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Bureau of Land Management

Casper Field Office, Wyoming

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**Trapper's Route
Recreation Area Management Plan
and
Environmental Assessment
WY-060-EA06-107**



Introduction

The North Platte River begins in Colorado and flows north through central Wyoming, where the river veers eastward merging with the South Platte River in Nebraska. Its flow is controlled by a series of dams strategically located along its course- providing municipal water supplies, irrigation, hydroelectric power and recreational opportunities. This river, once shallow and wide, is becoming narrow, deeper and more channelized due to the influence of the dams.

Scenic and recreational values of the North Platte River are derived from a combination of environmental factors and management practices. It's year round water flow, geologic formations, changing plant communities and abundance of wildlife contribute to the recreational experience. The North Platte River is highly valued as a Class 1 fishery and is rated a Blue Ribbon by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Game fish species include rainbow, brown and cutthroat trout. The most common recreation activities are fishing, floating, waterfowl hunting and wildlife observation. There are also opportunities for picnicking and camping. This river remains a vital part of the heritage and culture of central Wyoming.

Purpose and Need

The Platte River Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP), written in 1985, (Decision R1) states that a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) will be prepared for federal lands generally within 1/4 mile of the North Platte River. Public lands to be included are seven Trapper's Route Landing Sites, Bessemer Bend Historic Site and ten riverfront parcels between Casper and the Wyoming-Nebraska state line. Access constraints and the quality of fishing concentrate the majority of recreation use to the area between Alcova and Casper (Robertson Road Bridge), thereby focusing management upstream of Casper. This area is approximately 41 river miles long and contains 5.15 miles, approximately 3,824 acres of federally administered surface (Map1). Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) will be limited to those federal lands that are both identified in the RMP and upstream of Casper. The eastern downstream parcels may be included in the Trapper's Route RAMP as time, money and recreational demands dictate.

The BLM has managed the area with relatively few recreational constraints and limited user facilities. This approach has generally been accepted by local constituents for over twenty years. The popularity of the river has increased with the notary of the area. Overall visitation numbers, primarily related to fly fishing, have surged in the past 10 years. Increasing by approximately 600%. An increasing number of local and out-of-state businesses have taken advantage of this growing opportunity to guide fisherman. Their advertising efforts have substantially promoted the recreational aspects of the North Platte.

The economy of Casper has benefited from out-of-state recreation dollars and new job opportunities. At the same time, increased competition among differing user groups has exacerbated conflicts among local users, fly fishing guides and neighboring landowners. Unregulated Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use has resulted in soil compaction, increased erosion and has led to the proliferation of non-native invasive plant species. Livestock grazing also contributes to the spread of invasive plant species. Visitors cut cottonwoods for firewood reducing the health of these species, and livestock grazing has reduced vigor of native perennial vegetation at some locations. A combination of site upgrades and reclamation projects are essential for ecosystem health and to sustain visitor satisfaction.

The purpose of this document is to outline recreation management within the defined boundaries of the Trapper's Route RAMP. RAMP goals are to enhance individual and social benefits derived from quality recreational experiences and to sustain or improve important wildlife habitats within this corridor. Other management goals that may be realized through this planning effort include greater community involvement in volunteerism, cooperative management, partnerships and environmental education.

Overall objectives are to provide a range of recreation opportunities in order to maintain or increase user satisfaction, and to minimize the environmental impact related to recreation use. Management effectiveness will be evaluated.

Land Use Plan Conformance:

The 1985, North Platte River Resource Area Resource Management Plan (Casper Field Office) and other related planning documents were reviewed for decisions applicable to the proposed Trapper's Route RAMP. These decisions are listed below and have been mapped for clarification on Map 2.

Decision R1: In addition to defining the boundaries of the Trapper's Route RAMP, decision R1 allows for surface development of recreation facilities within the RAMP boundary, protects specific parcels from sale and other forms of disposal and facilitates easements and land exchanges within the boundary to support recreation opportunities.

Decision R2: Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use is to be limited to designated roads and trails.

Decision R4: The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) system will be applied where required to mitigate impacts of surface development. The vast majority of the area is currently managed to meet VRM Class III objectives. Class III objectives state that visual intrusions may be seen and draw the attention of the viewer, but should be subordinate to basic elements such as line, form, color and texture found within the natural landscapes. Less than 24% of the total surface is managed to VRM Class IV. Objectives for this class allow for visual intrusions to dominate the landscape, but, mitigation is encouraged.

Decision SWA2: For the protection of water, surface development will be prohibited within 1/4 mile of the North Platte River.

Decision M4: Trapper's Route is withdrawn under Executive Order 6025 as a public water reserve, which excludes mining activities.

Decision M4: Mineral material such as sand and gravel, moss rock, flagstone and scoria will not be made available for sale or free use within ¼ mile of the North Platte River.

Decision L3: Restricts Rights-Of-Way within 1 mile of the river.

RMU7: The 1985 RMP stipulates that within ¼ mile of the river, surface occupancy will be limited to recreational facilities. These public parcels are available for livestock grazing; however grazing leases may be adjusted to meet management objectives.

Another related planning document includes the following:

The Bald Eagle Habitat Management Plan for the Platte River Resource Area and Jackson Canyon ACEC completed in 1992, restricts surface development within ½ mile for certain sections of the North Platte River on a year-round basis; limits surface use from November 1 through March 31; and states that the BLM will improve bald eagle habitat within the planning area by planting cottonwoods, or placing suitable roosting structures along the river upstream from Casper.

<i>Document</i>	<i>Resource</i>
16 U.S.C. 433, Antiquities Act	Cultural
16 U.S.C. 470aa, Archaeological Resource Protection Act	Cultural
16 U.S.C. 470, National Historic Preservation Act	Cultural
43 U.S.C. Federal Land Policy and Management Act	Federal Actions
16 U.S.C. 4601-4, Land and Water Conservation Act, as amended	Land Tenure
43 CFR 8340	OHV
43 USC 1201	OHV
Executive Order 11644 (as amended by Executive Order 11989)	OHV
BLM Manual 8341, Conditions of Use (Off-Road Vehicles)	OHV
BLM Manual 8342, Designation of Roads and Trails	OHV
42 U.S.C. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969	Planning
BLM Manual Special Recreation Permit 8372	SRP
BLM Handbook H-8372-2	SRP
BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1 and H-843-1	Visual Resources
BLM Manual 1616,1620 and 1621	Visual Resources
16 U.S.C. 670, et seq., Sikes Act of 1974	Wildlife

Table 1: Federal Regulations and Guidance relevant to this RAMP

Public Involvement

The RAMP planning processes began in the spring of 2002, when the BLM conducted an on-site recreational survey. Questionnaires were placed in existing registration boxes at various BLM landing sites and were handed out by BLM personnel. Participants completed a series of questions pertaining to user satisfaction, quality of recreational activities and resource management. Demographic information was also collected. A single, open-ended question allowed for the public to provide suggestions to improve the quality of their experience.

Results of the survey indicated that 78% of visitors consider overall recreational management of the area above average. Ranking of specific management actions, such as appropriate recreation use, condition of facilities and the quality of resource protection, indicated that the majority of visitors were relatively satisfied with their experience. However, the BLM received lower scores for poor maintenance of roads and trails, inadequate differentiation of land status, and lack of sufficient law enforcement. Conversations with participants revealed that the perception of a lack of law enforcement relates to increased conflicts among users, lack of information, uncertain property boundaries, uncontrolled OHVs and vandalism.

The most common comments received regarding desired enhancement of the quality of recreational experience included improved roads and trails, comfort facilities, additional boat ramps, shade trees and higher-quality recreational maps. Additionally, land acquisition was ranked as either important or very important by the majority (78%) of all participants.

Management actions in 2003 and 2004 included the acquisition of additional 193 acres property, the creation of a new brochure, facilities maintenance, and site inventories including the number and quality of roads and trails. Informal meetings with permit-holding fly fishing guides and outfitters have been held on yearly basis to promote working relationships and to allow for the free exchange of information and ideas on resource management.

A public scoping meeting was held on July 7, 2005 and was attended by 17 members of the public. Attendees were receptive to the planning effort and showed genuine interest in recreational improvements along the river. The BLM was encouraged to promote cooperative management practices and seek

additional public access to the river. Only two written comments were received. Issues brought forth during the scoping process included the number of Special Recreation Permits (SRPs), need for additional facilities (particularly boat ramps, trash clean-up, and available shade trees), jurisdictional boundaries and the need for additional law enforcement.

In August of 2005, the BLM assembled a public working group to inventory the spectrum of recreation opportunities along the river corridor and to assist in planning efforts. Descriptions of existing recreational opportunities are a result of the Water Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (WROS) inventory (Appendix 1) completed in July of 2005. While the RAMP will be focused solely on BLM administered properties (5.15 river miles), the WROS inventory includes non-federal landing sites in order to holistically evaluate recreational use and cumulative impacts between Alcova and Casper. The BLM does not intend to extend its managerial influence beyond its political or jurisdictional boundaries.

The Existing Environment:

Cultural Resources

The North Platte River, as a permanent water source in an otherwise semiarid environment, has been the scene of human activity since the first people entered the region some 12,000 years ago. The river provided water and such primary resources as fish and shellfish, and supported large and small game populations along with a broad variety of vegetable foods. In addition, the river corridor provided shelter and firewood. This continuous corridor of high quality resources enabled travelers to pass from the Great Plains of eastern Wyoming west to the confluence with the Sweetwater. From there, travel to the south toward the Colorado Rockies and west to the Wind River and Green River basins was feasible. As a resource base and travel route for thousands of years, the river corridor contains abundant prehistoric cultural resources. Historically, the corridor was used by trappers and explorers who left few physical traces of their passing. The later Oregon Trail travelers left the river at Bessemer Bend; other traces of the massive westward expansion are not evident in the study area.

Most of the planning area has not had a cultural resource inventory, apart from isolated project-specific activities. At present, there are five known sites which could be affected by RAMP decisions. These run the gamut from prehistoric camps to Government Bridge. Prehistoric and early historic period sites are unlikely to be present immediately adjacent to the river, as the low-lying banks were subject to seasonal flooding and mobile channels prior to construction of Pathfinder Dam in 1905. Consequently, any sites that might have been present on the actual floodplain will have washed away, or been covered by alluvium and rendered undetectable. Sites on the bluffs above the river would remain intact.

Five known sites are located within or adjacent to proposed activity areas. Four of these are at Landing No. 4 near Government Bridge and one adjacent to the Landing No. 7, Bates Creek. At Government Bridge, site 48NA358 (ineligible lithic scatter) is situated between the current highway and the boat ramp access road, and about 120 m east of the river. Site 48NA786 (eligible, steel bridge) is the original Government Bridge. Although it lies within the Landing No. 4 activity area, no disturbance to it will occur from either recreational use or from development activities. Site 48NA3296 (ineligible, prehistoric open camp) is located some 300 m west of the river on the north side of US20-26. While within the Landing No. 4 area, it is not in an area of significant interest to visitors. Moreover, sites 48NA358 and 48NA3296 were likely destroyed during recent highway and bridge construction. Site 48NA3297 (unevaluated, open camp) is situated on the bluff immediately adjacent to the western abutment of the original steel bridge. Recreational activity in the vicinity will likely not encroach on the site. Evaluative testing will be conducted prior to any proposed developments that might disturb 48NA3267. Site 48NA1207 (eligible, open camp) is located on the extreme western edge of the Landing No. 7 area at Bates Creek. Situated on the bluff, it is unlikely that recreational activities in the area will affect it.

