	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other realty-related land use authorizations (including testing for pilot projects for carbon geo-sequestration, see the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i> ) would be avoided on approximately 490,000 BLM-administered surface acres (18%); excluded on approximately 570,000 BLM-administered surface acres (21%); and allowed on the	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs and other realty-related land use authorizations (including testing for pilot projects for carbon geo-sequestration, see the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i> ) would be avoided on approximately 1,300,000 BLM-administered surface acres (45%); excluded on approximately 16,000 BLM-administered surface acres (less than 1%); and

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		ROW Exclude and Avoid areas under this alternative.	remaining 1,300,000 (46%) BLM-administered surface acres in the planning area. See Map 38 for ROW Exclude and Avoid areas under this alternative.	remaining 1,700,000 (61%) BLM-administered surface acres in the planning area. See Map 39 for ROW Exclude and Avoid areas under this alternative.	allowed on the remaining 1,500,000 (55%) BLM-administered surface acres in the planning area. See Map 40 for ROW Exclude and Avoid areas under this alternative.
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Land Tenure (Ownership) Adjustment</b>	<p><b>Action 1</b> – Lands or interests in lands would be acquired by purchase, exchange, revocation of another agency’s withdrawal, administrative transfer from another agency, cooperative agreement, or donation where they complemented existing resource values. Exchange would be the preferred method of land tenure adjustment. Proposals would be considered to obtain inholdings in existing or future SRMAs, ACECs, back country byways, national trails, WSAs, and other designated areas or to obtain adjoining lands that expanded the areas. All exchange lands must be within Montana. All land or mineral ownership adjustments would be based on a willing buyer and willing seller basis unless law, regulation, court order, or Congressional action required otherwise.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 2</b> – Before acquiring land or interest through purchase, exchange, donation, or withdrawal relinquishment, the area would be inventoried for hazardous substances or hazardous contamination in accordance with United States Department of Interior (USDI) policy. The BLM would not acquire contaminated real estate except at the direction of Congress, or for good cause with the approval of the Secretary.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – Newly acquired lands would be managed according to the goals and objectives for the acquisition. Lands acquired within administratively designated special designation areas, such as ACECs and SRMAs, would be managed the same as the special designation area. Other lands acquired without special values or management goals would be managed in the same manner as the comparable surrounding public lands.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 4</b> – Parcels of BLM-administered land discovered through land status updates and corrections would be managed in the same manner as federal parcels adjacent to or in the same vicinity as the discovered parcel; this would include consideration for retention and disposal.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Land tenure adjustments would be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws and regulations based on retention, acquisition, and disposal criteria that can be found in the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i>. The retention and disposal lands identified in the Big Dry RMP and Powder River RMPs, as amended, are carried forward into this plan as shown on Map 41. The land base is categorized for management into three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Category 1 retention lands manage 97,000 acres in Category I for retention with no disposal (these include the WSAs);</li> </ul>				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Category 2 retention lands with limited disposal – manage 2,200,000 acres for retention but allow limited adjustment such as through land exchange, R&amp;PP grant, and other disposal methods, but no Section 203(a) FLPMA sales (unless the plan is amended);</li> <li>• Category 3 disposal lands – 450,000 acres are available for potential disposal by any means including Section 203 of FLPMA sales, exchange, R&amp;PP grants, and other disposal methods. These lands meet the FLPMA 203(a) criteria:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ such tracts that because of their location or other characteristic are difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public lands, and are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency; or</li> <li>○ such tracts were acquired for a specific purpose and the tracts are no longer required for that or any other federal purpose; or</li> <li>○ disposal of such tracts will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development, which cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land and which outweigh other public objectives and values, including, but not limited to, recreation and scenic values, which would be served by maintaining such tracts in federal ownership.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Land identified for disposal under Sections 203 and 206 of FLPMA and identified as such in this plan would be classified for disposal under Section 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended; under Executive Order 6910 (November 26, 1934); and under 43 CFR 2400. Mineral patents are not considered a land tenure adjustment for the purposes of this plan.</p>				
<p><b>Land Tenure Adjustment</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – All lands identified for disposal that were identified for disposal in a land use plan prior to July 25, 2000, and therefore, would qualify for consideration for disposal under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act of 2000 (43 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) if reauthorized. Lands acquired with Land and Water Conservation Fund (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.) appropriations would not be available for disposal by any means.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Federal minerals underlying nonfederal surface would generally be retained in federal ownership. However, an exchange of this type of mineral estate would be considered on a case-by-case basis if found to be in the public interest.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 8</b> – The BLM would acquire conservation easements to protect open space and important resources or as needed to meet management objectives.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Applications for R&amp;PP Patents, jurisdictional transfer through withdrawal, Color-of-Title (43 CFR 2540), Desert-Land Entry (43 CFR 2520), Indian Allotment (43 CFR 2530), Carey Act Grant (43 CFR 2610), State Grants (43 CFR 2620), Railroad Grants (43 CFR 2630), and Airport Grants (43 CFR 2640) would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Conveyance of the reversionary clauses in R&amp;PP patents would be considered on a case-by-case basis if it were determined to be in the public’s interest. No lands within the planning area are currently classified for entry, selection, or location by the above-mentioned methods.</p>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Applications for conveyance of federally owned mineral interests would be considered under Section 209 of FLPMA (see the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i>).</p>				
<b>Access</b>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Legal public or administrative access over nonfederal lands would be obtained from willing landowners or state or other federal agencies, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis as the need or opportunity arose and using criteria and direction contained in the <i>Lands and Realty-Renewable Energy Appendix</i>. Methods used to acquire access would include easements acquired through purchase, exchange, or donation; reciprocal ROWs; land exchanges; fee title purchase; cooperative agreements; reservations; permits; donation of fee land; covenant language in patents or deeds; or long-term land-use agreements.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Easement acquisition would be the predominant method of obtaining legal access; condemnation would be a last resort. Easements may also be acquired for such purposes as utility ROWs, range improvements, sign locations, and resource conservation on nonfederal lands.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 13</b> – Upon project completion, roads used for commercial access on public lands would remain open unless they were closed on a case-by-case basis.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 14</b> – The BLM would be committed to providing a reasonable level of access to its facilities, programs, services, and activities on BLM-administered lands for persons with disabilities consistent with the Montana/Dakotas Equal Access Program. This level of access must be consistent with BLM’s mandate of multiple-use management and dispersed recreational use of BLM-administered lands.</p>				
<b>Withdrawals</b>	<p><b>Action 15</b> – The BLM would review existing withdrawals on a case-by-case basis before the end of the withdrawal period, or as otherwise required, to determine whether the withdrawals should be extended, revoked, or modified. Approximately 430,000 acres of land in the MCFO planning area are currently withdrawn under existing withdrawals; of these lands, 370,000 acres have previously been recommended for continued withdrawal and would be subject to review.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 16</b> – Of the approximately 430,000 acres of land within the MCFO area that are currently withdrawn under existing withdrawals, approximately 56,000 acres (which don’t include the United States Army Corps of Engineers Fort Peck withdrawal because the approximately 3,756 acres to remain withdrawn have not been specifically identified) have previously been recommended for withdrawal revocation; these withdrawals can be revoked. Lands on which withdrawals were revoked would be managed in the same manner as the comparable surrounding public lands. (See Table 3-35 for more information on withdrawals in the planning area.)</p>				
	<p><b>Action 17</b> – The BLM would consider other agency requests for withdrawal relinquishments, extensions, or modifications on a case-by-case basis.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 18</b> – New withdrawal proposals would be considered on a case-by-case basis where resource values or agency investments were best protected by withdrawal.</p>				
<p><b>SPECIAL DESIGNATION AREAS, ACECs</b>            (See the <i>Special Designations Appendix</i> for more information about proposed and current ACECs.)  <b>Goal 1</b> – Identify and manage ACECs to protect life and safety from natural hazards or to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, paleontological, or scenic values; fish and wildlife resources; and other natural systems or processes.</p>					

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Ash Creek Divide ACEC (7,921 acres), Bug Creek ACEC (3,837 acres), Hell Creek ACEC (19,373 acres), and Sand Arroyo ACEC (9,052 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Ash Creek Divide, Bug Creek, Hell Creek, and Sand Arroyo sites would continue to be designated ACECs. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on the ACEC and surrounding lands (see Maps 42 through 45). <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing road and trails.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – ROWs would be allowed.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Ash Creek Divide ACEC (7,921 acres), Bug Creek ACEC (3,837 acres), Hell Creek ACEC (19,373 acres), and Sand Arroyo ACEC (9,052 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.		<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails (approximately 135 miles).	<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration would be prohibited in and within 300 feet of paleontological localities or localities that meet the criteria for designation within the boundaries of the ACEC (CSU).	<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).			

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>minimum impact suppression tactics (MIST). Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels</p>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Ash Creek Divide ACEC (7,921 acres), Bug Creek ACEC (3,837 acres), Hell Creek ACEC (19,373 acres), and Sand Arroyo ACEC (9,052 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The areas would be managed according to:  Ash Creek Divide – VRM Class III (84 acres) and VRM Class IV (7,837 acres);  Bug Creek – VRM Class II (149 acres), VRM Class III (2,005 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,683 acres);	<b>Action 13</b> – The areas would be managed according to VRM Class II (40,183 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – VRM would be managed according to:  Ash Creek Divide – VRM Class III (7,454 acres) and VRM Class IV (467 acres);  Bug Creek – VRM Class II (42 acres) and VRM Class III (3,795 acres);  Hell Creek – VRM Class II (5,180	<b>Action 13</b> – VRM would be managed according to:  Ash Creek Divide – Class IV (7,921 acres);  Bug Creek – VRM Class III (42 acres) and VRM Class IV (3,795 acres);  Hell Creek – VRM Class III (5,180 acres) and VRM Class IV (14,193	<b>Action 13</b> – VRM would be managed according to:  Ash Creek Divide – VRM Class III (7,454 acres) and VRM Class IV (467 acres);  Bug Creek – VRM Class II (42 acres) and VRM Class III (3,795 acres);  Hell Creek – VRM Class II (5,180