Soils and Vegetation

The North Platte River is central to the local ecosystem. The riparian area provides for numerous species of flora and fauna. Vegetation communities found along the corridor are influenced by soil type and water availability and by human activities such as reservoir management, agricultural practices and recreation use. Pockets of plains and narrowleaf cottonwoods, willow, rubber rabbitbrush, silver buffaloberry and, snowberry are scattered along the banks, separated by large stretches devoid of woody species. Treeless areas are commonly dominated by Baltic rush, Nebraska sedge, prairie cordgrass, redtop, silver sage and greasewood. Islands are characterized by native grasses, sedges and dense willows. Non-native species include Kentucky bluegrass, smooth brome, sweet clover, timothy, cheatgrass brome interspersed with natives and Russian olive. Appendix No 2 provides a brief description of soils and potentially vegetation found at inventoried sites. A complete description of these soils can be found in the Soil Survey of Natrona County Area, Wyoming published by the United States Department of Agriculture, (USDA) NRCS (1985).

Wildlife

In the proposed project area, the North Platte River corridor provides crucial winter range and year long habitat for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and white-tailed deer. A diversity of small mammals are found including different species of shrew, muskrat, beaver, badger, skunk, raccoon, white-tailed jackrabbit, thirteen-lined ground squirrel, Ord's kangaroo rat, desert cottontail, coyote, and red fox. Shore birds, waterfowl, and various other avian species utilize the riparian habitat including: red-winged blackbird, bank swallow, magpie, raven, crow, great blue heron, mallard, common goldeneye, common merganser, Canada goose, and pelican. Various raptor species additionally utilize the area and routinely nest in trees growing along the river.

Wintering eagles are common in the Casper Field Office (CFO). Migrating down from northern Canada, the earliest bald eagles arrive in the Casper area in October. The number increases until January or early February. The eagles then return to Canada to nest; the last bald eagles usually leave the Casper area in April. Wintering bald eagles are known to use the river from November through March as they forage for fish and waterfowl in ice-free, open water areas. Within the proposed project area, the North Platte River is recognized as a bald eagle winter feeding concentration area. In this delineated area, public lands within 1/2-mile of the river are protected by BLM from surface disturbance beginning November 1 through March 31. Eagles are also known to forage far away from the river in areas near winter concentrations of big game and/or livestock. Rangelands can provide important feeding habitat for bald eagles.

During migration and in winter, eagles often concentrate on locally abundant food resources and tend to roost communally. Communal roosts usually are located in stands of mature old growth conifers or cottonwoods. Large, live trees in sheltered areas provide a favorable thermal environment and help minimize the energy stress encountered by wintering eagles. The Jackson Canyon roost and the Stinking Creek roost are both located within 20 miles of the proposed project area.

Within the BLM Casper Field Office, bald eagle nesting is rare. The closest known bald eagle nest occurs approximately more than 20 miles east of the proposed RAMP.

Visual Resources

The low-lying view from the water surface creates the perception of a relatively undisturbed landscape. While floating these waters, visitors can observe differing combinations of line, form, color and texture. The visual quality of the North Platte River corridor is derived from its constantly changing shorelines and vegetation communities. The character of the landscape changes as visitors travel from open areas with densely vegetated banks and panoramic views to more enclosed locations dominated by landform

features. Cliff walls formed by erosion add visual interest and provide nesting habitats for a variety of bird species. At times, the shoreline devoid of vegetation or encroached upon by greasewood can appear uninviting.

Social Resources and Use

The river and its reservoirs are among Wyoming's most important sport fisheries. The North Platte River below Grey Reef has recently been touted as the number 1 destination trout fishery in North America by many angling publications. It is a world-class fishery and a primary focus of the BLM's recreation management program in Natrona County. Interest in fishing both as recreation and as business is increasing, which creates a growing need to manage recreation use. In 1996 an estimated 17,000 used the river; about 20% were fishing by boat. By 2000, the estimated number of anglers had increased by approximately 600%. A recent headline from the Denver Post commented on traffic jams on the river. Today a conservative estimate for the 41 miles of river between Alcova and Casper is approximately 100,000 seasonal anglers (Conder, 2006).

The BLM granted 16 Special Recreation Permits (SRP) in 2004 for commercial fly-fishing companies. Permitted guides use public lands along the North Platte for both launching and retrieving drift boats and are allowed to anchor drift boats and wade-fish on BLM administered property. Permits are not required for Wyoming State lands or for Game and Fish access locations or on private lands. Internet searches show that twice as many companies were advertising guided fly-fishing tours than were permitted to use BLM-administered lands. Commercial fly fishing companies add to the overall visitation numbers and compete with the casual visitor for use of public lands and facilities. The BLM receives between three and five new fly fishing permits for commercial companies each year.

Hunting, wildlife watching, camping and general water-based recreation activities are also important recreational uses of the area. However, recreation days for these types of activities are extremely difficult to estimate, due to the dispersed nature of these activities.

In addition to recreation, grazing is another common use of public land resources within the Trapper's Route RAMP. Many of the landing sites are leased for livestock grazing and three parcels (Clarkson Hill, Government Bridge and Bolton Creek) lie within the Bates Hole Stock Driveway. Use of the stock driveway usually occurs in the early April and late May and again in October.

Private lands make up the majority of the area and are commonly used for home sites or ranching operations. Nearby businesses that cater to outdoor recreation are thriving as a result of the increased use and growing interest in the river. The Wyoming Board of Travel and Tourism reported an average 5.7 % growth in earnings related to travel in Natrona County from 1997 to 2004 (Dean Runyan Associates 2005) and that 90% traveled to Wyoming for pleasure, as opposed to business.

The area is also available for oil and gas leasing and leases currently exist. However, surface and seasonal restrictions limit the amount of activity in the area. Sand and gravel operations occur on private lands within the planning area.

Site Descriptions

This section describes each of the public landing sites in greater detail. By providing both broad scale distribution information and site specific details, the BLM can better assess the impacts of each developed alternative. Map 3 depicts locations of BLM and Wyoming State landing sites.

Approximately 75-80 percent of riverfront property between Alcova and Robertson Road Bridge is privately owned, therefore, the majority of dispersed recreation is limited to the Trapper's Route Landing Sites, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's (WGFD) acquired fishing access lands and state school sections (see Table 2). Grey Reef is administered by BOR, with the campground and access managed by the Natrona County Parks Department.

Table 2: Describes the jurisdiction, access and acres at each site.

<i>SITE NAME</i>	<i>OWNERSHIP</i>	<i>ACCESS</i>	<i>River Miles</i>
Grey Reef	BOR	Cnty Rd	.32
Pete's Draw	BLM	Cnty Rd	.53
Ledge Creek	BLM	River only	.53
Lusby	G&F	G&F easement	2.08
Bolton Creek	BLM	Cnty Rd	.30
Government Bridge	BLM	State Hwy	.30
Clarkson Hill	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	2.5
Bates Creek	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	.16
WY state section at Bates Creek	WY State Land Board	2-track	1.89
Gray Cliff	BLM	2-track	.49
Sechrist	G&F	State Hwy	.49
Schmitt	G&F	State Hwy	.11
Hartnet	G&F	Cnty Rd, river,	.10
Bessemer Mountain	BLM	River only	.11
Flycaster's	G&F	Cnty Rd, G&F easement	.73
Speck/Bessemer Bend	BLM, G&F	Cnty Rd	.20
WY state section at Emigrant Ridge	WY State Land Board	River only	1.24
Emigrant Ridge	BLM	River only	.03
Robertson Road	G&F	Cnty Rd	.06

Landing #1): Pete's Draw is located two miles downstream from Grey Reef and is the start of the Trapper's Route landing sites. Pete's Draw is located at T. 30 N., R. 82 W., section 8, N½SE¼ and is part of a larger federal land parcel. Private lands adjoin it on the south and east. Legal land access to this parcel is available via County Road 104. The BLM has limited recreational infrastructure at this site including a small access loop, a pole-top fence, a single vault toilet, picnic tables and a metal fire ring. A small walk-in gate provides additional access just downstream of the development.



This landing site is most heavily used in the spring by wading fly fishermen taking advantage of the rainbow trout spawning season. Most weekend visitors are from Colorado. A smaller peak in visitor numbers occurs early in the fall. Approximately 80% of visitation is during the weekend. Local visitors use the area for day trips during both weekends and weekdays. Camping units are normally self-contained.

The WROS inventory rated Pete's Draw as Rural Natural. Pete's Draw is typical of the Rural Natural Setting with natural features dominating the landscape. Appendix 1 provides complete descriptions of each WROS class. Agriculture, tourism and recreation are the primary industries. Management activities

are noticeable in the form of signage, infrastructure and occasional personnel. The area provides an opportunity for visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds of nature. The proximity of secondary roads, local residences, power lines and small stores contribute to the rural setting and may provide an occasional convenience and some sense of security.

There are four basic ecological sites within this location. These include shallow loamy, saline lowland, loamy and saline subirrigated located on the river's bank. The associated soils are typically shallow and well drained. However, the permeability is moderate and the hazard of water erosion is severe. Upland shrubs include big sagebrush, black sagebrush, birdfoot sagebrush and rabbitbrush. Other shrubs that may be present are Gardner's saltbush and greasewood. Perennial grass species on these sites include western wheatgrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg's bluegrass, needle-and-thread grass, Indian ricegrass, and mutton bluegrass. A variety of forbs including Hood's phlox, Indian paintbrush, fleabane, fringed sagewort, penstemons, globemallow, prickly pear cactus, western yarrow and prairie clovers is also present. The overall condition including plant vigor and species composition, for the upland communities ranges from fair to good.

A narrow, heavily vegetated riparian strip is adjacent to the river. Many of the upland plants are also located along this stretch. The riparian zone contains a higher proportion of grass species and includes some plants which are typical of riparian zones such as Nebraska sedge and Baltic rush. Other species include alkali sacaton, basin wildrye, western wheatgrass, inland saltgrass, greasewood, Gardner's saltbush and rubber rabbitbrush. Plant vigor of the perennial grasses appears good. Invasive plant species include Canada thistle and cheatgrass brome. Roughly 5% of the total herbaceous matter at this parcel is cheatgrass brome.

Landing #2) Ledge Creek is an isolated parcel of federal land without legal land access. It is the second Trapper's Route landing site and the only public anchoring between Pete's Draw and Lusby (WG&F public easement). This site is located at T. 30 N., R. 82 W., section 9, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$. There are no permanent facilities. A portable toilet has been made available during the majority of the fishing season through agreement with the adjacent private landowner. The recreation use season mirrors that of Pete's Draw as this site is commonly used as a midway point for day floats.