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	Hell Creek – VRM Class II (12,213 acres) and VRM Class IV (7,160 acres); and  Sand Arroyo – VRM Class II (510 acres) and VRM Class III (3,112 acres), and VRM Class IV (5,430 acres) objectives.		acres), VRM Class III (5,512 acres), and VRM Class IV (8,681 acres); and  Sand Arroyo – VRM Class II (852 acres) and VRM Class III (7,469 acres), and VRM Class IV (731 acres).	acres); and  Sand Arroyo – VRM Class III (852 acres) and VRM Class IV (8,200 acres).	acres), VRM Class III (5,512 acres), and VRM Class IV (8,681 acres); and  Sand Arroyo – VRM Class II (852 acres) and VRM Class III (7,469 acres), and VRM Class IV (731 acres).
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Big Sheep Mountain ACEC (363 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Big Sheep Mountain site would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<b>Big Sheep Mountain ACEC (363 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed within the Pasture 8 Common East	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed (closed) in 363 acres (96	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC, consisting of 194 acres (51 AUMs), would be	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC, consisting of 66 acres (17 AUMs), would be	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>Allotment (#00926) and the Norris AMP Allotment (#01269), consisting of 363 acres and 98 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 47 E., sec. 28 through 29 and 32 through 33 (BLM 1996).</p>	<p>AUMs). This would include the following grazing allotments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pasture 8 Common East Allotment (#00926) for 162 acres and 39 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 20);</li> <li>• the Frank Ban Individual Allotment (#01225) for 121 acres and 34 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 28 and 33); and</li> <li>• the Norris AMP Allotment (#01269) for 80 acres and 25 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 32).</li> </ul> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would</p>	<p>closed to livestock grazing. This would include the following grazing allotments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pasture 8 Common East Allotment (#00926) for 87 acres and 22 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 29);</li> <li>• the Frank Ban Individual Allotment (#01225) for 78 acres and 21 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 28 and 33); and</li> <li>• the Norris AMP Allotment (#01269) for 29 acres and 9 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 32).</li> </ul> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of</p>	<p>closed to livestock grazing. This would include the following grazing allotments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pasture 8 Common East (#00926) for 36 acres and 9 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 29);</li> <li>• the Frank Ban Individual (#01225) for 29 acres and 7 AUMs (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 28 and 33); and</li> <li>• the Norris AMP Allotment (#01269) for 1 acre and 1 AUM (T. 15 N., R. 48 E., sec. 32).</li> </ul> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of</p>	<p>improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	
<b>Big Sheep Mountain ACEC (363 acres)</b>	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
Big Sheep Mountain ACEC (363 acres)	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>		<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (268 acres), VRM Class III (15 acres),</p>	<p><b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (363 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (363 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (363 acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (363 acres).</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	and VRM Class IV (80 acres) objectives.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Hoe ACEC (147 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Hoe site would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Hoe ACEC (147 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would continue to be allowed within the Hoe site ACEC within the Tenmile Creek Allotment (#01312) on 147 acres and 31 AUMs of the Hoe site ACEC (T. 10 N., R. 51 E., sec. 3).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed (closed) in 147 acres (31 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC would be closed to livestock grazing in 19 acres (4 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC would be closed to livestock grazing in a portion of the Hoe site ACEC consisting of 8 acres and 2 AUMs. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC would be closed to livestock grazing in 19 acres (4 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			of the ACEC.	improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<p><b>Hoe ACEC (147 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Hoe ACEC (147 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (147 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (147 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (147 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (147 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (147 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Jordan Bison Kill site would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards or protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation.				

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation.<sup>1</sup></p>				
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.</p>				
	<p><b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.</p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b></p>					
<p><b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed (BLM 1996).</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			
	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
<b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details). Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC (160 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (160 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (160 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (13 acres) and VRM Class IV (147 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (160 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (160 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Powder River Depot ACEC (1,401 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Powder River Depot would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
<b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.					
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Powder River Depot ACEC (1,401 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed except on 171 acres (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC consisting of 171 acres and 51 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4; and T. 12 N., R. 50 E.; sec. 27 and 33), would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g.,	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC consisting of 19 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4) would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species	<b>Action 10</b> – The entire ACEC would be open to livestock grazing. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would	<b>Action 10</b> – A portion of the ACEC consisting of 19 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 11 N., R. 50 E., sec. 4) would be closed to livestock grazing, except for a grazing authorization for vegetation management (e.g., invasive species

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>invasive species control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>	<p>control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>	<p>be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>	<p>control or hazardous fuels reductions).</p> <p>Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
<b>Powder River Depot ACEC (1,401 acres)</b>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>				
<p><b>Powder River Depot ACEC (1,401 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Powder River Depot ACEC (1,401 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 532 acres) and VRM Class II (869 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 522 acres) and VRM Class II (879 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 522 acres), VRM Class II (661 acres), and VRM Class III (218 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 522 acres), VRM Class III (661 acres), and VRM Class IV (218 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 522 acres) and VRM Class II (879 acres).
See <i>Recreation, SRMAs and ERMAs, Powder River Depot SRMA</i> for management of the Powder River Depot SRMA located within the Powder River Depot ACEC (BLM 1996).					
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Seline ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Seline site would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<b>Seline ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			
<p><b>Seline ACEC (80 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and</i></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and</i></p>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>	improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<i>Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>	<i>Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Seline ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (50 acres) and VRM Class IV (30 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (80 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (80 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (80 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (80 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (BLM 1985c).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – 121 acres of the Battle Butte Battlefield	<b>Action 5</b> – An additional 116 acres of proposed ACEC, plus the existing 121 acres (for a total of 237 acres) of the Battle Butte Battlefield, would be designated an ACEC and managed as a			<b>Action 5</b> – An additional 199 acres of proposed ACEC,

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.</p>	<p>cultural resource.</p>			<p>plus the existing 121 acres (for a total of 320 acres) of the Battle Butte Battlefield, would be designated an ACEC and managed as a cultural resource.</p>
<p><b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 121-acre ACEC (BLM 1985c).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in and within 0.5 miles of the NHL site boundary.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open (allowed) in 237 acres of this special use lands area only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects, only if it could be</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open.</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 320-acre ACEC.</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere, and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.		
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on 121 acres currently designated NSO (BLM 1999a). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in and within 0.5 miles of the NHL site boundary (3,176 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the ACEC (831 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU stipulation. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of the ACEC (267 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (320 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be offered on

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	121 acres (BLM 1999a). <sup>1</sup>	within 0.5 miles of the NHL site boundary.	allowed on existing roads and trails.	within 300 feet of the ACEC.	320 acres.
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded (BLM 1999a).	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded in and within 0.5 miles of the NHL site boundary.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed (BLM 1999a).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (121 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (237 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (237 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (237 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (320 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (BLM 1999a).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – The Reynolds Battlefield would continue to be designated an ACEC (324 surface acres). BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of	<b>Action 5</b> – An additional 598 acres plus the 324 acres of the existing ACEC (for a total of 922 acres) would be designated an ACEC and managed as a cultural resource.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 324 acres in existing ACEC (BLM 1985c).	<b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in the NRHP-nominated site and within 0.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary.	<b>Action 6</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open (allowed) in 922 acres of this special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.	<b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open on 922 acres.	<b>Action 6</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 922-acre ACEC.
	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to	<b>Action 7</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	NSO stipulation (BLM 1999a) (288 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	within 0.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary (2,709 oil and gas acres).	NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the 922-acre ACEC (2,419 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of the ACEC boundary (CSU) (994 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	NSO stipulation on 869 oil and gas acres. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on 324 acres currently designated NSO (BLM 1985c).	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary.	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of the boundaries of the ACEC.	<b>Action 8</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed on 922 acres.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided (BLM 1985c).	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded in and within 0.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed (BLM 1985c).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and</i>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and</i>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and</i>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>	improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<i>Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>	<i>Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology for details).</i>  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (324 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (922 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (922 acres)	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (922 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (922 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Finger Buttes ACEC</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Finger Buttes would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Finger Buttes ACEC (1,520 acres)</b>	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Finger Buttes ACEC (1,520 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed (BLM 1985c).	<b>Action 9</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 10</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM	<b>Action 10</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
Finger Buttes ACEC (1,520 acres)	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>		<p><b>Action 11</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products and Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be offered.</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Geophysical exploration would be offered.</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be offered.</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	designated roads and trails with restrictions.		existing roads and trails.		
<b>Finger Buttes ACEC (1,520 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,520 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,520 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,520 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (1,520 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,520 acres).
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Piping Plover ACEC (15 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Piping Plover area would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would not be allowed.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
<b>Action 9</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.					
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<b>Piping Plover ACEC (15 acres)</b>	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed from May 1 through July 15 (BLM 1996).		<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would		<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed from May 1 through July 15 (BLM 1996). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
				be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<p><b>Piping Plover ACEC (15 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
<b>Piping Plover ACEC (15 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (15 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (15 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (15 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (15 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (15 acres).
Howrey Island ACEC (592 acres)	See the <i>Recreation</i> section, under <i>SRMAs</i> and <i>ERMAs</i> , and <i>Howrey Island</i>				
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Smoky Butte ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Smoky Butte would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the ACEC and surrounding acres.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered on the ACEC and surrounding 680 acres with an NSO stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 6</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<b>Smoky Butte ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on 80 acres (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails (approximately 2 miles).		<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.
	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed (BLM 1996).		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails.		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Smoky Butte ACEC (80 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded subject to prior existing authorization (BLM 1996).</p>		<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.</p>
	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provide for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			
	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).				
<b>Smoky Butte ACEC (80 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV objectives (80 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (80 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (80 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (80 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (80 acres).
MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES					
<b>Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction ACEC (11,221 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Area would continue to be designated an ACEC. The BLM would protect relevant and important resource values with special management and ACEC designation. The agency would apply special management where standard or routine management would be inadequate to protect the resource values from risks and threats of damage or degradation, or to protect public safety when faced with natural hazards.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered on the ACEC and on the potential black-footed ferret habitat with a CSU stipulation. <sup>1</sup>				
	<b>Action 5</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – ROWs would be avoided.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE					
<b>Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction ACEC (11,221 acres)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> - Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.		
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed (BLM 1996).	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction ACEC (11,221 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Fossil values would be protected by not allowing earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas. A management decision would be coordinated with the resource advisor for fire management activities. Heavy equipment use would be limited to improve the condition of existing two-track roads for use as fire control lines (BLM 2004g) (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials,</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire</i></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials,</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials,</p>	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<i>Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction ACEC (11,221 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 6,953 acres), VRM Class II (2,389 acres), and VRM Class IV (1,879 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 6,976 acres) and VRM Class II (4,245 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 6,976 acres), VRM Class II (722 acres), VRM Class III (3,502 acres), and VRM Class IV (21 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 6,976 acres), VRM Class III (722 acres), and VRM Class IV (3,523 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class I (overlap with WSA, 6,976 acres), VRM Class II (722 acres), VRM Class III (3,502 acres), and VRM Class IV (21 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area (1,022 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.					
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area (1,022 acres)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Cedar Creek Battlefield would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part of the planning area.	<b>Action 4</b> – Cedar Creek Battlefield area would be designated an ACEC (1,022 acres).			
	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in and within 1.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary.	<b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open in 1,022 acres of this special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in the ACEC (1,022 acres).

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area (1,022 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (1,022 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or within 1.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary (2,260 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the 1,022-acre ACEC boundary (1,884 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of the ACEC boundary (CSU) (1,124 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in the 1,022-acre ACEC (1,022 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>
	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on 1,022 acres.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 1.5 miles of the NRHP-nominated site boundary.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails (approximately 4 miles).</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of the boundaries of the ACEC.</p>	<p><b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in the ACEC (1,022 acres).</p>
	<p><b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (approximately 4 miles).</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.</p>	<p><b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (approximately 4 miles).</p>		<p><b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (approximately 4 miles).</p>
	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.</p>
	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area (1,022 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>		<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p> <p>Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or</p>		<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and</i></p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and</i></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	impact the values of the ACEC.		<i>Ecology</i> for details).	<i>Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area (1,022 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (1,022 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,022 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (1,022 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (1,022 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (1,022 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres) (Map 46)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Flat Creek Paleontological area (547 acres) area would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part	<b>Action 4</b> – Flat Creek Paleontological area (547 acres) would be designated an ACEC.			

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	of the planning area except for the 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.				
<p><b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres) (Map 46)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed on the 547 acres of the proposed ACEC.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 547 acres of the proposed ACEC.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open within 547 acres of this special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open except for the 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.</p>	<p><b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 547 acres of the proposed ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms except</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered on the 547 acres of the</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with a CSU. Prior to</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	on 50 acres designated NSO for oil and gas (497 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	proposed ACEC (547 oil and gas acres).	and within 0.5 miles of the ACEC boundary (2,138 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	surface disturbance, a SUPO and a paleontological localities mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC except for the 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed (254 oil and gas acres).	the ACEC (547 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres) (Map 46)</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed except on 50 acres designated NSO. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails (approximately 2 miles) except on 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC except on 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed. <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.
	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	existing roads and trails (approximately 2 miles).			existing roads and trails (approximately 2 miles).	existing roads and trails (approximately 2 miles).
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres) (Map 46)</b>	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed except on 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided except on 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed except on 50 acres designated no surface-disturbing activities allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long	

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
					as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area (547 acres) (Map 46)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (547 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (547 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (497 acres) and VRM Class IV (50 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (547 acres).	<b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (497 acres) and VRM Class IV (50 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Powderville Paleontological Area would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part of the planning area (29,571 BLM-administered surface acres).	<b>Action 4</b> – Powderville Paleontological Area would be designated an ACEC (27,151 BLM-administered surface acres).			<b>Action 4</b> – Powderville Paleontological Area would be designated an ACEC (9,518 acres).
	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open within 27,151 acres of this	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			<p>special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere, and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.</p>		
<p><b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (29,571 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered on the ACEC and surrounding lands (29,156 oil and gas acres) (Map 47).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation on the ACEC and surrounding lands (29,156 oil and gas acres) (Map 47).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and a paleontological localities mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in or within 300 feet of paleontological localities within the boundaries of the</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation (9,310 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
				ACEC (CSU) (78 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails (approximately 86 miles).	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.
	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (approximately 86 miles).	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails (approximately 86 miles).		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing and range improvements would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.			
	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources,	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources,	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).	

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.			preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.	Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (7,075 acres) and VRM Class IV (20,076 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (27,151 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (24,308 acres) and VRM Class III (2,843 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (24,308 acres) and VRM Class IV (2,843 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (6,673 acres) and VRM Class III (2,845 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Long Medicine Wheel Area (179 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Long Medicine Wheel Area (179 acres)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Long Medicine Wheel area (179 acres) would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part of the planning area.	<b>Action 4</b> – 179 acres of the Long Medicine Wheel area would be designated an ACEC.			
	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in the 179 acres of proposed ACEC and within 0.5 miles of the site boundary.	<b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open within 179 acres of this special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 179 acres of the proposed ACEC.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.		
<p><b>Long Medicine Wheel Area (179 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (179 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or within 0.5 miles of the ACEC boundary (1,056 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the 179-acre ACEC (1,056 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in or within 300 feet of archeological sites and paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC (CSU) (44 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in the ACEC (179 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 0.5 miles of the site boundary.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of archeological sites and paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in the 179 acres of the proposed ACEC.
<b>Long Medicine Wheel Area (179 acres)</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Long Medicine Wheel ACEC, consisting of 179 acres (34 AUMs), within the Antelope Hill AMP Allotment (#00279) (T. 25 N., R. 46 E., sec. 3 and 4) would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed (would not be allowed) on 179 acres (34 AUMs) of the Long Medicine Wheel ACEC. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed in a portion of the ACEC on 25 acres (5 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed in a portion of the ACEC on 5 acres (1 AUM). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Long Medicine Wheel ACEC, consisting of 179 acres (34 AUMs), within the Antelope Hill AMP Allotment (#00279) (T. 25 N., R. 46 E., sec. 3 and 4) would be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<p><b>Long Medicine Wheel Area (179 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>		<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – The area would be managed according</p>

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	to VRM Class IV (179 acres) objectives.	to VRM Class II (179 acres).	to VRM Class IV (179 acres).	to VRM Class IV (179 acres).	to VRM Class II (179 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Walstein Area would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part of the planning area.	<b>Action 4</b> – Walstein Area would be designated an ACEC.			
	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open in 2,054 acres of this special use lands area (only for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be open.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.		
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (2,017 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered (2,017 oil and gas acres).	<b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the ACEC (3,313 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of archeological sites and paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC (CSU) (236 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>	<b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in the ACEC (2,017 oil and gas acres). <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of archeological sites and paleontological localities within the boundaries of the ACEC.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed except in archeological sites within the ACEC.

**TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Walstein area within the Boggs Allotment (#00353), consisting of 2,054 acres, would continue to be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed on 14 acres (2 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would not be allowed on 2 acres (1 AUM). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Walstein area within the Boggs Allotment (#00353), consisting of 2,054 acres, would continue to be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Walstein area within the Boggs Allotment (#00353), consisting of 2,053 acres, would continue to be allowed. Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss	<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and	<b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural		<b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.	prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.	(e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).  Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	<b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
					ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Walstein Area (2,054 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (2,054 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (2,054 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (602 acres) and VRM Class IV (1,452 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (2,054 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (2,054 acres).
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Yonkee Area (40 acres)</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – If mining claims were staked for locatable minerals on an ACEC and a NOI and POD submitted, the BLM would conduct an examination on the subject claims to determine the validity of the claims. A decision to withdraw the lands from mineral entry would be made based on the outcome of the validity examination.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – All previous coal leasing decisions would be carried forward. The coal screening process would be applied in response to a leasing request.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Geothermal leasing would not be offered.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Yonkee Area (40 acres)</b>	<b>Action 4</b> – Yonkee Area would not be designated an ACEC and would be managed as part of the planning area.	<b>Action 4</b> – The Yonkee Area would be designated an ACEC.			
	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed in the 40 acres and within 0.5 miles of the site boundary.	<b>Action 5</b> – Limited approvals for mineral material development would be open within 40 acres of this special use lands area (only	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be allowed.	<b>Action 5</b> – Mineral material sales and permits would be closed on the 40 acres of proposed ACEC.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			<p>for the purpose of constructing and maintaining public roads or projects) only if it could be demonstrated that it would not be economically or technologically feasible to obtain the materials elsewhere and only if the removal and reclamation would not impair the special qualities of the resource for which the subject lands were managed.</p>		
<p><b>Yonkee Area (40 acres)</b></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with lease terms (40 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would not be offered in or within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the 40-acre ACEC site boundary (774 oil and gas acres).</p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in and within 0.5 miles of the boundary of the 40-acre ACEC (774 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered. Prior to surface disturbance, a SUPO and an archeological site mitigation plan must be approved by the AO for all surface-disturbing activities in and within 300 feet of archeological sites within the boundaries of the ACEC (CSU) (18 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>Action 6</b> – Oil and gas leasing would be offered with an NSO stipulation in the ACEC (40 oil and gas acres).<sup>1</sup></p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would be allowed.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in the 40 acres or within 0.5 miles of the site boundary.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration for oil and gas would be allowed on existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in or within 300 feet of archeological sites within the boundaries of the ACEC.	<b>Action 7</b> – Geophysical exploration would not be allowed in the 40 acres of the proposed ACEC.
<b>Yonkee Area (40 acres)</b>	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.	<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be limited to the existing roads and trails.		<b>Action 8</b> – OHV use would be closed.
	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be avoided.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be allowed.	<b>Action 9</b> – ROWs would be excluded.
	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Yonkee site within the FTY Ranch Allotment (#010297) consisting of 40 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 8 S., R. 46 E., sec. 13) would be allowed.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed (would not be allowed) on 40 acres (5 AUMs) of the entire Yonkee ACEC.  Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed in a portion of the ACEC consisting of 22 acres (3 AUMs). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing would be closed in a portion of the ACEC consisting of 9 acres (1 AUM). Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.	<b>Action 10</b> – Livestock grazing in the Yonkee site within the FTY Ranch Allotment (#010297) consisting of 40 acres and 5 AUMs (T. 8 S., R. 46 E., sec. 13) would be allowed.  Range improvements that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
					improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
Yonkee Area (40 acres)	<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>		<p><b>Action 11</b> – All fires would be suppressed using the management response with the intent of minimizing the loss of natural resources and improvements, protecting cultural and historic resources, preventing fire spread onto private property, and minimizing suppression costs.</p>	<p><b>Action 11</b> – Fire would be managed by employing MIST. Values would be protected by limiting surface-disturbing activities (e.g., earth-moving equipment, blading of roads, or increasing road areas).</p> <p>Fire management (e.g., wildfire and prescribed fire) that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.</p>
	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).</p>		<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed</p>	<p><b>Action 12</b> – Management of forest products, biomass materials, and hazardous fuels would be allowed</p>

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	allowed (see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.		(see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).	(see <i>Forestry and Woodland Products</i> and <i>Wildland Fire Management and Ecology</i> for details).  Forestry management that provided for the improvement or maintenance of ecosystem functionality would be allowed as long as the improvements would not damage or impact the values of the ACEC.
<b>Yonkee Area (40 acres)</b>	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class IV (40 acres) objectives.	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (40 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (40 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class III (40 acres).	<b>Action 13</b> – The area would be managed according to VRM Class II (40 acres).
<b>GREATER SAGE-GROUSE AREA</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Protect greater sage-grouse priority habitat.				
<b>MANAGEMENT BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Greater Sage-grouse Area</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – No areas would be designated an ACEC for sage-grouse.	<b>Action 1</b> – Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas would be designated an ACEC (1,300,000	<b>Action 1</b> – Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas would not be designated an ACEC. These areas	<b>Action 1</b> – Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas would not be designated an ACEC. These areas	<b>Action 1</b> – Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas would not be designated an ACEC. These areas

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
		BLM-administered acres) to protect priority habitat for sage-grouse (Map 7). See <i>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</i> for specific management to protect habitat and minimize fragmentation in these areas.	would be managed according to actions described under <i>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</i> .	would be managed according to actions described under <i>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</i> .	would be managed according to actions described under <i>Sage-grouse Habitat – Protection Priority Areas</i> .
<b>BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Manage current and future back country byways in partnership with communities, interest groups, and state and federal agencies.</i>					
<b>Back Country Byways</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Enhance back country byway visitor experiences through interpretation.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Back Country Byways</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Continue to manage the Big Sky Back Country Byway to enhance visitor experiences while evaluating future roads for potential inclusion as back country byways (Map 48).				
<b>NATIONAL TRAILS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Assist in cooperative efforts to manage current and future national trails to protect values for which they were designated.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Safeguard the nature and purpose and conserve, protect, and restore the National Trail resources, qualities, values, associated settings and primary use or uses of national trails.</i>					
<b>National Trails</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Protect and enhance national trail values based on trail characteristics.				
	<b>Objective 2</b> – Provide premier trail visitor experiences for public benefit.				
	<b>Objective 3</b> – Maximize opportunities for shared national trail stewardship.				
	<b>Objective 4</b> – Reduce the potential for uses that substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the national trail.				
	<b>Objective 5</b> – Avoidance of activities that are incompatible with the purposes for which the national trail was established.				
	<b>Objective 6</b> – Identify and manage high potential historic sites or high potential route segments, including the recommendation of additional federal protection components.				
	<b>Objective 7</b> – Strive to restore altered landscapes to an identified trail-era condition.				