Ledge Creek is ranked as Semi-Primitive setting. Water resources and shorelines appear natural. Sights and sounds of human activity are rare or very minor. Management presence is slight and relies upon the cooperation of visitors and a sense of stewardship. A sense of remoteness and self-reliance is dominant among visitors.

The Ledge Creek parcel includes shallow loamy and saline lowland ecological sites. The plant community for the saline lowland consists mainly of alkali sacaton, basin wildrye, western wheatgrass, inland saltgrass, greasewood, Gardner's saltbush and rubber rabbitbrush. The shallow loamy site

includes bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg's bluegrass and needle-and-thread grass. Various forbs found here are Hood's phlox and western yarrow. Mature cottonwoods have fallen and lie along the shoreline.

Landing #3) Bolton Creek (Trapper's Route Number 3) is part of a larger federal parcel located in T. 31 N., R. 82 W., section 24, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ and section 25, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$. Private lands border the north, south and

west. Legal access is available from County Road 404. BLM has developed roads extending through the parcel that provide access to the river. Otherwise the site remains undeveloped. Some ATV trails have been created around the Bolton Creek drainage and damage to a small landing site is apparent. This site is not as well known as other Trapper's Route landing sites and is not functional as a put-in or take-out location. Therefore, Bolton Creek receives fewer visitations than other sites with vehicle access. Even so, due to the limited acreage of the parcel the current amount of recreational use is having a negative impact on the natural environment. Recreation use consists mainly of bank fishing and overnight camping. Unauthorized OHV use has added significantly to soil erosion.

The Bolton Creek landing site despite having no developments or obvious management presence is ranked as Rural-Developed. The working group felt that the proximity to the active gravel quarry (directly across the river), the extensive soil erosion that has been exacerbated by increased OHV use, and lack of vegetative cover and vigor detracted from the natural setting. The group felt that the site had poor aesthetic value and very limited opportunities for recreational development.



The saline lowland/saline upland communities located at Bolton Creek are rated as low fair ecological condition. Cheatgrass brome and prickly pear cactus are present throughout the site and make up a significant portion of the understory vegetation. Annual mustards are common. The only perennial grasses are western wheatgrass and Sandberg's bluegrass. Greasewood, birdfoot sagebrush and Gardner's saltbush are the major shrubs. The vigor of the perennial grass species is low. The sandy upland community includes cottonwoods, willow, rubber rabbitbrush and big sagebrush. These species are in poor condition and severely hedged. Sandberg's bluegrass, western wheatgrass and halogeton are also found here in limited amounts. This is due to sediment loading in the drainage covering the pre-emergent vegetation. However, this does not account for the lack of perennial grasses and the overall low plant vigor in the area.



Landing #4) Government Bridge/Miles Landing is the fourth stop along Trapper's Route. It, too, is part of a larger federal land parcel, with private lands lying to the north and east. It is located in T. 31 N., R. 82 W., section 23, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$. Wyoming Highway 220 and County Road 404 provide vehicle access to this landing site. The site is rated as Rural Natural.

The proximity of this site relative to upstream landings and easy access makes Government Bridge/Miles Landing a primary put-in and take-out location. Small parking area and boat launches exist at this location. However, the current layout and design of the landing

does not effectively utilize the available area or meet recreation needs. The parking facilities were not designed to accommodate the thirty plus vehicles that commonly parked here and the existing boat ramp is narrow, creating difficulty for boat launching and retrieval. Congestion is an issue at this site, especially during spring and summer.

The loamy ecological site found on the uplands was rated as being in mid-fair ecological condition. Grasses include cheatgrass brome, western wheatgrass, Sandberg's bluegrass, and prairie junegrass and trace amounts of needle-and-thread grass. Hood's phlox, prickly pear cactus and big sagebrush are the major plant species. The vigor of the perennial grass species appears fair. The vigor of the shrub species is in high poor to low fair. In contrast to the riparian zone of this landing, which is in good condition. Plant species on the sandy ecological site near the shoreline include: needle-and-thread grass, Indian ricegrass, Sandberg's bluegrass, western wheatgrass, prairie junegrass, rabbitbrush and big sagebrush. Willows, cattails and basin wildrye are present along the river banks.



Landing #5) Clarkson Hill (Trapper's Route Number 5) is part of a very large federal land complex, located on the north bank of the river beginning approximately one mile downstream of Government Bridge (T. 31 N., R. 82 W., section 11, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ and section 14, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$) and extends through T.31N., R.82W. sec 2 W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ west of the river. Clarkson Hill stretches two and half miles down river before connecting into the Bates Creek landing site. The land ownership pattern on this portion of the river is a combination of private parcels intermingled with federal lands. The BLM has obtained a scenic easement on the opposite side of the river.

The WGFD has obtained walk-in access from Government Bridge/Miles Landing to Clarkson Hill. Vehicle access is available via County Road 316. In addition, several two-track trails have been created by visitors to obtain access to the river. While the entire area is used frequently throughout the season, the most heavily used spot is located on the west bank of the river. Camping occurs here almost every weekend from June through August and a primitive boat ramp has been created from use of the area. The Clarkson Hill area is divided into three WROS units. These units are ranked as either primitive or semi-primitive. This area is relatively undeveloped; recreation experiences are influenced by the sights and sounds of nature.

This site is comprised of saline lowland /saline upland and loamy ecological sites. Range condition of all sites has been estimated to be in low to mid fair condition. Cheatgrass brome and prickly pear cactus are present throughout the site and in some places these species comprise a significant part of the understory. Annual mustards are also common. Russian thistle and halogeton are also present. Perennial grasses include alkali sacaton, blue grama, western wheatgrass, needle-and-threadgrass, and Sandberg's bluegrass. Various forbs such as Hood's phlox and wild onion are present. Greasewood, big sagebrush and Gardner saltbrush are the major shrubs. A few mature cottonwood trees are located on this site. Ground cover is about 50% and erosion has become quite noticeable.



The loamy site appears to be in slightly better condition than the saline sites. Willows, cattails and basin wildrye occur along the river banks. Patches of big sagebrush and greasewood are also located in the loamy ecological community.

Landing #7) The Bates Creek site provides legal vehicle access to the Wyoming State school section. This site is located at T. 32 N., R. 82 W., sec 35 SE¹/₄SE¹/₄. and is a loamy ecological site. Bates Creek is ranked as primitive, although the quality of recreation experiences is degraded due to loss of vegetative communities, overuse by OHV and the overall condition of the site. Resource uses are mainly livestock grazing and antelope and waterfowl hunting. This site is in low to mid fair condition. The major plant species are cheatgrass brome, western wheatgrass, Sandburg bluegrass, big sagebrush and greasewood. Forbs include Hood's Phlox, and prickly pear cactus. The vigor of the perennial grasses and shrubs is poor. This landing is ranked as semi-primitive, although uncontrolled OHV use has created a number of two-track trails increasing vehicle access to the area.



Landing #8) Gray Cliff is Trapper's Route Number 6 and is part of the same federal land complex as Clarkson Hill. Gray Cliff is located in T. 32 N., R. 82 W. section 25, SE¹/₄NE¹/₄, W¹/₂SW¹/₄, NE¹/₄SW¹/₄ and NW¹/₄SE¹/₄. The topography of this site is somewhat different than other Trapper's Route locations. Here the North Platte River makes a tight meander that abuts a 100-foot-high cliff. Swallows and a red tail hawk have nested on the cliff side. Legal access to the Gray Cliff parcel is from the Power Line road. Camping has occurred on the state parcel adjacent to this site. The site has seen an increase in use by waterfowl hunters in recent years. Gray Cliff is ranked as primitive.

The area consists of the following different ecological sites; shale, saline lowland and lowland. The plant species in the shale community are western wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, blue grama, Sandberg's bluegrass, Gardner's saltbush and rubber rabbitbrush. The saline lowland site is comprised of alkali sacaton, basin wildrye, western wheatgrass, inland saltgrass, greasewood and rubber rabbitbrush. Plant species found on the lowland site are similar to the saline lowland community. These sites appear to be in mid fair condition.

Landing #9) On the eastern end of Bessemer Mountain the river flows northward through a narrow canyon locally known as "The Narrows". The canyon separates Bessemer Mountain on the west from Coal Mountain on the east. Trapper's Route Number 9 (T. 33 N., 81 W., sec 25 SE¹/₄SE¹/₄SE¹/₄) is defined as the river frontage (less than 10 acres) at Bessemer Mountain. Recreational opportunities at this landing are limited by the steep bank and small size of river frontage. No legal land access exist at this site, access is limited to the river. The Bessemer Mountain site is ranked as Rural Natural.

Plant species found at this loamy ecological site include bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Sandburg bluegrass, needle-and-threadgrass, prairie junegrass, threadleaf sedge, Hood's phlox, western yarrow, scarlet globemallow, big sagebrush and green rabbitbrush.

Landing #10) Bessemer Bend is a small federal parcel located in T. 32 N., R. 81 W. section 3, SW¹/₄ NW¹/₄. The parcel is surrounded by private land with the exception of a small adjoining parcel acquired by the WGFD for river access. Legal access to this site is provided by County Roads 308 and 309. Bessemer Bend is in a wide alluvial valley. The site was acquired by the BLM for the development of the Bessemer Bend Historic Site.



It was historically known as the "Last Crossing" of the North Platte River during the western migration of the 1800s. Existing facilities include parking lot, gazebo, picnic tables, interpretive panels and disabled-accessible vault toilet. A new walking path has been completed. This site is one of the most commonly visited of the Trapper's Route landing sites. It is popular with both local and out of state visitors. A WGFD public access landing is located immediately upstream of the historic site. The site is ranked as being Rural Developed.

The ecological community at this location is a lowland site. Dominant plant species are alkali sacaton, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, silver sagebrush, rabbitbrush, Sandberg's bluegrass and inland saltgrass. Cheatgrass brome, along with several species of non-native forbs, has been introduced at this site. Cottonwoods and willows have been planted. The condition of the community is mid fair.

Landing #11) Emigrant Ridge is on the northwest side of the river, approximately 4 miles southwest of Casper. The parcel is in T. 33 N., R. 81 W., section 25, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ and is part of a large block of federal land extending along the Emigrant Gap Ridge. A Wyoming state section borders the parcel on the south, immediately downstream of this landing site and provides additional recreational opportunities. The only legal access is via the North Platte River. This loamy site consists primarily of low terrace and foothills above the water's surface. Recreational use numbers are generally lower here than at other landing sites due to limited legal access and size of the parcel. The Emigrant Ridge Landing is ranked as Semi-Primitive. BLM-administered surface spans only .03 miles of river.