<b>TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<b>Objective 8</b> – Conserve, protect, and restore landscape elements that are evocative of the period of use to the extent allowed by law.				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>National Trails</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – See the <i>Lewis and Clark SRMA</i> section for management of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (Map 49).				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Expand opportunities to interpret trail resources both on and offsite.				
<b>WILDERNESS</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Manage WSAs so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness until Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them from further study.</i>					
<b>Wilderness</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> – Protect and preserve the wilderness characteristics of the existing WSAs (naturalness, solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation).				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Wilderness</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – Maintain the wilderness values of the seven WSAs (Billy Creek (3,409 acres), Bridge Coulee (6,024 acres), Buffalo Creek (5,644 acres), Musselshell Breaks (8,547 acres), Seven Blackfoot (20,151 acres), Terry Badlands (42,874 acres), and Zook Creek (8,451 acres) to preserve or enhance their primitive characteristics. WSAs would be managed in accordance with BLM Manual 6330, <i>Management of Wilderness Study Areas</i> , or until acted upon by Congress. In the future, should any WSA, in whole or in part, be released from wilderness consideration, such released lands will be managed in accordance with the goals, objectives, and management prescriptions established in this RMP.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – Lands acquired within WSAs would be managed like adjacent lands.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – Closed routes will be rehabilitated or converted into non-mechanized trails.				
	<b>Action 4</b> – Provide public access to WSAs through voluntary public access easements across private land or roads.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – MIST would be used for all suppression efforts. A resource advisor would be assigned to all fires that occurred within a WSA.				
<b>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Provide for a diverse array of activities or conditions that result in social benefits while minimizing negative effects.</i>					
<i>Goal 2 – Provide for a diverse array of stable economic opportunities in an environmentally sound manner.</i>					
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Social and Economic</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would assess impacts of project proposals on a case-by-case basis.				
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Identify and correct or revise, to the extent possible, disproportionate negative effects to minority or low-income populations in accordance with Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (February 11, 1994).</i>					

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES</b>					
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would assess the impacts of project proposals on a case-by-case basis.				
<b>HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE</b>					
<i>Goal 1 – Protect humans and the environment from exposure to hazardous materials.</i>					
<b>Hazardous Materials and Waste</b>	<b>Action 1</b> – The BLM would ensure compliance with all appropriate laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials and wastes.				
	<b>Action 2</b> – The BLM would respond to hazardous material incidents and sites by applying standard operating procedures.				
	<b>Action 3</b> – The BLM would conduct cleanups and reclamation in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 CFR 300).				
	<b>Action 4</b> – The BLM would ensure protection of public and environmental health and safety on BLM-administered facilities, compliance with applicable federal and state laws, and prevention of waste contamination resulting from any BLM-authorized actions.				
	<b>Action 5</b> – The BLM would minimize future hazardous material contamination and its associated risks, costs, and liabilities on public lands in authorizing activities.				
	<b>Action 6</b> – The BLM would protect the health and safety of public land users when authorizing actions.				
	<b>Action 7</b> – Prior to the BLM acquiring land through purchase, exchange, or withdrawal relinquishment, the area shall be inventoried for hazardous substances or contamination in accordance with USDI policy.				
	<b>Action 8</b> – The BLM would not acquire any contaminated real estate, except at the direction of Congress or for good cause in compliance with USDI policy.				
	<b>Action 9</b> – Cleanup of any accidental or intentional spill or release of potentially hazardous substances on public land would be in cooperation with the MDEQ.				

2-188

<sup>1</sup> See the *Minerals Appendix*, Oil and Gas Leasing Stipulations.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Best Management Practices Appendix*.

<sup>3</sup> Site productivity maintained or restored, surface runoff and sedimentation adequately controlled, on- and off-site areas protected from accelerated erosion by wind or water, and surface-disturbing activities prohibited during extended wet periods.

<sup>4</sup> No other practicable alternative exists; the unique biological and hydrological features associated with floodplains would be protected or restored; natural and beneficial values of floodplains would be preserved or enhanced; human safety, health, and welfare (associated with the risk of flood loss) would not be adversely affected; floodplains, streambanks, and waterbodies would be protected from accelerated erosion (such as rilling, gullyng, piping, and mass wasting) and sedimentation; impacts to water quality and quantity would be at acceptable levels and in conformance with state and federal laws; native woody riparian species would be protected or restored in areas in which they existed prior to disturbance; and surface-disturbing activities would be prohibited during extended wet periods.

<sup>5</sup> Waterbodies could not be avoided; the unique biological and hydrological features associated with waterbodies would be protected or restored; floodplains, streambanks, and waterbodies would be protected from accelerated erosion (such as downcutting, rilling, gullyng, piping, and mass wasting) and sedimentation; channel morphology would not be adversely affected; impacts to water quality and quantity would be at acceptable levels and in conformance with state and federal

laws; native woody riparian species would be protected or restored in areas in which they existed prior to disturbance; and surface-disturbing activities would be prohibited during wet periods.

<sup>6</sup>The unique biological and hydrological features associated with riparian areas and wetlands would be protected or restored; surface-disturbing activities prohibited during extended wet periods; riparian areas, wetlands, streambanks, and waterbodies would be protected from accelerated erosion (such as rilling, gullying, piping, and mass wasting) and sedimentation; water quality and quantity would be in conformance with state and federal water quality laws; and woody species would be protected or restored in areas in which they existed prior to disturbance.

<sup>7</sup>Noise (measured at sport-fish reservoirs) from permanent facilities would not exceed a maximum of 49 decibels. Methods to accomplish this may include but are not limited to the following: mufflers on gas-powered pumpjacks; and electric-powered pumpjacks. Permanent facilities would apply mitigating measures to minimize the visual contrast within the landscape of the sport-fish reservoir. Methods to accomplish this may include, but are not limited to, using topographic or vegetative screening, matching color tones of facilities with the surrounding topographic features, orienting the well pad or facilities to minimize size and movement, and using only standard size production facilities. Impacts to water quality and quantity would be at acceptable levels and comply with state and federal laws, streambanks (tributaries to the reservoir, which includes ephemeral and intermittent channels) and reservoir banks would be protected from erosion and sedimentation; and native woody riparian species would be protected or restored in areas in which they existed prior to disturbance.

<sup>8</sup>Surface-disturbing and disruptive activities would prevent or minimize disturbance to sage-grouse or their habitat. Except as identified above or during emergency situations, activities would not compromise the habitat. Water developments would be managed to reduce the spread of West Nile virus within sage-grouse habitat areas. Linear ROWs would be sited or minimized to reduce disturbance to sagebrush habitat. Placement of new utility developments (e.g., power lines, pipelines) and transportation routes would be encouraged in existing utility or transportation corridors. Power lines would be buried, eliminated, designed, or sited in a manner that did not impact sage-grouse. Placement of other high-profile structures, exceeding 10 feet in height, would be eliminated, designed, or sited in a manner that did not impact sage-grouse. Remote monitoring of production facilities must be utilized and all permit applications must contain a plan to reduce the frequency of vehicle use. The area of interim reclamation on long-term access roads and well pads (including reshaping, topsoiling, and revegetating cut and fill slopes) would be maximized. Disturbed areas would be restored at final reclamation to pre-disturbance conditions or a desired plant community. Permanent (those remaining longer than 2 months) structures that create movement must be designed or sited to minimize impacts to sage-grouse. Use of off-site mitigation (e.g., creation of sagebrush habitat), or the purchase of conservation easements (with proponent dollars to) would be considered to offset habitat losses. Creation of a Mitigation Trust Account would be considered when impacts could not be avoided, minimized, or effectively mitigated through other means. If approved by the BLM, the proponent may contribute funding to maintain habitat based on the estimated cost of habitat treatments or other mitigation needed to maintain affected habitats. The preferred approach is for the proponent to fund and arrange the implementation of successful mitigation after consultation with the appropriate state wildlife agency and BLM. The primary emphasis of offsite mitigation is to maintain habitat for the affected sage-grouse population as close to the impact site as possible. Off-site mitigation should only be considered when no feasible options are available to mitigate adequately (within and immediately adjacent to the affected site) or when the off-site location would provide more effective mitigation of the impact than could be achieved onsite.

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>AIR RESOURCES AND CLIMATE</b>					
<p><b>Air Resources and Climate</b></p>	<p>Alternative A would allow new oil and gas development of up to 100% of the RFD and potentially result in the greatest criteria air pollutant and HAP emissions, as well as the greatest impacts to ambient air pollutant concentrations and AQRVs. However, impacts in specific areas of the planning area would depend on the location of fluid mineral activity.</p> <p>Alternative A would potentially result in the greatest carbon dioxide and methane emissions.</p> <p>Cumulative impacts under Alternative A would be larger than for each of the other Alternatives.</p>	<p>Alternative B would allow new oil and gas development of up to 5% of the RFD and would potentially result in the lowest criteria air pollutant and HAP emissions, as well as the smallest impacts to ambient air pollutant concentrations and AQRVs. However, impacts in specific areas of the planning area would depend on the location of fluid mineral activity.</p> <p>Alternative B would potentially result in the lowest carbon dioxide and methane emissions.</p> <p>Cumulative impacts under Alternative B would be less than those for any other alternative.</p>	<p>Alternative C would allow new oil and gas development of up to 30% of RFD and would potentially result in relatively low criteria air pollutant and HAP emissions, as well as lower impacts to ambient air pollutant concentrations and AQRVs than for Alternatives A, D, and E. However, impacts in specific areas of the planning area would depend on the location of fluid mineral activity.</p> <p>Under Alternative C, carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be approximately 85%, 94%, and 96% of Alternatives A, E, and D, respectively. Alternative C carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be</p>	<p>Alternative D would allow new oil and gas development of up to 54% of the RFD and would potentially result in greater criteria air pollutant and HAP emissions than under all other alternatives, except for Alternative A. Impacts to ambient air pollutant concentrations and AQRVs would generally be less than Alternative A.</p> <p>Under Alternative D, carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be approximately 115%, 106%, and 102% of Alternatives B, C, and E, respectively. Alternative D carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be</p>	<p>Alternative E would allow new oil and gas development of up to 47% of the RFD and would potentially result in greater criteria air pollutant and HAP emissions than under Alternatives B and C, and less than for Alternatives A and D. Impacts to ambient air pollutant concentrations and AQRVs would be slightly less than those for Alternative D. However, impacts in specific areas of the planning area would depend on the location of fluid mineral activity.</p> <p>Under Alternative E, carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be approximately 113% and 104% of Alternatives B and</p>

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
			<p>approximately 108% of Alternative A emissions.</p> <p>Cumulative impacts under Alternative C would be less than under Alternatives A, D, and E, but more than under Alternative B.</p>	<p>approximately 90% of Alternative A emissions.</p> <p>Alternative D cumulative impacts would be greater than those under each alternative, except for Alternative A.</p>	<p>C, respectively. Alternative E carbon dioxide equivalent emissions would be approximately 88% and 98% of Alternative A and Alternative D emissions, respectively.</p> <p>Alternative E cumulative impacts would be greater than those under Alternatives B and C, and less than those under Alternatives A and D.</p>
<b>SOILS</b>					
<b>Soils</b>	<p>Alternative A would not contribute to a predicted cumulative increase in soil resource health and conservation in the planning area. This alternative would maintain 17,000 acres of sensitive soils and 470 acres of slopes 25% or greater under surface-disturbing actions and require</p>	<p>Alternative B would contribute to a cumulative increase in soil resource health and conservation because surface-disturbing actions would not be allowed on 1,600,000 acres of sensitive soils and 150,000 acres of slopes 25% or greater.</p>	<p>Alternative C would contribute to the continuing increase in soil resource health and conservation because many actions under this alternative would require controlled management of surface uses and ground-disturbing actions (including those aimed toward</p>	<p>Alternative D would contribute to the continuing increase in soil resource health and conservation because many actions under this alternative would require controlled management of surface uses and ground-disturbing actions (including those aimed toward</p>	<p>Alternative E would contribute to the continuing increase in soil resource health and conservation because many actions under this alternative would require controlled management of surface uses and ground-disturbing actions (including those aimed toward</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>mitigation on 6,800 acres of sensitive soils and 590 acres of slopes greater than 25%.</p> <p>Historically, management actions proposed under Alternative A have led to allotments that failed to meet Rangeland Health Standards or that contained downward trend riparian or wetland areas, ecosystems with moderate to high departures from natural fire regimes, and disturbed lands with insufficient reclamation.</p>	<p>Compared to all alternatives, Alternative B would better maintain soil resources.</p>	<p>ecological improvement).</p> <p>This alternative would maintain 520,000 acres of sensitive soils and 34,000 acres of slopes 25% or greater under surface-disturbing actions and require mitigation on 1,100,000 acres of sensitive soils and 20,000 acres of slopes greater than 25%.</p> <p>Compared to all other alternatives (except B), Alternative C would better maintain soil resources and provide for soil conservation.</p>	<p>ecological improvement).</p> <p>This alternative would maintain 320,000 acres of sensitive soils and 17,000 acres of slopes 25% or greater under surface-disturbing actions and require mitigation on 1,300,000 acres of sensitive soils and 130,000 acres of slopes greater than 25%.</p> <p>Alternative D would conserve soil resources.</p> <p>Compared to Alternative D, Alternatives B and C would better maintain soil resources.</p>	<p>ecological improvement).</p> <p>Alternative E would also provide for required mitigation in areas that buffered waterbodies and riparian areas. This alternative would maintain approximately 480 acres of sensitive soils and 170 acres of slopes 25% or greater under surface-disturbing actions and require mitigation on 1,600,000 acres of sensitive soils and 150,000 acres of slopes greater than 25%.</p> <p>Compared to all other alternatives, Alternative E would better conserve soil resources. All other alternatives would better maintain soils resources.</p>
<b>WATER RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Water</b>	Although water quality, water quantity, and overall	Water quality, water quantity, and watershed health	Water quality, water quantity, and overall watershed health	Water quality, water quantity, and overall watershed	Water quality, water quantity, and watershed

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>watershed health would decline under this alternative, beneficial uses would be supported.</p> <p>The absence of buffers; minimal restrictions on water developments; and surface disturbance in waterbodies, floodplains, and wetlands, riparian areas and on sensitive soils, soils with poor reclamation potential, and highly erodible soils under this alternative would reduce water quality and result in long-term to permanent increases in sedimentation.</p> <p>Grazing in allotments that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health would contribute to a decline in water quality and watershed health.</p>	<p>would be maintained or improved under this alternative.</p> <p>Establishing buffers and prohibiting surface disturbance in waterbodies, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains would maintain water quality.</p> <p>Water developments would maintain watershed and riparian functionality or they would not be allowed.</p> <p>Closing allotments that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health would increase water quality and watershed health.</p> <p>Closures and NSO stipulations under this alternative would maintain all waterbodies and</p>	<p>would decline under this alternative.</p> <p>The absence of buffers; minimal restrictions on water developments; and surface disturbance (if not avoided) in waterbodies, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains would reduce water quality.</p> <p>Closing allotments within 5 years that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health would increase water quality and watershed health in the long term but decrease water quality in the short term.</p> <p>Closures and NSO stipulations would maintain approximately 2,000 miles of waterbodies and 18,000 acres of floodplains.</p> <p>Compared to</p>	<p>health would decline under this alternative.</p> <p>The absence of buffers; minimal restrictions on water developments; and surface disturbance in waterbodies, floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas would reduce water quality and result in long-term to permanent increases in sedimentation.</p> <p>Closing allotments within 5 years that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health would increase water quality and watershed health but decrease water quality in the short term.</p> <p>Closures and NSO stipulations under this alternative would not maintain</p>	<p>functionality would be maintained under this alternative.</p> <p>Limiting surface disturbance within 300-foot buffers of all miles of streams would help to reduce nonpoint source pollution.</p> <p>Non-oil and gas surface disturbance (if not avoided) in waterbodies, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplains would reduce water quality.</p> <p>Water developments would maintain watershed and riparian functionality.</p> <p>Closing allotments within 5 years that did not meet Standards for Rangeland Health would increase water quality and watershed health but decrease water</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	<p>Closures and NSO stipulations would maintain approximately 2,000 miles of waterbodies and 260,000 acres of floodplains.</p> <p>Compared to Alternative A, Alternatives B, C, and E would better maintain water resources.</p>	<p>floodplains.</p> <p>Compared to all other alternatives, Alternative B would better maintain water resources.</p>	<p>Alternatives A and D, Alternative C would better maintain water resources. Compared to Alternative C, Alternatives B and E would better maintain water resources.</p>	<p>waterbodies and floodplains.</p> <p>Compared to Alternative D, all other alternatives would better maintain water resources</p>	<p>quality in the short term.</p> <p>Closures and NSO stipulations would maintain approximately all waterbodies and floodplains.</p> <p>Compared to Alternatives A, C, and D, Alternative E would better maintain water resources.</p>
<b>VEGETATION</b>					
<b>Vegetation</b>	<p>Equipment movement, sheep grazing restrictions, and case-by-case treatment of invasive weed species under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation through the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>OHV use in the short and long term would cause physical damage to vegetation.</p>	<p>Sheep grazing restrictions under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation through the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>OHV use in the short and long term would cause physical damage to vegetation.</p>	<p>Surface-disturbing activities under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation through the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>OHV use in the short and long term would cause physical damage to vegetation.</p>	<p>Surface-disturbing activities under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation through the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>Invasive species would continue to spread.</p> <p>OHV use in the short and long term would cause physical damage to vegetation.</p>	<p>Surface-disturbing activities under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation through the spread of invasive species.</p> <p>OHV use in the short and long term would cause physical damage to vegetation.</p> <p>Early Detection Rapid Response would be the most cost-efficient, effective method for</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>RIPARIAN AND WETLAND AREAS</b></p>	<p>Surface-disturbing activities (other than oil and gas activities with NSO stipulations) would increase erosion and sedimentation to vegetative buffers. Changes in vegetation composition would increase runoff, alter stream bank and channel structure, cause nutrient losses, and increase sedimentation. NSO stipulations would protect vegetative buffers and prevent soil compaction and vegetation removal, which would subsequently protect riparian and wetland areas from erosion and sedimentation and maintain overall watershed health.</p>	<p>Prohibiting surface-disturbing or disruptive activities or mineral development would decrease stream bank erosion, sedimentation, and vegetation removal and protect riparian and wetland areas. Offering leasing and development with an NSO stipulation would protect 59,000 acres of riparian and wetland areas from erosion and sedimentation.</p>	<p>Avoiding surface-disturbing and disruptive activities in riparian and wetland areas would decrease erosion and sedimentation with specialized design features to improve or maintain PFC. A CSU stipulation for oil and gas leasing and development would prevent vegetation removal and soil compaction, protect vegetative buffers important to some species, and maintain overall watershed health. Unless mitigation ensured the activity maintained or improved riparian and wetland conditions, allowing mineral exploration and development would cause opposite impacts.</p>	<p>Avoiding surface-disturbing and disruptive activities in riparian and wetland areas would decrease erosion and sedimentation with specialized design features to improve or maintain PFC. A CSU stipulation for oil and gas leasing and development would prevent vegetation removal and soil compaction, protect vegetative buffers important to some species, and maintain overall watershed health. Unless mitigation ensured the activity maintained or improved riparian and wetland conditions, allowing mineral exploration and development would cause opposite</p>	<p>recovering vegetation to its native state.</p> <p>Avoiding surface-disturbing and disruptive activities in riparian and wetland areas would decrease erosion and sedimentation with specialized design features to maintain functionality. NSO stipulations would protect vegetative buffers and prevent soil compaction and vegetation removal, which would subsequently protect riparian and wetland areas from erosion and sedimentation and maintain overall watershed health.</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>Riparian and Wetland Areas</b></p>	<p>Limiting diversions from springs would reduce soil moisture in overflow areas and increase flows from the source to the natural drainage, enhancing the vigor and type of riparian vegetation. Fencing springs would protect the vegetative buffer at the source and increase species vigor and composition.</p>	<p>Prohibiting surface-disturbing or disruptive activities or mineral development would decrease stream bank erosion, sedimentation, and vegetation removal and protect riparian and wetland areas. Offering leasing and development with an NSO stipulation would protect 59,000 acres of riparian and wetland areas from erosion and sedimentation.</p>	<p>Not authorizing spring developments would ensure the riparian and wetland areas around springs continued to maintain species vigor and composition without disturbance.</p>	<p>Designing spring developments to ensure riparian communities maintained or improved the integrity and functionality of riparian and wetland areas would benefit overall watershed health.</p>	<p>Designing spring developments to ensure riparian communities maintained or improved the integrity and functionality of riparian and wetland areas would benefit overall watershed health.</p>
	<p>Avoiding placement of troughs and tanks in areas containing important riparian and wetland vegetation would increase species vigor and composition.</p>	<p>Locating new livestock water developments at least 0.25 miles from riparian and wetland areas would protect 2,500,000 acres from increased erosion and sedimentation related to direct disturbances of congregating livestock and wildlife.</p>	<p>Locating new livestock water developments at least 0.25 miles from riparian and wetland areas would protect 2,500,000 acres from increased erosion and sedimentation related to direct disturbances of congregating livestock and wildlife. Approved deviation would</p>	<p>Locating new livestock water developments at least 0.25 miles from riparian and wetland areas would protect 2,500,000 acres from increased erosion and sedimentation related to direct disturbances of congregating livestock and wildlife. Approved</p>	<p>Designing spring developments to ensure riparian communities would maintain or improve the integrity and functionality of riparian and wetland areas would benefit overall watershed health.</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
			ensure the area continued to function properly with erosion control, stabilized banks, and filtered sediments.	deviation would ensure the area continued to function properly with erosion control, stabilized banks, and filtered sediments.	
<b>INVASIVE SPECIES</b>	<p>Equipment movement, sheep grazing restrictions, and case-by-case treatment of invasive weed species under this alternative would increase invasive species.</p> <p>This alternative would be 40-percent less cost efficient than Alternative E because of the lack of scientific, methodical prioritization of invasive species treatments.</p>	<p>Prohibiting disruptive activities would preclude weed control.</p> <p>Sheep grazing restrictions in the Bighorn Sheep Range under this alternative would increase invasive species.</p> <p>This alternative would be the most restrictive, which would aid in limiting invasive species spread through development but there would still be new infestations through natural paths (wildlife, wind, and water sources). However, because treatment is not prioritized, this</p>	<p>Prohibiting disruptive activities would also preclude weed control.</p> <p>Early Detection Rapid Response would be the most cost-efficient, effective method for recovering vegetation to its native state.</p> <p>Allowing sheep grazing to treat invasive species in the Bighorn Sheep Range would support vital weed control in those areas.</p> <p>This alternative would increase (in comparison to Alternatives A, B, and C) the percentage of</p>	<p>Invasive species would increase if priority treatment areas were areas in which the surrounding private lands were within an active invasive species treatment area and in which the respective private landowners were actively controlling invasive species.</p> <p>Allowing sheep grazing to treat invasive species in the Bighorn Sheep Range would support vital weed control in these areas.</p> <p>The lack of methodology and scientific approach to treatments of</p>	<p>Surface-disturbing activities under this alternative would threaten the ecological status of vegetation.</p> <p>Early Detection Rapid Response would be the most cost-efficient, effective method for recovering vegetation to its native state.</p> <p>Allowing sheep grazing to treat invasive species in the Bighorn Sheep Range would support vital weed control in these areas.</p> <p>Alternative E would increase the productivity of invasive species</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		alternative is 40% less productive than Alternative E.	infestations treated in the planning area.	invasive species under this alternative would decrease the percentage of acres treated by 40% in comparison to Alternative A.	treatments similarly to Alternative C, but would allow invasive species treatments across the entire planning area.
<b>FISH AND WILDLIFE</b>					
<b>FISH AND WILDLIFE, AQUATICS</b>	<p>There would be a general declining trend in habitat conditions of prairie streams and rivers under this alternative.</p> <p>Designations of sensitive aquatic wildlife species, species included under the ESA or state and federally listed species would increase.</p>	<p>Prairie stream and river habitat conditions would plateau or improve under this alternative.</p> <p>Actions under this alternative would help protect endangered and sensitive fish, amphibians, and reptiles.</p>	<p>Habitat conditions of prairie streams and rivers would plateau under this alternative.</p> <p>Riparian vigor would increase and soil erosion and sedimentation of aquatic wildlife habitat would decrease.</p>	<p>There would be a general declining trend in habitat conditions of prairie streams and rivers under this alternative.</p> <p>Designations of sensitive aquatic wildlife species, species included under the ESA or state and federally listed species would increase.</p>	<p>Prairie stream and river habitat conditions would be variable under this alternative.</p> <p>Habitat conditions would plateau or even improve in areas in which fish passage were required and strict 300-foot buffers applied to riparian areas and water-bodies. Prairie stream and river habitat conditions would decline in areas in which these conditions were not applied.</p>
<b>FISH AND WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL</b>	Wildlife habitat conditions would slowly degrade in the future, which would result in long-term declines in a number	Although habitat conditions would continue to be affected, overall conditions would be most improved	Wildlife habitat conditions would improve in the planning area in the future. This alternative would	This alternative would improve fewer acres of habitats than Alternatives B or C but more than those	Alternative E would provide improvements similar to those under Alternative D. Additional acres of