Alternatives Considered but not carried forward

The Trapper's Route RAMP alternatives were created using planning guidelines taken from the WROS User's Guidebook (USDI BOR 2004). The 2005 WROS inventory classified the landing sites into different recreation opportunities and settings. Inventory results became the "No Action" Alternative and the starting point from which the other alternatives were formed. Alternatives outline a different management approach (Maps 4a – 4d) and reflect how recreation settings on state and WGFD managed properties may change, based on differing alternatives. Figure 1 compares the alternatives based on the percent river miles for each WROS category and includes the following amounts of legally accessible properties: BLM - 41.5%, WGFD - 30.2%, Wyoming State Land Board - 25.7% and Bureau of Reclamation - 2.6%. The "No Action", Developed, and the "Habitat Emphasis" alternatives were not carried forward.

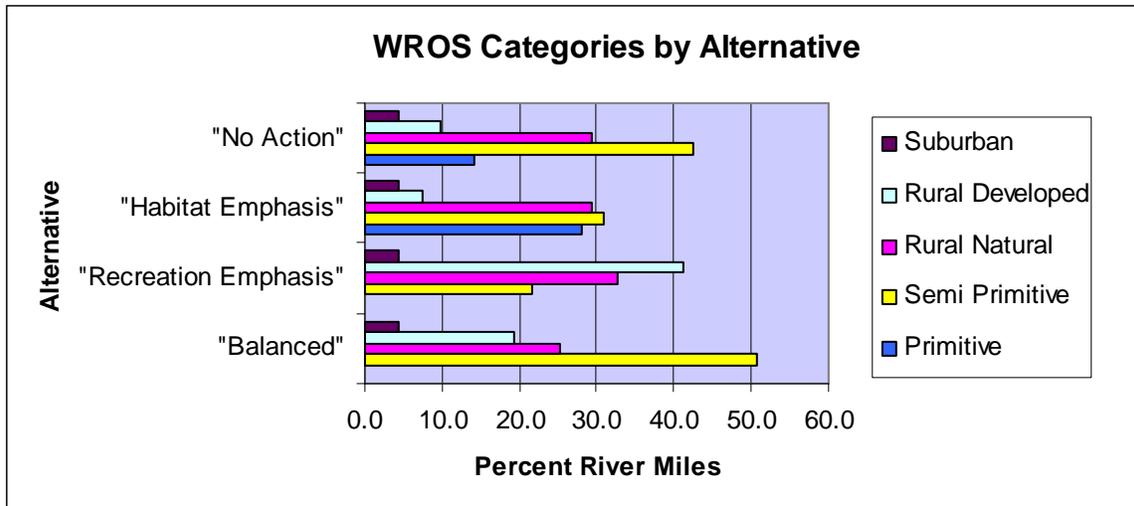


Figure 1

The “No Action” Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not change current management or allow for additional facilities. All existing roads and trails would be included as designated routes for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs). Developed recreational opportunities along the river would be limited to existing landings. Management of Special Recreation Permits would be on a case by case basis; the BLM would assess the impacts of SRPs for fly fishing guides at the current levels including non-permits commercial use and may adjust the number of available permits accordingly. Management of grazing leases would continue in the same manner as over the last twenty years.

The 2005 WROS Inventory rated the majority of sites with existing facilities as Rural Developed. These sites represent 13% of the inventoried area. Government Bridge, a BLM developed landing, is rated Rural Natural. The Rural Natural category makes up 32%, with 64% of the public accessible lands (BLM & WGFD) being Semi-primitive or Primitive. Inventory results coupled with visitation numbers indicate a river that is being heavily utilized for recreation with very little management constraint or presence.

The majority of visitation along this portion of the North Platte River occurs during spring, primarily from late March through June. The Grey Reef and Pete’s Draw Landing sites are crowded in early morning on both Saturday and Sunday as visitors are beginning their day on the water. Mid-day congestion occurs at Ledge Creek, Government Bridge and Lusby. Ledge Creek is often used as a lunch stop, while Lusby and Government Bridge provide convenient take-outs for many who began their trip near Grey Reef. Downstream of Government Bridge, numbers of anglers start to drop off. This area, known as Clarkson Hill, has no facilities, is not as well-known and there is a perception that the quality of fishing is lower. As this area becomes more well-known, use is expected to increase. Recreation activities common to this area includes dispersed camping, bank fishing and some primitive launch sites are being developed. With no formal boat ramps or other public facilities until Sechrist, a typically 6-hour float day along this stretch can be long and uncomfortable.

Continuation of the current management approach would result in long term impacts both to the natural environment as well as the social environments. High levels of livestock utilization combined with drought conditions and heavy recreational use has had a negative impact on the riparian zones and on the uplands within the RAMP boundary. A downward trend occurred in many of the associated plant

communities, species diversity has dropped and non-native invasive plant species have encroached into much of the area.

Public landing sites with facilities, such as Grey Reef, Pete's Draw, Lusby and Government Bridge are heavily congested from late March through June. Highest use occurs on the weekends starting early Thursday morning from 7:00 am to 10:30 am running through Sunday afternoon. During this high-use season, the number of vehicles at these developed landings averages between 20 and 30. The average boat launch time exceeds 30 minutes, considered to be reasonable for urban settings. Moreover, the section of river between Grey Reef and Pete's Draw has distances between boats of 1/8 mile to 1/4 mile. These distances are more commonly seen in both Suburban and Urban recreational settings. Heavily congested recreation sites have negative impacts on visitor satisfaction levels and encourage conflict among user groups.

Environmental damage related directly to recreation activities would continue to increase with time. The existing two-track roads are no longer stable, soil erosion along these routes is prominent and braided trails are found at nearly every low area, along slopes and in drainage crossings. New trails are being developed from uncontrolled OHV use. These trails tend to follow the natural slope and cross stream channels in several locations. Vegetative cover is being lost, adding significantly to natural erosion and sedimentation. Heavily used camping areas quickly become devoid of vegetation. Soils in these areas are compacted, decreasing the potential for natural re-vegetation. Woody species are damaged and in some cases completely removed to be used for firewood.

Fishing like many river-based recreational activities are geared toward private individuals and small groups. Crowded landing sites and areas heavily impacted as a result of dispersed camping or off-road vehicle use detract from the recreation experience. Visitors react to congestion by seeking less crowded locations and natural settings. Primitive camp sites would continue to grow in size and in the number of locations, adding to health and safety concerns. These concerns would continue to grow without proper sanitation and adequate launching facilities.

Recreational use of the North Platte River is likely to continue to grow as local communities become more populated and the recreation aspects of the area become more well-known. Without new developments, the competition between among commercial outfitters and the general public for use of recreation facilities and use of public landing sites is likely to increase. Under the "No Action" alternative the BLM would remain in a reactive mode. Problems would be addressed as they increase in severity and conflicts among users are amplified. Impacts would be similar but on a larger scale to those described under existing environment.

Livestock grazing practices would remain relatively the same under the "No Action" alternative although some changes may occur over time as leases are renewed. Fences would not be installed barring livestock from areas that are not currently leased and grazing utilization would remain the same. The condition of rangelands would continue to deteriorate having negative impacts to vegetation communities, riparian and fish habitats. Invasive non-native plant species would be allowed to infest more area, reducing the overall amount of available forage.

Continuation of the "No Action" Alternative would result in long term environmental consequences and would have detrimental effects to important on wildlife habitats, including the available perching areas and prey base for Bald eagles. Benefits to the public would be minimal and would be outweighed by the adverse impacts described above; therefore this alternative was not analyzed further.

The "Habitat Emphasis" Alternative

Under the "Habitat Emphasis" Alternative, the management framework would change significantly. Greater restrictions would be placed on both grazing management and recreational use of the river corridor. Management prescriptions would focus on improving the visual resources and on habitat restoration projects. Bank restoration, plantings of woody species and projects that improve plant species richness would be given a high priority. The development of additional facilities and road improvement projects would be limited especially in areas that have not been previously developed. New Special Recreation Permits would not be authorized. Impacts related to the number of existing commercial launches would be evaluated and limits would be set accordingly.

The "Habitat Emphasis" Alternative would allow for improvements on previously developed sites such as Pete's Draw and Government Bridge as long as the proposed improvements do not exceed the WROS guidelines. Improvements may include road upgrades, boat ramps, comfort facilities and developed campgrounds. Cooperative relationships with other land managers including private land owners would emphasize conservation efforts and monitoring strategies geared toward improvement of wildlife habitat.

This alternative assumes the highest percentage of river miles (58.8%, approximately 7.88 miles) under the primitive or semi-primitive settings. These numbers include projected changes on non BLM-administered properties. Campsites, parking areas and comfort stations on BLM-administered properties would be unobtrusive and limited in both size and number of locations. These sites would not be allowed within riparian areas and would be required to repeat the basic elements of form, line, color and texture of the natural landscape. Fencing and other types of physical barriers would be used to limit off-road travel and would eliminate livestock grazing from landing sites.

Recreation distribution would not significantly change. Given the parameters of this alternative, recreation levels would continue to grow, but, recreation facilities would fail to meet user needs within a relatively short period of time. Increasing restrictions on recreational activities, such as limiting dispersed camping and motorized travel, would not mitigate congestion on upstream sections of the river. Visitors seeking less crowded conditions would naturally migrate to more primitive areas. Impacts similar to those described under the "No Action" Alternative would continue. Recreation dollars would go to finance additional monitoring and law enforcement needs. Increased benefits derived from recreation activities, such as relief of daily stress, the opportunity to commune with nature and a sense of solitude would be minimal due to increased restrictions and lack of adequate infrastructure. This alternative would limit the available space and range of recreational opportunities. Other legally accessible lands as Wyoming state trust lands and WGFD access locations would be more heavily impacted as a result of the changing management.

Livestock grazing practices would be improved under the "Habitat Emphasis" Alternative and habitat improvement projects would be implemented. However, damage to wildlife habitats and vegetation communities as a result of dispersed recreation activities. Impacts similar to those described under the "No Action" Alternative would continue in spite of management changes.

The "Habitat Emphasis" Alternative would not meet recreation objectives set for the RAMP. User satisfaction levels are more likely to decline over-time as congestion continues to increase. Moreover, habitat loss, soil compaction and sedimentation levels are likely to be elevated in primitive areas; therefore this alternative was not analyzed in further detail.

The "Recreation Emphasis" Alternative

A "Recreation Emphasis" Alternative was created to maximize recreational opportunities. Management prescriptions would prioritize development of campgrounds, additional boat ramps, and parking areas. Roads and trails would be upgraded in order to improve access along the river banks and would allow for several designated parking areas. The BLM would emphasize working relationships with other land management agencies and private landowners to gain additional access areas and upgrade landing sites.

Habitat improvement and restoration projects would be included in this alternative; vegetation would be planted to create a natural-appearing environment near designated campgrounds. Grazing leases could be re-evaluated and changes in grazing practices could be implemented. Limits on the number of SRPs would not be enacted, allowing the number to be limited only by market demand.

This alternative assumes the highest percentage of river miles (78.4%, approximately 10.5 miles) to be managed for developed recreation opportunities. These numbers include projected changes on non BLM-administered properties. The semi-primitive category would make up 22% of total miles, while none of the area would be managed within a primitive setting. Voluntary redistribution of recreational users would be significant. Under this alternative, a crowned and ditched access road would provide vehicle access throughout the entire length of the Clarkson Hill and Bates Creeks Landings. This would allow for the development of up to 7 new campgrounds and 4 new boat ramps. The increased number of landing sites that could support drift boats, rafts and over-night camping would help to alleviate congestion at the upstream developed sites.