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>of wildlife and special status wildlife species habitats through increased individual mortality, displacement, increased habitat fragmentation, and wildlife avoidance of affected areas or important habitats.</p>	<p>under this alternative. Management would cause long-term improvements in a number of wildlife and special status wildlife species habitat through increased individual recruitment and decreased displacement and habitat fragmentation. This alternative would cause few impacts to endangered and threatened species habitats and slow degradation, ensure protection of these habitat and species, and possibly enhance important habitat for these species.</p>	<p>cause few impacts to endangered and threatened species habitats and slow degradation, ensure protection of these habitat and species, and possibly enhance important habitat for these species. Although this alternative would provide more protection than Alternatives D and E for certain species habitats, it would provide less protection than Alternative B.</p>	<p>improved under Alternative A. This alternative would cause few impacts to endangered and threatened species habitats and slow degradation, ensure protection of these habitat and species, and possibly enhance important habitat for these species.</p>	<p>protection would depend on species habitats (such as big game, raptors, and prairie dogs) that included habitats for other special status wildlife species.</p>
<p><b>Fish and Wildlife, Terrestrial</b></p>	<p>This alternative would contribute to long-term declines in sage-grouse abundance and potential losses of sagebrush habitat.</p>	<p>Habitat compensation and restrictions for surface-disturbing activities in sage-grouse habitats under this alternative would provide the most protection (except</p>	<p>Habitat compensation and restrictions for surface-disturbing activities in sage-grouse habitats under this alternative would provide protection for fewer acres of</p>	<p>This alternative would provide comparable to fewer protections for sage-grouse, depending on the sage-grouse area. This alternative would contribute to long-term declines</p>	<p>Habitat compensation and restrictions for surface-disturbing activities in sage-grouse habitats under this alternative would provide protection for fewer acres of</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>for those areas included in Restoration Areas under this alternative) of any of the alternatives.</p> <p>Habitat compensation would minimize disturbances within the habitat areas or provide incentives for project proponents to prevent new disturbances. Habitat conditions would improve in the planning area in the future.</p>	<p>habitat than those protected under Alternative B.</p> <p>Habitat compensation would minimize disturbances within the habitat areas or provide incentives for project proponents to prevent new disturbances.</p>	<p>in sage-grouse abundance and potential loss of sage brush habitat.</p> <p>Habitat compensation would minimize disturbances within the habitat areas or provide incentives for project proponents to prevent new disturbances.</p>	<p>habitat than those protected under Alternative B. This alternative would include more protection for Restoration Areas (including a source population area) than would other alternatives.</p> <p>Because this alternative would not include habitat compensation, habitat disturbances would not be minimized and potential off-site mitigation employed.</p>
<p><b>Fish and Wildlife, Terrestrial</b></p>	<p>This alternative would cause direct and indirect habitat loss and overall decreased densities and abundances of prairie dogs. Impacts would include potential abandonment or displacement of the prairie dog colony. Allowing energy development in</p>	<p>This alternative would ensure that prairie dog colonies were maintained or expanded in the planning area. Prohibiting surface-disturbing and disruptive activities and oil and gas leasing in and within 0.5 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies would</p>	<p>This alternative would ensure that prairie dog colonies were maintained or expanded in the planning area. Prohibiting surface-disturbing and disruptive activities and oil and gas leasing in and within 0.25 miles of black-tailed prairie dog colonies would</p>	<p>This alternative would provide less protection than Alternatives B and C for prairie dogs because it would allow surface-disturbing and disruptive activities and oil and gas leasing in black-tailed prairie dog colonies (with mitigation to</p>	<p>This alternative would provide less protection than Alternatives B and C for prairie dogs because it would allow surface-disturbing and disruptive activities and oil and gas leasing in black-tailed prairie dog colonies (with mitigation to</p>

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	prairie dog colonies would also impact numerous species associated with prairie dogs (i.e., burrowing owls and ferruginous hawks) depending on the species' tolerance to disturbance.	provide the most protection for prairie dog colonies.	provide protection for prairie dog colonies.	minimize direct and indirect habitat loss). This alternative would ensure that some prairie dog habitat remained in the planning area.	minimize direct and indirect habitat loss). This alternative would ensure that some prairie dog habitat remained in the planning area.
<b>WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT AND ECOLOGY</b>					
<b>FUELS MANAGEMENT/ PRESCRIBED FIRE</b>	Alternative A would contribute to the anticipated impacts.	Same as Alternative A: Alternative B would contribute to the anticipated impacts.	Alternative C would contribute to the anticipated impacts. Mitigation measures required for project planning and implementation would reduce effective fuels management for hazardous fuels reduction or wildlife habitat improvement, which would cause resource competition and increase vegetative stress across the landscape.	Alternative D would contribute to the anticipated impacts. Mitigation measures required for project planning and implementation would reduce effective fuels management for hazardous fuels reduction or wildlife habitat improvement, which would cause resource competition and increase vegetative stress across the landscape.	Alternative E would result in less restrictions than Alternatives A and B for project planning and implementation of effective fuels management for hazardous fuels reduction or wildlife habitat improvement.
<b>WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT</b>	Alternative A would be less restrictive for wildland fire management activities than	Alternative B would be the most restrictive to wildland fire management	Alternative C would require fewer restrictions to wildland fire management and	Alternative D would require fewer restrictions to wildland fire management and	Alternative E would require fewer restrictions to wildland fire management and

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	Alternative B.	actions, which would cause larger fire perimeters, higher costs to suppress wildfire, and increases in burned area rehabilitation and emergency stabilization (resulting from the impacts of wildfire).	provide more options to manage wildland fire within the ecosystem than Alternatives A and B.	provide more options to manage wildland fire within the ecosystem than Alternatives A and B.	provide more options to manage wildfire within the ecosystem than Alternatives A and B.
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	From 212,000 to 270,000 acres would be disturbed, which would potentially encounter from 2,125 to 2,749 cultural resource sites in the planning area that would potentially be impacted and affected by management actions. Actions would encounter and possibly impact between a high of 277 (10%) and 413 (15%) and a low of 214 (10%) and 319 (15%) of cultural resource properties considered eligible	Approximately 34,000 acres would be disturbed, which would potentially encounter 602 cultural resource sites in the planning area that would potentially be impacted and affected by management actions. Actions would encounter and possibly impact between 60 (10%) and 92 (15%) of cultural resource properties considered eligible for the NRHP. However, adherence to the	From 210,000 to 360,000 acres would be disturbed, which would potentially encounter from 2,139 to 3,573 cultural resource sites in the planning area that would potentially be impacted and affected by management actions. Actions would encounter and possibly impact between a high of 358 (10%) and 535 (15%) and a low of between 214 (10%) and 320 (15%) of cultural resource properties	From 240,000 to 410,000 acres would be disturbed, which would potentially encounter from 2,395 to 4,119 cultural resource sites in the planning area that would potentially be impacted and affected by management actions. Actions would encounter and possibly impact between a high of 411 (10%) and 618 (15%) and a low of 239 (10%) and 359 (15%) of cultural resource	From 170,000 to 200,000 acres would be disturbed, which would potentially encounter from 1,738 to 2,007 cultural resource sites in the planning area that would potentially be impacted and affected by management actions. Actions would encounter and possibly impact between a high of 201 (10%) and 302 (15%) and a low of between 174 (10%) and 262 (15%) of cultural resource properties

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	for the NRHP. However, adherence to the cultural resource laws and regulations, project abandonment, project redesign, or, as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts in most instances, would minimize or mitigate possible impacts.	cultural resource laws and regulations, project abandonment, project redesign, or, as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts in most instances, would minimize or mitigate possible impacts.	considered eligible for the NRHP. However, adherence to the cultural resource laws and regulations, project abandonment, project redesign, or, as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts in most instances, would minimize or mitigate possible impacts.	properties considered eligible for the NRHP. However, adherence to the cultural resource laws and regulations, project abandonment, project redesign, or, as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts in most instances, would minimize or mitigate possible impacts.	considered eligible for the NRHP. However, adherence to the cultural resource laws and regulations, project abandonment, project redesign, or, as a last resort, mitigation of adverse impacts in most instances, would minimize or mitigate possible impacts.
<b>PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>	From 210,000 to 270,000 acres would be disturbed, which would impact from 111 to 144 paleontological resources in the planning area.	Approximately 34,000 acres would be disturbed, which would impact 16 paleontological resources in the planning area.	From 210,000 to 360,000 acres would be disturbed, which would impact from 112 to 187 paleontological resources in the planning area.	From 240,000 to 410,000 acres would be disturbed which would impact from 125 to 216 paleontological resources in the planning area.	From 170,000 to 200,000 acres would be disturbed, which would impact from 90 to 104 paleontological resources in the planning area.
<b>FORESTRY AND WOODLAND PRODUCTS</b>					
<b>Forestry and Woodland Products</b>	Forest and woodlands would continue to decline in health and be at risk for extensive resource damage or loss due to landscape-level insect outbreaks or	Same as Alternative A: Forest and woodland areas would continue to decline in health and be at risk for extensive resource damage or loss due to landscape-level	Alternative C would allow sales of special forest products (e.g., firewood, posts and poles, and Christmas trees) and provide a moderate volume of commercial forest	Alternative D would allow sales of special forest products (e.g., firewood, posts and poles, and Christmas trees) and provide a moderate to high	Alternative E would allow sales of special forest products (e.g., firewood, posts and poles, and Christmas trees) and provide a moderate to high volume of

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	high-intensity wildfires.	insect outbreaks or high-intensity wildfires.	<p>products, with PSQs up to 650 mbf /year, contributing to long-term forest health improvement.</p> <p>Proactive silvicultural treatments would help restore conditions characteristic with the Historical Range of Variability, enhancing the overall vigor, productivity, and resiliency of forest and woodland vegetation.</p> <p>Risk for extensive resource damage from insects, diseases, or high-intensity wildfire would be reduced.</p>	<p>volume of commercial forest products, with PSQs up to 1,100 mbf/year, contributing to long-term forest health improvement.</p> <p>Proactive silvicultural treatments would help restore conditions characteristic with the Historical Range of Variability, enhancing the overall vigor, productivity, and resiliency of forest and woodland vegetation.</p> <p>Risk for extensive resource damage from insects, diseases, or high-intensity wildfire would be reduced.</p>	<p>commercial forest products, with PSQs up to 1,100 mbf/year, contributing to long-term forest health improvement.</p> <p>Proactive silvicultural treatments would help restore conditions characteristic with the Historical Range of Variability, enhancing the overall vigor, productivity, and resiliency of forest and woodland vegetation.</p> <p>Risk for extensive resource damage from insects, diseases, or high-intensity wildfire would be reduced.</p>
<b>LIVESTOCK GRAZING</b>					
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>	2,800,000 acres with an estimated 546,570 AUMs would be available for all	2,500,000 acres and an estimated 502,706 AUMs would be available	2,700,000 acres and an estimated 545,189 AUMs would be available	2,800,000 acres and an estimated 545,943 AUMs would be available	2,700,000 acres and an estimated 544,709 AUMs would be available