This alternative would utilize most of the available space at the Grey Reef, Government Bridge, along the Clarkson Hill and Bates Creek Landings. This would reduce the total amount of available forage and wildlife habitat both large game and small mammal species. The additional space provided for facility development and the reduction of available habitat, wildlife would have negative impacts related directly to the high numbers of recreation visitors. Perching structures and the prey base would also be reduced.

The "Recreation Emphasis" alternative has the potential to meet many of the recreation user needs for this area, but, does not provide an adequate range of recreational opportunities. Visitors seeking a more primitive setting would not realize enhanced recreation benefits from this alternative. Furthermore, habitat and visual objectives would not be met. Recreational developments would be incorporated throughout the Trapper's Route RAMP. This would cause greatest loss of existing riparian areas and important habitats and negatively impact raptors that rely on this area as a winter feeding ground. Therefore, this alternative was not analyzed in further detail.

The "Balanced Recreation Alternative" (The Proposed Action)

This alternative strives to balance recreational user needs with environmental concerns. It provides for additional recreation development while preserving and enhancing much of the wildlife habitat. Additional parking areas and campgrounds would be used to guide recreational use of the river corridor. Roads and trails would be designated for use and upgraded to accommodate user needs. All unneeded roads and trails that cause undue degradation would be closed and reclaimed when possible. Habitat improvement projects would share the same high priority as recreation facility development. The BLM would strive whenever possible to work with other land management agencies and private landowners to meet RAMP objectives such as habitat improvement and additional access needs.

The number of additional SRPs authorized by the BLM would be limited to 50 % above the existing level. The additional permits would be restricted to weekdays only while the impacts of this baseline commercial activity are evaluated. This would allow the BLM time to understand the impacts of these permits without creating an economic hardship on any specific operator. Limits on the number, location

and timing of commercial launches would be enacted based on the capacity of the newly developed recreation facilities and private recreational use.

Grazing leases would be evaluated to ensure that Wyoming Standards for Healthy Range Lands are met. The BLM supports grazing improvement projects that enhance the natural environment or reduce overall sediment loads in the river. Ultimately, the Trapper’s Route RAMP will help revegetate the North Platte River riparian corridor. The RAMP will assist in restoring riparian health and wildlife habitat. Riparian areas support more animal diversity than any other habitat (WGFD 1999) and are the single most productive wildlife habitat type in Wyoming. Healthy riparian areas provide vertical structure complexity, canopy, and subcanopy layers as well as a ground layer which supports species diversity. Riparian vegetation influences aquatic communities by shading the stream, controlling dissolved nutrient inputs, stabilizing stream banks and contributing organic matter (Moline 2004). Streamside vegetation provides cover for fish by creating quiet, shaded resting areas beneath overhanging vegetation and contributes material to organic debris jams (Wohl 2004), and vegetative canopy cools the water.

The Trapper's Route RAMP would be divided into differing WROS categories, which strive to balance the natural environment of the river ecosystem and the social benefits derived from recreational use. The "Balanced" alternative would allow recreational users to freely choose the type of recreational experience desired. Areas with existing facilities would be redesigned to accommodate the increased use. While new recreation facilities would be strategically placed to provide additional put-in and take-out points downstream of Government Bridge, more effectively utilizing the existing public lands within the planning area, while controlling potential impacts from recreational activities.

Site designs for developed areas would vary depending on the WROS category assigned. Recreational facilities within Rural Developed areas would accommodate a higher concentration of visitors and would allow for RV camping. Site plans for Rural Natural and Semi-Primitive areas would be limited to smaller groups and provide for a more natural setting. Placement of landing site locations and designated roads and trails are depicted on maps 5- 8.

The Whitetail, Golden Current, Chalk Bluffs and Buffaloberry Campgrounds would be new developments constructed under this alternative. Table 3 compares the existing and proposed facilities for the Trapper’s Route Recreation Area (Note additional interim parking areas would be provided at specific locations but is not listed in the proposed landing site facilities).

<i>Site Name</i>	<i>Existing Facilities</i>	<i>Proposed Developments</i>
Pete’s Draw	toilet, picnic tables, fire ring, access road	2-toilets, 5 campsites (with RV access), parking area (15 OHV), day use area, walking trail and pier, access road, potential potable water
Ledge Creek	Portable Toilet	Vault toilet
Bolton Creek	Access roads	Access roads and vehicle barriers
Government Bridge	Boat ramp, parking, access road	Vault toilet, day use area/shelters and tables, improved boat ramp, enlarged parking area (20 OHV/trailers) & interim parking (2 OHV)
White Tail Campground	Access roads	Boat ramp, vault toilet, 4 campsites (with RV access), parking area (15 OHV/trailers), access road, potential potable water
Golden Current	Access roads	Vault toilet, parking area (4 vehicles), 5 tent campsites
Chalk Bluff Campground	Access roads	Boat ramp, vault toilet, 15 campsites, Parking area (10 OHV/trailers), day use site with tables, potential potable water
Buffaloberry Creek Campground	Access roads	Vault toilet, 4 campsites, additional interim parking area for 4 OHVs

Table 3

The "Balanced" alternative would result in significant changes in recreation distribution and would help to alleviate congestion in some areas. It provides the widest range of recreational choices for visitors and

has the potential to meet RAMP objectives relating to ecosystem health and visitor satisfaction levels. The following includes: Detailed objectives, guidelines for recreation management and design prescriptions, road and trail designations, and implementation and monitoring standards for Trapper's Route Recreation Area.

Table 4 provides a brief summary of each of the environmental, social and managerial impacts among each of the alternatives considered.

Alternative	Managerial	Social	Environmental
"No Action"	Reactive mode, travel management not implemented, commercial use assessed on a case by case basis, little management presence, cooperative relations are opportunistic	Minimal regulations, moderate range of recreational opportunities, congestion at developed landings, conflicts among users, inadequate infrastructure, does not meet user expectations, decreased user satisfaction	Increased erosion, increased sedimentation, loss of habitat and vegetation diversity, increase invasive non-native plant species, Potential adverse impacts to wildlife and Bald Eagles
"Habitat Emphasis"	Management focus on regulations, monitoring and conservation efforts, travel management is restrictive, new SRPs will not be authorized until impacts are evaluated, increased management presence, cooperative relationships focus on conservation	Increased regulations, minimal range of recreation opportunities, heavily congested at developed sites, inadequate infrastructure, increased conflicts among user groups, does not meet user expectations, decreased user satisfaction	Decreased erosion and sedimentation, improved habitat and vegetative diversity, focus on control of invasive non-native plant species, potential adverse impacts to wildlife habitats in primitive areas.
"Recreation Emphasis"	Management focus on maintenance of recreation facilities, travel management focuses on improvements and the development of long access roads, Limits are not set for commercial use, increased management presence in the form of signs, cooperative relationships focus on new access and increased development.	Increased regulations, minimal range of recreation opportunities, does not provide for semi-primitive or primitive recreational experiences, adequate infrastructure, less congestion, conflicts among user groups related to unregulated number of SRPs, decreased user satisfaction.	Decreased erosion and sedimentation, loss of wildlife habitat areas and vegetation diversity, impact to riparian habitats resulting in impacts to wildlife including Bald Eagles
"Balanced" (preferred)	Proactive management, travel management focuses providing access and reducing impacts related to OHV use, commercial use evaluated at 50% above the current SRP level and adjustments may be made, increased management presence, cooperative relationships are goal oriented.	Increased regulations, moderate to high range of recreation opportunities, provides a full range of recreation experiences, less congestion and conflicts among user groups, adequate infrastructure, and improved user satisfaction.	Decreased erosion and sedimentation, benefits to wildlife habitat areas and vegetation diversity, improvements to riparian habitats, focus on control of invasive non-native plant species. Increased perching structures for Bald Eagles

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Guidelines

Goals:

RAMP goals are to sustain or improve important wildlife habitats while striving to enhance individual and social benefits derived from quality recreational experiences within the defined planning area.

Objectives:

- Manage to the prescribed WROS settings, providing for a range of recreational activities and experiences.
- Fully implement the restoration, deferred maintenance and capital improvement projects outlined in this plan.
- Provide recreational opportunities in which individual, community and economic benefits may be derived.
- Provide facilities that adequately meet user needs and reduces negative impacts related to increased visitation.
- Provide a transportation system that meets access needs and ensures adequate protection to natural resources.
- Meet Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands
- Meet VRM Class III and WROS category objectives for visual modifications
- Sustain or improve important riparian and wildlife habitats
- Secure the long term funding necessary for continued maintenance and management of the area.
- Evaluate management effectiveness
- Cultivate cooperative and multi-agency management
- Ensure public awareness and involvement in management decisions.
- Allow for future adaptations.

WROS Categories for BLM-Administered Surface:

Site Name	Average Score	WROS Classification
Pete's Draw	RD5	Rural-Developed
Ledge Creek	P10	Semi-Primitive/Primitive
Bolton Creek	RD7	Rural-Natural
Government Bridge	RD5	Rural-Developed
Clarkson Hill #1	RD5	Rural-Developed
Clarkson Hill #2	SP8	Rural-Natural
Clarkson Hill #3	SP8	Rural-Natural
Bates Creek	SP8	Rural-Natural
Gray Cliff	P10	Semi-Primitive
Bessemer Mountain	RN7	Rural-Natural
Bessemer Bend	RD4	Rural-Developed
Emigrant Ridge	P10	Semi-Primitive/Primitive

Table 4

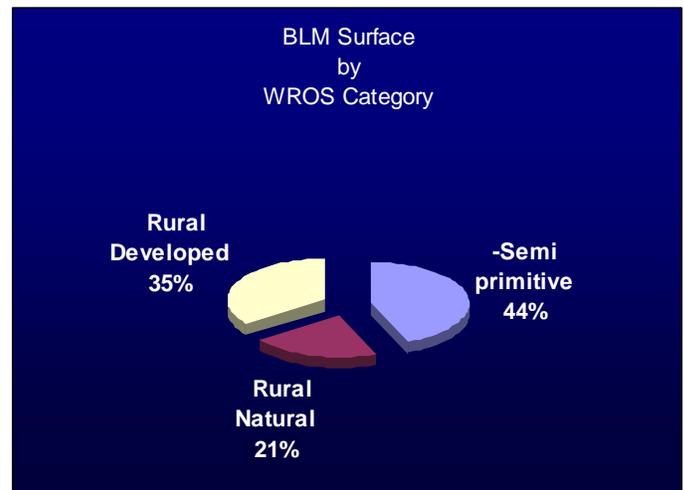


Figure 2

Design Prescriptions:

Rural Developed: The BLM would manage approximately 1.79 miles of riverfront property in this WROS category. The category is characterized by substantial modification from the natural environment. Modifications are made to enhance specific recreational opportunities. The sites and sounds of human

activity are readily apparent and interaction with other users is common. Facilities may include campgrounds, improved access roads, and fences, walking trails, interpretive panels, parking lots, vault toilets and boat ramps. Landing sites are designed to accommodate a large number of visitors and incorporate American Disabilities Association standards whenever possible. Site designs use available space and are largely defined by visitor demand. Landing sites under this category would include: Pete's Draw, Government Bridge, Whitetail Campground and Bessemer Bend. No changes or upgrades would be made to the Bessemer Bend Historic Site.

Landscape designs for developed landings are to include natural appearing barriers such as vegetative screens and rock placement whenever possible. Mitigation measures would be used during construction to control the spread of non-native plant species.

Rural-Natural: Approximately 1.1 miles of riverfront property would be managed to this category. Developed landing sites managed under this classification include; Golden Current tent camping area, Chalk Bluffs and Buffaloberry Campgrounds. The Bessemer Mountain Landing is also managed under this classification; however, no recreation developments would be place at the location. Predominately natural appearing environments characterize these areas. Interaction among visitors should be moderate, compared to other sections of the river. Resource modification is evident but in harmony with the natural landscape. Facilities are designed and constructed to encourage redistribution of visitor use and to accommodate small groups and family units. Facilities include designed camp grounds, improved roads, boat ramps, and small parking areas and vault toilets. Where indicated fencing would be used to exclude livestock. Travel management would focus on access to developed sites and would be limited in areas where restoration projects are to be emphasized.

Recreation developments within the Rural-Natural settings would be located where necessary to facilitate voluntary redistribution of recreation users. However, they would be placed so as to allow for open space and natural habitats.

Semi-Primitive: Approximately 2.26 miles of river front property would be managed to a semi-primitive setting. Although these landings are significantly smaller, the Ledge Creek, Gray Cliff and Emigrant Ridge Landing would be managed within the confines of a semi-primitive category. These areas are characterized by a natural landscape. Facilities are to be limited to signs and a vault toilet, if permanent administrative access can be obtained to the Ledge Creek landing. Fencing may also be used to control livestock where necessary. Maintained roads and small parking areas may fit within this category if the opportunity and are necessary for protection of natural resources arise. Resource integrity is essential to the visitor experience. Concentration and interaction between users should be low to moderate. Travel management would focus on resource protection and may be limited in some areas to visitors who egress via the river (drift boats, rafts).

Site Design Guidelines by WROS Category:

Rural-Developed:

Visual quality objective: modification of landscape
Degree of visitor concentration: moderate to high
Degree of developed recreation sites: Prevalent, common
Campgrounds would be rustic (no utilities)
Camping allowed in designated campsites
Campsite per acre in developed campground: 3 to 5 per acre
Paved boat ramp: Appropriate and common
Vault Toilets: Appropriate and common
Fire rings and grills would be designed into campsites

Potable water would be evaluated
Fencing

Rural-Natural:

Visual quality objective: partial retention and improvement of visual resources
Degree of visitor concentration: Occasional, periodic
Degree of developed recreation sites: Occasional, infrequent
Campgrounds would be rustic (no utilities)
Campsites 3 per acre in developed campground
Camping would be allowed in designated campsites only within 1.5 miles of developed sites and on a dispersed basis outside this parameter.
Paved boat ramp: Appropriate but only occasional
Vault Toilets: Appropriate and may be occasional
Fire rings and grills would be designed into designated campsites
Potable water would be evaluated
Fencing

Semi-Primitive:

Visual quality objective: retention, improvement of visual resources
Degree of visitor concentration: minor, seldom
Degree of developed recreation sites: minor, seldom
Campsite per acre in developed campground: NA
Designated campsites: NA (dispersed camping only)
Paved boat ramp: NA (Unpaved boat ramp may be found occasionally)
Vault Toilets: Appropriate but seldom
Fire rings and grills would not be utilized
Fencing

Visual Resource Management

To meet VRM Class III objectives, final site design for recreation improvements would be reviewed using visual contrast ratings. Best management practices for visual resources would be utilized to lessen the contrasts. These practices include but are not limited to the proper placement and layouts of campgrounds including internal features such as access roads, boat ramps and vault toilets; choosing colors that are repeated in the natural landscape, avoiding sky-lining structures and the use of vegetative screens and natural barriers (http://www.blm.gov/bmp/Technical_Information.htm).

Signing Guidelines:

Highways would be utilized to identify county roads which provide access to public landing sites.

Entrance signs for the Trapper's Route Landings would be placed at the junction of the corresponding county road and access road. These signs would be uniform for all BLM landings.

Private/public lands would be marked at the river with Blue and Red signs. These signs would be placed within plain view of the public and would be kept clear of vegetation.

Regulation and information signs would be kept to a minimum. These signs are to include BLM/WGFD signs with location maps, float times and basic information on overnight camping and off-road travel. Additional regulatory information may be provided on site via brochures.

Designated roads would be marked with posts and white arrows.

Closed roads and trails would be indicated as such using signs and physical barriers when necessary.

Interpretive signs would be utilized to educate the public about history, natural resources and land ethics where appropriate within recreational developments for Rural-Developed Setting. Interpretive signs would be developed within BLM guidelines. The entire interpretive program would be designed and approved prior to placement of any interpretive signs.

Travel Management:

Motorized Use:

OHV travel within a one mile corridor of the North Platte River between Alcova and Casper would be allowed only on designated roads and trails. Exceptions to this rule would be allowed for administrative purposes. Recreational, off-road travel for purposes such as game retrieval and dispersed camping would be limited to 300 ft from the designated routes as long as no resource damage occurs. Road and trail designations including upgrades, rerouted sections and closures are provided in Appendix 3.

Approximately 10.7 miles of existing two-track trails would be maintained in their current condition and be designated OHV use. These trails, including all drainage crossings, would be evaluated. Any travel route that is deemed to be causing resource degradation would be upgraded, rerouted or closed for the protection of natural resources.

Improved recreational roads would be designated for OHV use and would be constructed to the minimum standard required to accommodate traffic needs and stabilize soil. Where necessary low water crossings and culverts would be incorporated into road designs. Approximately 4.6 miles of roads would be improved, of which 2.4 miles are to be rerouted to better accommodate use. These roads would provide vehicle access to the river and to developed campgrounds and landings.

All roads and trails that are designated for recreation use (15.3 miles) would be marked with white arrows.

Approximately 10.6 miles of existing roads and trails would be closed and be removed from the transportation system. They would not be displayed on ownership maps or on river brochures. All closed roads would be signed accordingly. As deemed necessary, these roads and trails would be barricaded and restored to their natural state.

Temporary closures approximate .61 miles of existing trails. These trails lie within an area infested with cheatgrass brome and that has severe erosion problems. After the successful re-establishment of native species, use of these trails would be re-evaluated.

Administrative access is required at specific sites within the Trapper's Route Recreation Area. Vehicle access (.24 miles) to these areas is limited to administrative use.

Non-Motorized Trail Use:

Surfaced walking trails would be limited to the existing interpretive trail at Bessemer Bend and a walking trail at the Pete's Draw landing site. The walking trail at Pete's Draw would be surfaced with limestone crusher fines and would incorporate stairs. This trail would help to stabilize soil, reduce the rate of erosion and ease walking traffic to the river's edge.

No other non-motorized trails have been proposed for this area. However, mountain biking and equestrian uses are increasing in the area. The natural environment of Trapper' Route Recreation Area coupled with its close proximity to local communities and adequate public access creates an ideal location for the development of these types of trails. Therefore, proposals for development of non-motorized trails may be evaluated at a future time.

Restoration and Habitat Improvement:

Public surface would be evaluated using the Wyoming BLM standards and guidelines for healthy rangelands. Adjustments would be made as necessary to grazing practices, recreation management and motorized access to improve the ecological condition of BLM administered lands within the RAMP boundary. Changes to grazing management practices may include, but are not limited to, changes in the duration and season of use, reducing available animal unit months, rangeland improvement projects (i.e. location of mineral and salt supplements) and off-site watering sources. When necessary to meet habitat and recreation objectives, grazing land would be rested or removed. All BLM administered lands within the RAMP area that are not currently leased for livestock grazing would not be made available for lease.

Restoration projects would focus on areas that fail standards for healthy rangelands. Areas currently selected for restoration projects include the Bolton Creek landing site and Bates Creek area. These two areas would be fenced to control OHV use until vegetation has established. Walk-in gates would be allowed for recreational egress. Roads and trails that are to be closed would also be restored to the natural habitat. Specific actions may include scarification, re-seeded and treatment of cheatgrass brome and other non-native plant species.

Seed Mixes

The following seed mixes would be used for closed roads and/or trails, upland areas, and campgrounds:

<i>Loamy and Sandy Loam Textured Soils</i>			
Common Name	Cultivar	Scientific Name	LBS/PLS/Acre
Thickspike wheatgrass	Critana	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Slender wheatgrass	Revenue	Elymus trachycaulus	2.0
Streambank wheatgrass	Sodar	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Prairie junegrass		Koeleria macrantha	0.5
Sandberg's bluegrass	Common	Poa Sandberg'sii	0.5
American vetch	Common	Vicia americana	2.0
White evening primrose	Common	Oenothera pallida	0.5
Blue flax	Appar	Linum lewisii	0.5

Table 5

<i>Clay and Dense Clay Soils</i>			
Common Name	Cultivar	Scientific Name	LBS/PLS/Acre
Western wheatgrass	Rosana	Pascopyrum smithii	2.0
Streambank wheatgrass	Sodar	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Slender wheatgrass	Revenue	Elymus trachycaulus	2.0
Green needlegrass	Lodorm	Nassella viridula	2.0

Sandberg's bluegrass	Common	Poa Sandberg'sii	0.5
Gardner's saltbush	Common	Atriplex gardneri	1.0

Table 6

Seeding would be done in late summer or fall; late September or October. If seeding is done earlier than this late summer or early fall moisture may result in some germination prior to winter which could lead to the death of some seedlings. While most of the seed would germinate in the spring, seed from some species may not germinate the first year.

Large areas of disturbance seeding would occur along the topographic contour unless for safety reasons it is not practical. On level areas, seeding would be applied perpendicular to the prevailing wind. For linear features, such as roads and trails, it would not be practical to do either of these. However, water turnouts (water bars) would be constructed along closed roads and trails as needed to prevent erosion. Construction guidelines would be followed using percent slope to determine the number and spacing of water turnouts required.

Mulching and crimping of seeded areas would be used where practical. Mulching and crimping provides an artificial cover crop and results in a higher rate of success for stand establishment. A minimum of 1½ tons of straw or hay mulch per acre, which is certified weed free would be used. An application of 1½ tons of mulch per acre provides 70 to 75 percent coverage. Two tons of mulch per acre provides close to 90 percent coverage.

Woody Species

The planting of woody species including cottonwoods and willows would be geared towards Rural-Natural and Semi-Primitive areas so as to provide perching structures for eagles and habitat for various species of birds and other wildlife, with minimal human intrusion. Trees and shrubs would also be used in campground areas and possible access roads going into them to provide natural screening and shade. Nine different woody species have been selected for possible use. Descriptions, uses and possible planting locations of each species are provided in Appendix 4.