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	livestock grazing.	for livestock grazing (excluding domestic sheep and goats). 2,100,000 acres and approximately 422,903 AUMs would be available for grazing by domestic sheep and goats.	for livestock grazing (excluding domestic sheep and goats). 2,700,000 acres and approximately 544,578 AUMs would be available for grazing by domestic sheep and goats.	for all livestock grazing.	for all livestock grazing.
<b>MINERALS</b>					
<b>COAL</b>	Closures and restrictions would tend to slow coal exploration but not severely restrict it. Typically, coal exploration precedes leasing applications.	Coal companies would be severely restricted and the companies would not be able to find new reserves. The closures and restrictions would nearly eliminate coal exploration in the planning area. Subsequently, coal companies would not be able to continue to explore as necessary to define additional BLM-administered coal resources, which would cause some mines to close prematurely (depending on the availability of	Closures and restrictions would increase the difficulty of coal exploration by eliminating lands for exploration and imposing new restriction on the land available. In the future, coal companies would be able to continue to explore but encounter more difficulties and greater costs under this alternative.	Coal companies would be able to continue to explore but encounter more difficulties and greater costs under this alternative.	Same as Alternative D: Coal companies would be able to continue to explore but encounter more difficulties and greater costs under this alternative

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		private and state coal resources).			
<b>OIL, GAS, AND GEOTHERMAL</b>	<p>This alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts to the mineral estate. It would allow drilling and development to continue at a slow, irregular pace with numerous restrictions for resource protection.</p> <p>Oil and gas well development would be expected to occur within the predicted reasonably foreseeable development (RFD) of 816 conventional drilled oil wells; 668 conventional drilled gas wells; and 278 drilled CBNG wells on BLM-administered mineral estate (1,762 total wells drilled on BLM-administered mineral estate) in the planning area.</p>	<p>This alternative would contribute to cumulative impacts to the mineral estate. It would be the most restrictive for drilling and development. The increased number of closures and restricted acres would considerably limit, and possibly eliminate development in the planning area.</p> <p>Under this alternative, there would be a range of 58 to 444 drilled oil wells; 48 to 363 drilled gas wells; 20 to 151 drilled CBNG wells on BLM-administered mineral estate (126 to 958 total wells drilled on BLM-administered mineral estate) in the planning area.</p> <p>The increased amount of</p>	<p>This alternative would contribute to cumulative impacts to the mineral estate. It would restrict and limit drilling and development through an increased number of restricted acres.</p> <p>Under this alternative there would be a range of 728 to 751 drilled oil wells; 596 to 615 drilled conventional gas wells; and 248 to 256 drilled CBNG wells on BLM-administered mineral estate (1,571 to 1,622 total wells drilled on BLM-administered mineral estate) in the planning area.</p> <p>The increased amount of restrictions under this alternative compared to Alternative A would raise the cost of</p>	<p>This alternative would contribute to cumulative impacts to the mineral estate and reduce and slow drilling and development. It would allow drilling and development with restrictions for resource protection.</p> <p>Under this alternative there would be a range of 742 to 751 drilled oil wells; 607 to 615 drilled conventional gas wells; and 253 to 256 drilled CBNG wells on BLM-administered mineral estate (1,601 to 1,621 total wells drilled on BLM-administered mineral estate) in the planning area.</p> <p>The increased</p>	<p>This alternative would contribute to cumulative impacts to the mineral estate. This alternative would restrict and limit drilling and development on BLM-administered minerals through an increased number of restricted acres.</p> <p>Under this alternative there would be a range of 525 to 752 drilled oil wells; 430 to 616 drilled conventional gas wells; and 179 to 256 drilled CBNG wells on BLM-administered mineral estate (1,134 to 1,624 total wells drilled on BLM-administered mineral estate) in the planning area.</p> <p>The increased amount of restrictions under</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>restrictions under this alternative compared to Alternative A would raise the cost of drilling on federal minerals and make some ventures uneconomical or unapprovable, thereby increasing the amount of drainage compared to Alternative A.</p> <p>Impacts to oil and gas development from other resource restrictions are greater under Alternative B than under any other alternative.</p>	<p>drilling on federal minerals and make some ventures uneconomical or unapprovable, thereby increasing the amount of drainage compared to Alternative A.</p>	<p>amount of restrictions under this alternative compared to Alternative A would raise the cost of drilling on federal minerals and make some ventures uneconomical or unapprovable, thereby increasing the amount of drainage compared to Alternative A.</p>	<p>this alternative compared to Alternative A would raise the cost of drilling on federal minerals and make some ventures uneconomical or unapprovable, thereby increasing the amount of drainage compared to Alternative A.</p>
<p><b>LOCATABLE MINERALS</b></p>	<p>Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat functionality would cause changes to mining POs and NOIs if these actions complied with the mining laws and surface management regulations.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A: Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat functionality would cause changes to mining POs and NOIs if these actions complied with the mining laws and surface</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A: Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat functionality would cause changes to mining POs and NOIs if these actions complied with the mining laws and surface management regulations.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A: Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat functionality would cause changes to mining POs and NOIs if these actions complied with the mining</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A: Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat would cause changes to mining POs and NOIs if these actions complied with the mining laws and surface management regulations.</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<p><b>MINERAL MATERIALS</b></p>	<p>This alternative would close 81,000 to mineral material development.</p>	<p>management regulations.</p> <p>This alternative would close an additional 2,000,000 acres of BLM-administered mineral material estate in the planning area. (This is cumulative and does not account for overlapping closures.) This closure would result in a downward future trend in sales of mineral materials.</p>	<p>This alternative would close an additional 3,300,000 acres of BLM-administered mineral material estate. (This is cumulative figure and does not account for overlapping closures.) These closures, coupled with avoidance and mitigation requirements, would result in a downward future trend in sales of mineral materials.</p>	<p>laws and surface management regulations.</p> <p>This alternative would close 3,100,000 acres of BLM administered mineral material estate. (This is cumulative and does not account for overlapping closures.) These closures, coupled with avoidance and mitigation requirements, would result in a downward future trend in sales of mineral materials.</p>	<p>This alternative would close 31,000 acres to mineral material development. Some land use management actions requiring special design, avoidance, or habitat would preclude development on an undetermined number of acres because of the expense of the proposed management action or denial of the proposal by the BLM.</p>
	<p><b>RECREATION (VRM, LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS, TRAVEL MANAGEMENT AND OHV, AND BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS)</b></p>				
<p><b>Recreation (VRM, Lands with Wilderness Characteristics, Travel Management and OHV, and Back Country Byways)</b></p>	<p>Alternative A would maintain current trends in recreation, with no net increase or decrease in recreational use.</p>	<p>Under Alternative B, increased recreational demand for dispersed recreation opportunities would conflict with approved land uses, such as</p>	<p>Under Alternative C, most programs would increase in overall net recreational use through the maintenance or improvement of recreational settings</p>	<p>A decrease in protective measures under this alternative would reduce fish and wildlife habitat, which would alter fish- and wildlife-</p>	<p>Under Alternative E, most programs would increase in overall net recreational use the maintenance or improvement of recreational settings in the planning area.</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		<p>development activities that would alter recreational settings. However, because fewer acres would be available for mineral development and surface-disturbing activities, resource protection would increase under this alternative.</p> <p>Constraints identified to protect lands with wilderness characteristics would result in minimal surface disturbance and visual intrusions, which would enhance these lands.</p> <p>Because more acres would be designated VRM Class II (more than 500,000) and VRM Class III (more than 600,000) under this alternative, this alternative would have more direct,</p>	<p>in the planning area.</p> <p>In the long term, the designation of VRM classes under this alternative would result in more beneficial impacts to visual resources than Alternative A because more acres would be managed to preserve relatively undeveloped high quality scenic landscapes.</p> <p>However, more acres would be designated as Class VRM III and IV (compared to Alternative B) with long-term impacts occurring in those areas containing high scenic quality but managed at lower classes.</p>	<p>related activities such as hunting and fishing, recreational settings, opportunities, and experiences in developed areas.</p> <p>Compared to Alternative A, B, and C; Alternative D would have more long-term impacts to VRM because more acres would be managed at lower classes of scenic quality protection (from a VRM II to VRM III), which would subject a greater amount of land to surface-disturbing activities. This alternative would provide the least protection for visual resources.</p>	<p>More acres would be managed as Class II VRM management objective (410,000 acres) than in Alternative A (400,000 acres) and Alternative D (360,000 acres), but less acres than in Alt B (580,000 acres). This will result in more beneficial impacts within the MCFO as more lands will be managed to preserve the scenic landscapes.</p> <p>Under this alternative, more acres would be designated as Class III and IV, which would manage more acres at lower classes. Alternative E would, in the long term, permit areas with higher scenic quality to develop the characteristics of lower VRM classes through increased</p>

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
		long-term impacts to visual resources because more acreage would be protected under higher classes than Alternative A.			permitted surface disturbances and visual intrusions, and so would be less protective of visual resources than Alternative B.
<b>SRMAS</b>	An emphasis on recreation management activities would be prioritized in SRMAs, ensuring that quality recreation opportunities and experiences would be provided. There would be a total of three SRMAs designated.	Recreation management activities would be increased in comparison to Alternatives A and D through the designation of eight additional SRMAs for a total of 11.	Alternative C would increase management activities through the designation of eight additional SRMAs, which would total 11.	Under Alternative D, there would be no SRMA designations, which would decrease the benefits and experiences for recreationists.	An emphasis on recreation management would be prioritized within SRMAs, increasing the benefits and experiences for recreationists. There would be a total of 11 SRMAs designated.
<b>RENEWABLE ENERGY</b>					
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	Requiring special design features for Renewable Energy ROWs would increase application processing time, cost, or in some cases, relocation or denial of the project.				
<b>Renewable Energy, Excluded</b>	Managing 55,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy exclusion areas would remove 2% of the BLM surface from development, including 11,000 acres (2%) of the 550,000 acres in Wind Power Class 4	Managing 2,400,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy exclusion areas would remove 86% of the BLM surface from development, including 484,000 acres (88%) of the 550,000 acres of	Managing 860,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy exclusion areas would remove 31% of the BLM surface from development, including 136,000 acres (25%) of the 550,000 acres in Wind Power Class 4	Managing 560,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy exclusion areas would remove 20% of the BLM surface from development, including 86,000 acres of the 550,000 acres	Managing 15,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy exclusion areas would remove less than 1% of the BLM surface from development, including 150 acres (less than 1%) of the 550,000 acres in

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	and above.	Wind Power Class 4 and above.	and above.	(16%) in Wind Power Class 4 and above.	Wind Power Class 4 and above.
<b>Renewable Energy, Avoided</b>	Managing 300 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy avoidance areas would potentially limit or deny development, or require specialized mitigation that increase costs and processing time on less than 1% of the BLM (see impacts under exclusion for Wind Power Class 4 and above), leaving 2,700,000 acres (98%) of BLM-administered surface, including 540,000 (98%) Class 4 and above acres, open for renewable energy development in the planning area.	See impacts under exclusion, which would leave 400,000 acres (14%) of BLM-administered surface including 64,000 (12%) Class 4 and above acres open for renewable energy development in the planning area.	Managing 620,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy avoidance areas would potentially limit or deny development or require specialized mitigation that increased costs and processing time on 22% of the BLM-administered surface, including 170,000 acres (31%) of the 550,000 acres in Wind Power Class 4 and above, leaving 1,300,000 acres (47%) of BLM-administered surface, including 240,000 acres (44%) Class 4 and above acres, open for renewable energy development in the planning area.	Managing 490,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy avoidance areas would potentially limit or deny development or require specialized mitigation that increased costs and processing time on 18% of the BLM-administered surface, including 140,000 acres (26%) of the 550,000 acres in Wind Power Class 4 and above, leaving 1,700,000 acres (62%) of BLM-administered surface, including 320,000 (58%) Class 4 and above acres, open for renewable energy development in the planning area.	Managing 1,300,000 acres of BLM-administered surface in the planning area as renewable energy avoidance areas would potentially limit or deny development or require specialized mitigation that increased costs and processing time on 45% of the BLM-administered surface, including 290,000 acres (54%) of the 550,000 acres in Wind Power Class 4 and above, leaving 1,500,000 acres (55%) of BLM-administered surface, including 250,000 (46%) Class 4 and above acres, open for renewable energy development in the planning area.