Invasive non-native Plant Species

A formal inventory would be completed for the Trapper's Route Recreation Area to determine the species and density of invasive non-native plant species. At the completion of this inventory, arrangements would be made with the Natrona County Weed and Pest for treatments of these species.

Cheatgrass brome treatments are to be planned and implemented on a site specific basis. However, the following guidelines would apply.

- Chemical herbicides considered for use:
 Roundup, Glyphosate, Monsanto,
 Telar, Chorsulfuron, Dupont, Oust,
 Sulfometuron, Dupont, Plateau
- Prescribed burns would be used on a site specific base prior to chemical applications.
- All areas are to be re-seeded following chemical treatment.
- Timing of re-seeding following chemical treatment would be determined by type of herbicide and manufacture recommendations.
- Livestock and OHV use would be removed from treated areas for a minimum of 3 years after vegetation has been established. Fencing would be used to create a physical barrier.

Special Recreation Permits:

The BLM would evaluate the impacts of allowing a 50% increase in permitted commercial use along the North Platte River. The evaluation would determine if the proposed recreational facilities are adequate to meet the demands of both the commercial and private recreation use without causing undue conflict among user groups and if environmental damage is occurring on non-developed parcels due to commercial use numbers. Additional Special Recreation Permits above this baseline numbers would not be permitted until such time as the BLM has completed the evaluation. These new permits would be restricted to weekdays only. Specific guidelines for SRP management would be implemented after the completed evaluation. The evaluation would be completed five years after implementation of this RAMP

Implementation:

2006: Deferred maintenance projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grey Reef Reconstruction Government Bridge Reconstruction Bolton Creek Restoration Project Bullard placement and Clarkson Hill tent camping area Complete Road and Trail designations Fence removal on east side of Clarkson Hill Removal of trailer
2007: Capital Improvement projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White Tail and Golden Current Campgrounds Chalk Bluffs Campground Buffaloberry Landing site Implementation of travel plan (including signing) Implement sign plan Complete remaining maintenance projects Walk-in gate & turn around at Pete’s Draw Access gates and west parking at Government Bridge Completion of user surveys
2008: Restoration projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Cheatgrass brome treatment plan Removal and reseed closed roads (as needed) Plant woody and riparian species in open areas Completion of rangeland evaluations
2009: Uncompleted projects;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete remaining capital improvements Address additional obtained access site needs Completion of necessary restoration projects
2010: Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of user surveys Completion of SRP evaluation Assess recreation infrastructure and travel management Assess planning area for additional restoration needs

Monitoring:

Monitoring effectiveness of management prescriptions is an on going process and would continue throughout the life of this plan. Effective monitoring strategies are the cornerstone of adaptive management. They help to insure that objectives are being met and lead to continued public support. To that end the BLM would report on the status of the Trapper’s Route Recreation Area to the public at least once every five years.

To appropriately assess the effectiveness of management prescriptions monitoring and data needs of the environment have been divided into three categories: Physical, Social and Management attributes. Baseline studies would be designed in the fall of 2006 and would be implemented beginning in 2007. Onsite inventories and documentation of actual use began in spring of this year.

Physical Resource Attributes:

- All public lands within the RAMP would be evaluated by the standards set for healthy rangelands.
 - Standard # 1: Within the potential of the ecological site (soil type, landform, climate, and geology), soils are stable and allow for water infiltration to provide optimal plant growth and minimal surface runoff.
 - Standard #2: Riparian and wetland vegetation has structural, age, and species diversity characteristic of the stage of channel succession and is resilient and capable of recovering from natural and human disturbance in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, dissipate energy, and provide for groundwater recharge.
 - Standard #3: Upland vegetation on each ecological site consists of plant communities appropriate to the site which are resilient, diverse, and able to recover from natural and human disturbances.
 - Standard #4: Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and diversity of native plant species appropriate to the habitat. Habitats that support or could support threatened animal species, species of special concern, or sensitive species would be maintained or enhanced.
 - Standard #5: Water meets Wyoming State standards.
 - Standard #6: Air quality meets Wyoming State standards (USDA 1994).
- The area would be evaluated for existing habitats, perching and nesting areas for differing bird and small mammal species.
- Winter range evaluation
- Eagle counts from Jackson canyon and surveys during winter feeding times
- Noxious and invasive weed inventory.

Social Attributes:

- Traffic counters would be used at developed areas and at Clarkson Hill (non-developed landing)
- Document actual use (number of launches, full and half day floats of permitted fly fishing Guides; number of launches & retrievals on BLM Landings, Average launch & retrieval times).
- Document number of guides advertising for the area each year.
- Document OHV sightings on all available landings.
- Estimate the average distance between drift boats (during primary and secondary seasons)
- Complete visitor surveys every three years.
- Visitor registration boxes would be placed at all locations with facilities (including seasonal parking areas and walk-in access gates).
- Voluntary registrations would be used to monitor use (type amount, location and duration). All appropriate visitor comments would be recorded (i.e. number positive/negative, suggestions for improvement, problems)

Management Attributes:

- Evaluate existing facilities for visitor capacity (i.e. number of campsites, day-use sites, size of parking areas)
- Provide visitor infrastructure capacity after reconstruction and capital improvements
- Record management actions completed each year (campgrounds and landing site upgrades, parking areas stabilized, miles of road upgraded, miles of road closed/reclaimed, noxious & invasive weeds treated, and restoration projects implemented/successful).
- Monitor road and trail conditions on all currently existing routes including photo points.
- Record volunteer and education projects (i.e. project benefits, groups involved, cost/value)
- Record report cooperative management actions (i.e. project benefits, groups involved, and cost/value added).
- Land tenure adjustments

Funding Opportunities:

Capital improvements, enhanced management and monitoring projects increase the fiscal obligations. Current available monies include deferred maintenance funding, request for capital improvement projects and fees obtained via SRPs. The BLM may also apply for grants including those related to riparian improvements and cost share projects. These opportunities are available on a limited basis and do not ensure the long term funding required.

After the completion of the reconstruction and capital improvements the BLM would determine a recreation fee schedule that could be established to supplement available funding. In addition, the BLM will seek cooperative management and monitoring projects thereby reducing total cost and improving grant opportunities.

The development of a long term funding strategy is essential for the continued maintenance and daily management of the planning area. Successful funding strategies must be goal oriented and adaptable. They must ensure fiscal and social responsibility.

Adaptations:

Recreation management is an ongoing process. As specific actions are completed and new information is obtained it is often advantageous to adapt management prescriptions and activities so long as the value obtained is not lost. The overarching goals for the area remain the same although specific objectives may change. As stated previously the BLM would complete an evaluation cycle in five year increments and report the results to the public. Any substantial changes in management prescriptions would be disclosed. This process would help to ensure public awareness and involvement in the decision making process. Changes to travel management would be made in coordination with neighboring land owners and state and local government agencies.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

Table 7 shows the critical elements exist within the planning area and have been evaluated for impacts derived from the proposed alternative.

<i>Critical Elements</i>	<i>Affected</i>
Air Quality	No
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	No
Prime or Unique Farmlands	No
Flood Plains	No
Native American Religious Concerns	No
Hazardous and/or Solid Waste	No
Water Quality and Prime or Sole Source of Drinking Water	No
Wetlands and Riparian Areas	Yes
Threatened and Endangered Species	Yes
Wild and Scenic Rivers	No
Wilderness Values	No
Environmental Justice	No
Invasive Non-Native Species	Yes

Cultural Resources

Implementation of the preferred alternative will have little affect on the known sites. Areas proposed for disturbance that have not been inventoried will need a survey to locate and evaluate any prehistoric or historic cultural resources. If such are found and determined to be eligible for nomination to the NRHP, some type of mitigation will be required. While avoiding sites by project redesign is the method of choice, where that is not practical, formal testing and possibly data recovery may be necessary.

Regardless of which alternative is chosen, recreational use will ultimately have a negative effect on cultural resources. This could be either through collection and disturbance of the physical remains, or the secondary effects of wind and water erosion caused by casual roads and the removal of vegetation by recreation activities.

Soils and Vegetation

The planning area is comprised of a variety of soil types and plant communities, many of which are being affected by current recreation use of the river. Increased visitation numbers, uncontrolled OHV use and lack of adequate infrastructure are resulting in accelerated erosion, soil compaction and loss of riparian habitat and vegetative diversity. The proposed action would result in a significant reduction in impacts.

Construction projects would cause short term disturbances to soils and vegetation and would result in some long term losses to vegetation communities. However, the proposed developments have been designed to provide for the health and safety of visitors and to reduce impacts related to concentrated recreation use. Surfaced access roads, parking areas, boat ramps and campsites guide recreation activities and protect soils from compaction and reduce damage to vegetation. Comfort facilities such as fire rings, grills, and vault toilets reduce environmental contaminates and soil sterilization. Under the "Balanced" alternative, 35.6 acres would be dedicated to recreation facilities development, which is the equivalent to 3.6% of the total BLM-administered surface within the planning area.

Short term disturbances to soil and vegetation would occur under the "Balanced" alternative resulting from road closures and improvements. Long term losses of vegetation cover resulting from road improvements would be minimal because the majority of road improvements are to occur on previously disturbed areas. Improved roads would be constructed to the minimal standards necessary to meet user needs and stabilize soils, thereby minimizing the overall surface disturbance. Implementation of the transportation guidelines would reduce off-road use and the proliferation of two-track trails and mitigate some of the damage that has already occurred. Parking areas that are primarily used during peak seasons would be stabilized with permeable materials allowing vegetation to grow during the majority of the year. A total of 15.3 miles of roads and trails would be designated for OHV use. Travel management would be extended to one mile either side of the North Platte River, allowing for more effective OHV management.

All areas disturbed during construction projects would be stabilized using surfacing materials such as limestone crusher fines, gravel, permeable fiber or native vegetation. Seed mixtures would be as defined under the "Balanced" alternative. Construction projects and road improvements would be monitored for encroachment of invasive non-native plant species. These areas would be treated as necessary to prevent new infestations.

Restoration efforts, including treatment of invasive, non-native plant species, would result in short term impacts to soils and existing vegetation communities. These impacts would be derived from activities such re-contouring, scarification, chemical treatments of invasive non-native plant species and prescribed fire. If successful, long term impacts resulting from restoration projects and improved grazing practices would include: soils that are stable and allow for water infiltration; riparian and wetland habitats that have structural; age and species diversity characteristic of the river corridor; and plant communities that are appropriate for each ecological site and resilient to natural and human disturbances, with the species diversity necessary to support a variety of wildlife populations. The proposed action would close and restore approximately 10.6 miles of two-track trails and rehabilitate approximately 40 acres of heavily used BLM administered surface. These numbers do not include mitigation described for construction projects or the planting of woody species.