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
<b>Renewable Energy, Power Lines</b>	There would be no restrictions for power lines under this alternative.	Requiring burial of power lines for renewable energy projects (unless it was not technologically feasible) would increase the cost and time, possibly cause conflicts with aboveground power lines on adjoining lands, and cause more surface disturbance than aboveground power lines. Burying power lines would potentially cause avoidance of the area or denial of the project.	Power line design required to maintain specific wildlife habitat functionality under this Alternative could inhibit the development of renewable energy if meeting the requirements makes it economically unfeasible to construct transmission lines necessary to deliver generated renewable energy to market.	Power line design required to maintain specific wildlife habitat functionality under this Alternative could inhibit the development of renewable energy if meeting the requirements makes it economically unfeasible to construct transmission lines necessary to deliver generated renewable energy to market.	Power line design required to maintain specific wildlife habitat functionality under this Alternative could inhibit the development of renewable energy if meeting the requirements makes it economically unfeasible to construct lines necessary to deliver generated renewable energy to market. Burying lines on public land when feasible could cause conflicts and incompatibility with aboveground lines on adjacent lands.
<b>ROWs, Prescribed Fire</b>	No impact from allowing prescribed fire.	Prohibiting prescribed fire on 2,500,000 (91%) acres of BLM-administered lands would increase fuel buildup for wildfires, which would increase the susceptibility of ROW and other	No impact from allowing prescribed fire.		

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
		land use authorization facilities to damage.			
<b>LANDS AND REALTY</b>					
<b>LAND USE AUTHORIZATIONS</b>					
<b>ROWs and other Land Use Authorizations</b>	Requiring special design features for Renewable Energy ROWs would increase the time, cost, or, in some cases, avoidance or denial of the project.				
<b>ROWs and other Land Use Authorizations Excluded</b>	Excluding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 57,000 BLM-administered acres would limit implementation at certain times or prohibit authorizations in 2% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.	Excluding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 2,400,000 BLM-administered acres would limit implementation at certain times or prohibit authorizations in 88% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.	Excluding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 880,000 BLM-administered acres would limit implementation at certain times or prohibit authorizations in 32% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.	Excluding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 570,000 BLM-administered acres would limit implementation at certain times or prohibit authorizations in 21% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.	Excluding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 16,000 BLM-administered acres would prohibit authorizations in less than 1% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area.
<b>ROWs and other Land Use Authorizations Avoided</b>	Avoiding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 300 BLM-administered acres would increase the cost and time of projects and reduce opportunities for the public to receive land use approvals. These restrictions would impact less than 1% of the	See impacts from Exclusion, which would leave 327,000 acres (12%) of BLM-administered surface open for ROW and other land use authorization development in the planning area.	Avoiding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 6201,000 BLM-administered acres would increase the cost and time of projects, reduce opportunities for the public to receive land use approvals, and would potentially cause the denial of projects.	Avoiding ROWs and other land use authorizations on 490,000 BLM-administered acres would increase the cost and time of projects, reduce opportunities for the public to receive land use approvals, and would potentially cause the denial of	Avoiding land use authorizations on 1,300,000 BLM-administered acres would increase the cost and time of projects, reduce opportunities for the public to receive land use approvals, and would potentially cause the denial of projects. These restrictions

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	BLM-administered lands in the planning area, leaving 2,700,000 acres (98%) of BLM-administered surface open for ROW and other land use authorization development in the planning area.		These restrictions would impact 22% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area, leaving 1,300,000 acres (46%) of BLM-administered surface open for ROW and other land use authorization development in the planning area.	projects. These restrictions would impact 18% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area, leaving 1,700,000 acres (61%) of BLM-administered surface open for ROW and other land use authorization development in the planning area.	would impact 45% of the BLM-administered lands in the planning area, leaving 1,500,000 acres (55%) of BLM-administered surface open for ROW and other land use authorization development in the planning area.
<b>Lands and Realty, Power Lines</b>	Within the Powder River RMP area, low-voltage power lines associated with oil and gas would be buried if feasible, which would increase the cost and time of the project, possibly cause conflicts with aboveground power lines on adjoining lands, and cause more surface disturbance than aboveground power lines.	Requiring burial of power lines (if feasible) would increase the cost and time of the project, possibly cause conflicts with aboveground power lines on adjoining lands, and cause more surface disturbance than aboveground power lines. Burying power lines would potentially cause avoidance of the area or denial of the project.	Power line restrictions would prohibit power line ROWs, particularly for aboveground power lines unless the power line can be designed in a manner that maintained specific wildlife habitat functionality. These restrictions would increase the cost and time of projects and would potentially cause avoidance of the area or denial of the project.	Power line restrictions would prohibit power line ROWs, particularly for aboveground power lines unless the power line can be designed in a manner that maintained specific wildlife habitat functionality. These restrictions would increase the cost and time of projects and would potentially cause avoidance of the area or denial of the project.	Requiring burial of low-voltage power lines for renewable energy projects (if feasible) or specialized design features that maintained habitat would increase the cost and time of projects, cause more surface disturbance than aboveground power lines, and possibly cause conflicts with aboveground power lines on adjoining lands.

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
<b>ROWs and other Land Use Authorizations, Prescribed Fire</b>	No impact from allowing prescribed fire.	Prohibiting prescribed fire on 2,500,000 (91%) acres of BLM-administered lands would increase fuel buildup for wildland fires, which would increase the susceptibility of ROW and other land use authorization facilities to damage.	No impact from allowing prescribed fire.		
<b>SPECIAL DESIGNATION AREAS</b>					
<b>ACECs</b>	In almost all circumstances, impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be avoided by project redesign or relocation, which would eliminate the need for implementation of mitigation measures. However, should impacts be unavoidable, mitigation would be applied prior to the authorization of project implementation.				
	The Ash Creek Divide, Bug Creek, Hell Creek, Sand Arroyo, Big Sheep Mountain, Hoe, Jordan Bison Kill, Powder River Depot, Seline, Finger Buttes, Piping Plover, Smoky Butte, and Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction would continue to be designated ACECs. Little, if any, impacts would occur to resources within	The Ash Creek Divide, Bug Creek, Hell Creek, Sand Arroyo, Big Sheep Mountain, Hoe, Jordan Bison Kill, Powder River Depot, Seline, Finger Buttes, Piping Plover, Smoky Butte, and Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Area would continue to be designated ACECs. The Cedar Creek Battlefield, Flat Creek Paleontological Area, Powderville Paleontological Area, Long Medicine Wheel Area, Walstein Area, and Yonkee Area would be designated ACECs. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs as they would be protected from the variety of management actions.			

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	ACECs because they would be protected from the variety of management actions.				
<b>Ash Creek Divide ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 7,921 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Bug Creek ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 3,837 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Hell Creek ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 19,373 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Sand Arroyo ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 9,052 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Big Sheep Mountain ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 363 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Hoe ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 147 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Jordan Bison Kill ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 160 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Powder River Depot ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 1,401 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Seline ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 80 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Battle Butte Battlefield ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 121 acres under this alternative. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs as they would be protected from the variety of management actions.	The ACEC would be 237 acres under this alternative. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs as they would be protected from the variety of management actions.	The ACEC would be 320 acres under this alternative. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs as they would be protected from the variety of management actions.		
<b>Reynolds Battlefield ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 324 acres under this alternative. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs because they would	The Reynolds Battlefield area would increase to 922 acres. Little if any impacts would occur to resources within ACECs because they would be protected from the variety of management actions.			

<b>TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE</b>					
<b>Resource or Resource Use</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E (Preferred)</b>
	be protected from the variety of management actions.				
<b>Finger Buttes ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 1,520 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Piping Plover ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 16 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Smoky Butte ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 80 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction ACEC</b>	The ACEC would be 11,221 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Cedar Creek Battlefield Area</b>	The area would be 1,022 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Flat Creek Paleontological Area</b>	The area would be 547 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Powderville Paleontological Area</b>	The area would be 29,571 acres under this alternative.	The ACEC would be 27,151 acres under this alternative.	The ACEC would be 27,151 acres under this alternative.	The ACEC would be 27,151 acres under this alternative.	The ACEC would be 9,518 acres under this alternative.
<b>Long Medicine Wheel Area</b>	The area would be 179 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Walstein Area</b>	The area would be 2,054 acres under this alternative.				
<b>Yonkee Area</b>	The area would be 40 acres under this alternative.				
<b>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC</b>					
<b>Social and Economic</b>	Continuation of current management would maintain or enhance the quality of life of permittees, those who prefer resource use, and many residents of local communities.  Those who prefer resource protection for prairie ecosystems (including greater	This alternative would enhance the quality of life of those who prefer resource protection and recreation that provides primitive, quiet experiences. Permittees, those who favor resource use, OHV enthusiasts, and many residents of local communities, would not feel their	This alternative would maintain the quality of life of those who prefer resource protection for prairie ecosystems (including greater sage-grouse habitat) and primitive, quiet recreation opportunities. Permittees, those who favor resource use, OHV	This alternative would maintain or enhance the quality of life of permittees, those who prefer resource use, many residents of local communities, and those who participate in off-road recreation opportunities. Those who prefer resource protection	This alternative may maintain the quality of life of those who prefer resource protection for prairie ecosystems (including greater sage-grouse habitat) and primitive, quiet recreation opportunities. Permittees, those who favor resource use, OHV enthusiasts, and

**TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE**

Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
	<p>sage-grouse habitat) and primitive, quiet recreation opportunities would not feel these resources would receive adequate protection and may experience a decline in quality of life.</p> <p>Total local jobs and associated labor income related to BLM land management would be an estimated 2,278 jobs and \$126 million, an increase of 45% and 48.2% from current levels.</p>	<p>concerns were adequately addressed and may experience a decline in quality of life. Opportunities for primitive, quiet recreation experiences would be greatest under this alternative.</p> <p>Total local jobs and associated labor income related to BLM land management would be an estimated 1,596 jobs and \$86.7 million, an increase of 1.5% and 1.8% from current levels.</p> <p>Overall, employment and income related to BLM activities would increase by approximately 2% from current levels, which would be lower than under other alternatives.</p>	<p>enthusiasts, and some residents of local communities, would also feel their concerns were addressed.</p> <p>Total local jobs and associated labor income related to BLM land management would be an estimated 2,081 jobs and \$113.6 million, an increase of 32.4% and 33.5% from current levels.</p>	<p>for prairie ecosystems (including greater sage-grouse habitat) and primitive, quiet recreation opportunities would not feel that these resources would receive adequate protection and may experience a decline in quality of life. Except for Alternative A, this alternative would be result in the highest levels of resource use.</p> <p>Total local jobs and associated labor income related to BLM land management would be an estimated 2,135 jobs and \$117.2 million, an increase of 35.8% and 37.7% from current levels.</p> <p>This alternative would allow the highest levels</p>	<p>some residents of local communities, may also feel that their concerns were addressed.</p> <p>Total local jobs and associated labor income related to BLM land management would be an estimated 1,986 jobs and \$109 million, an increase of 26.4% and 27.8% from current levels.</p>

TABLE 2-2. SUMMARY COMPARISON OF IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE					
Resource or Resource Use	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
				livestock grazing, coal exploration and oil and gas development except for Alternative A.	



Long-tailed weasel in winter near Ekalaka, Montana

**This page intentionally left blank.**