Water Resources

The North Platte River is fed by numerous naturally occurring drainages which carry sediment and provide water at various locations as they flow into the North Platte. Water resources are focal points for differing forms of resource use and can be easily impacted by livestock grazing and recreational activities. Livestock grazing in the Trapper's Route Recreation Area would be reviewed and adjusted where necessary to improve the condition of wildlife habitats and vegetation communities. Improved grazing practices would have positive impacts to water resources in the planning area.

Areas within the floodplains and immediately adjacent to ephemeral and intermittent streams are normally not well suited for concentrated recreation activities or infrastructure. Management actions proposed in the "Balanced" alternative would administer resource uses in these important areas to improve existing conditions and mitigate potential future impacts. The number of drainages crossings would be minimized through road closures and reroutes, reducing overall sediment loads. Low-water crossings and culverts would be added to road improvement projects helping to stabilized soils and vegetation communities along stream banks. This would improve the potential for bank stabilization and natural filtration resulting in improved water quality.

Infrastructure placed within riparian zones would be minimized whenever possible. Designated campsites would be limited to tent camping only, allowing for parking outside the flood plain. Boats ramps would be surface or paved to accommodate the high numbers of the launches. The "Balanced" alternative would result in stable, well-vegetated banks, reduced sediments and increased water quality.

Wildlife

The Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle. Overall, the RAMP will have beneficial effects on the bald eagle. The implementation of this plan will have no effect on the following Federally listed species: black-footed ferret, Preble's meadow jumping mouse, designated critical habitat for Preble's meadow jumping mouse, Ute ladies'-tresses, Colorado butterfly plant, blowout penstemon, and Platte River water depletions.

<i>Threatened and Endangered Species</i>	<i>Effects</i>
Bald Eagle	Yes*
Black-footed ferret	No
Preble's Meadow jumping mouse (PMJM)	No
Designated critical habitat for PMJM	No
Ute's Ladies'- tresses orchid	No
Colorado butterfly plant	No
Blowout penstemon	No
Platte River water depletions	No
*may affect, not likely to adversely affect	

The RAMP will have no effect on bald eagle nesting or communal roosts. The North Platte River is a known bald eagle winter feeding concentration area and is recognized, delineated, and protected from surface development with a ½-mile buffer on each side of the river from November 1 through March 31. New construction for fencing, campgrounds, vault toilets, upgraded roads, and other surface disturbance will not take place during the bald eagle winter feeding season.

The majority of recreational activities that take place on the North Platte River are seasonal in nature and occur from early spring through summer, most of which occurs outside of the bald eagle winter foraging season (November 1 through March 31). The RAMP will not increase recreational activity on the river nor lengthen the recreation season. Rather, it will manage, control, and direct recreational activity to take place in designated locations. Certain roads and other specific areas will be closed, unrestricted camping will be controlled, and areas that experienced previously unmanageable resource damage will be closed and restored. The Trapper's Route may affect but is not likely to adversely affect bald eagle winter feeding concentration areas.

The Trapper's Route RAMP will have many beneficial effects to bald eagles and other wildlife species. Cottonwoods along the Platte River in Nebraska are known to be a preferred tree perch species of bald eagles (Vian and Bliese 1974). The plan proposes to plant cottonwoods and various woody shrubs to rehabilitate areas and restore riparian health. Planting cottonwoods will increase the number of diurnal perch sites available for bald eagles and other species. Cottonwoods will improve riparian health by stabilizing riverbanks, reducing erosion and sedimentation, and will provide shade and cover for wildlife species. For campgrounds that are being developed and for other areas that are being rehabilitated, additional trees and shrubs will be planted which will provide habitat, screening, shade, cover, nesting sites, and a food source for a variety of wildlife species.

Tamarisk is sporadic throughout the drainages of the North Platte. Russian knapweed, whitetop, and cheatgrass can also be found in the proposed area. The RAMP proposes to treat these invasives using an Integrated Pest Management approach (IPM). This will further improve and restore riparian health and wildlife habitat which will benefit the bald eagle through increased prey base, increased water quality and aquatic habitat for fish and waterfowl, and increased perch sites.

Designated campgrounds, boat ramps, and toilets will be constructed and developed. This will concentrate users in these developed areas and will limit OHV access other areas. Overall this will be a benefit to bald eagles. Trash will be controlled, people and traffic will be managed, habitat fragmentation

will be reversed, and aquatic habitat health will improve. Effects from recreationists will be minimized and controlled.

No new roads are proposed in the RAMP. In fact, the plan will close 10.7 miles of existing road which will be rehabilitated to pre-disturbance condition. Native vegetation will be reseeded and the area will be restored--habitat fragmentation will be directly reduced. Overall, wildlife habitat will be increased, riparian habitat will be improved, and habitat fragmentation caused from roads and unrestricted camping will be reversed. In addition, BLM will strive to continue acquiring riverfront property along the North Platte. As BLM acquires public land along the river, future urbanization, habitat fragmentation, and habitat loss along the North Platte will be reduced.

Other wildlife concerns within the project area include big game crucial winter range and raptor nests. To protect big game crucial winter range, no surface disturbance will be allowed from November 15 through April 30.

To protect raptor nests, no surface disturbance will occur from February 1 through July 31 within 1/2-mile of an active or occupied nest.

Visual Resources

The majority of the planning area lies within VRM Class III. Objectives for this class states that visual intrusions may be seen and may draw the viewer's attention but may not dominate the view. Visual intrusions repeat the basic elements of form, line, color and texture found in the characteristic landscape. Using Best Management Practices for VRM would mitigate the majority of long term impacts to visual resources and provide natural appearing settings for recreation activities.

Other management prescriptions outlined in the "Balanced" alternative that would mitigate existing damage to the visual resources of the area include: proper placement and closure of roads and trails, habitat restoration projects and consistent signing guidelines. Implementation of the "Balanced" alternative would have long term positive impacts on the characteristic landscape.

Social Resources and Use

Management objectives include increased visitor satisfaction and sustained recreation benefits. Long term social impacts would be derived for the quality of recreation experience. The BLM would strive to meet these objectives by managing the natural resources and resource uses in such a manner as to provide a range of settings, in which the public has the opportunity to engage in recreational activities. Benefits which may be derived from opportunities afforded would include social connections, relaxation, well being and communing with nature, as well as many others.

Proactive management of SRPs would reduce conflicts among user groups, promote recreation opportunities in the area and allow for sustainable financial gain. The communities of Casper and Alcova could benefit long term from the tourism industry. Nearby businesses that cater to outdoor recreation would continue to thrive as a result of the increased use and growing interest in the river.

The changes in grazing practices as a result of the evaluations should not have negative impacts on the grazing community or on individual grazing companies due to the limited amount of animal unit months associated with the proposed changes. Moreover, improved vegetative communities and ecosystem health would result in more forage available for livestock grazing.

Cumulative Impacts

Dam development has impacted the natural environment and human activities located along the North Platte River. Urban population centers and rural developments have become dependant on the controlled flows. Reservoir release has altered the natural flood cycle of the river, and negatively affected species dependant on seasonal flooding. The channel has narrowed allowing permanent structures to be located on the historic floodplain.

Livestock grazing, irrigated pasture-land, and dry-land pasture are primary land uses. Many of these lands are also used to produce irrigated crops (alfalfa, corn). Habitat conversion has produced both positive and negative effects. The loss of native habitat has a negative impact on species dependant on those habitat types. Irrigated agriculture increases the productivity of many areas creating opportunities for species which are able to adapt to agricultural settings. If overgrazing occurs on these private lands, it could negatively impact cottonwood recruitment thus reducing future eagle roosts and diurnal perch sites.

Areas historically used for grazing and agriculture are being subdivided and developed creating additional habitat fragmentation, more roads, power lines, habitat loss, and disturbance. Riparian health, water quality, and sedimentation could be negatively affected.

Over the last 100 years, cottonwood numbers have decreased due to lack of flooding resulting from reservoir construction and water control. There is little recruitment to replace the decadent cottonwood stands. Recruitment can also be affected by grazing of large ungulates.

A gravel mining operation is located on private surface / private minerals on the south side of the river at the Bolton Creek confluence. Bolton Creek contributes a natural sediment load to the North Platte River, but it is possible mining operations add some additional amount of sedimentation. In the future, additional private mineral gravel pits might be developed. This could potentially contribute more sedimentation and decreased water quality.

Recreation use including unregulated OHV use has increased substantially during the past 10 years. OHV use has contributed to soil compaction, increased erosion and proliferation of non-native invasive plant species.

The implementation of the Trapper's Route RAMP would not substantially change activities occurring on private lands but may have positive impacts on the area as a whole. Management actions implemented on public lands as a result of this plan will control OHV use, restore native vegetation, treat invasive species and create greater recreational opportunities for the public.

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WROS Inventory 2005

The Water Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (WROS) was designed to be a dynamic and adaptive inventory, planning, and management tool. The overarching goal when using this system is to provide planners and managers with a framework and procedure for making better decisions for managing a spectrum of high quality and diverse water recreation opportunities.

WROS has six classifications of water based recreation opportunities, which incorporate activities, settings, experiences, and benefits for each WROS class. The 2005 WROS inventory for the North Platte River Special Recreation Area was used to generate larger scale goals and objectives for the area and to assist in the development of site specific designs.

A core team of professionals and members of the public with interest in management of the river was assembled to create and maintain a collaborative process by which to evaluate and develop the North Platte River Special Recreation Management Area Plan. Members were chosen to provide a diversity of view points, to represent differing user groups and to broaden the public participation in the planning process. The working group was limited to ten participants for sufficiency and logistical reasons.

Field surveys for the WROS was completed on August, 2005 and incorporated both BLM and Wyoming Game & Fish landing sites along the North Platte River between Gray Reef and Casper. The first day was limited to sites that have vehicle access and focused on those parcels west of Government Bridge. The inventory was completed on the second day reaching all remaining parcels by jet boat. This gave the team the opportunity to observe how public perspectives can change based on mode of travel.

At each location team members were given a brief description of the site including visitor information such as high use seasons, recreation activities and visitor types. After which they were provided the opportunity to "experience" the locations. Member individually completed the WROS Inventory protocol form in which sites are ranked based on physical, social, and managerial attributes. Scores ranged from 1- 11, with higher scores representing more primitive features. After which, group consensus was reached to provide each site with a single score for each attribute. The three attributes were then averaged together to provide an overall WROS ranking for each site.

The WROS ranking system divides recreation sites into the following categories:

Urban: Urban areas are located within extensively developed or populated municipalities. Municipal, industrial, commercial and residential land use dominate the built environment. Management presence is common and easily identified. Recreational diversity is important. Opportunities to experience the natural setting are rare due the predominance of human activity, development and resource modification. Recreational activities incorporate socialization with family and friends. Group activities are common and interactions with others visitors is expected. Management presence, a sense of security and modern conveniences are important to visitors.

Suburban: Suburban areas are located on the fringes of urban environments. They are predominately commercial and residential. Human presence is widespread and prevalent, while the appearance of the natural environment may be found in community parks, greenways, trails and open spaces. Management presence is obvious and provides a sense of security. Recreational activities focus on community activities, social development, relaxation and exercise. A moderate level of comfort and convenience is expected.

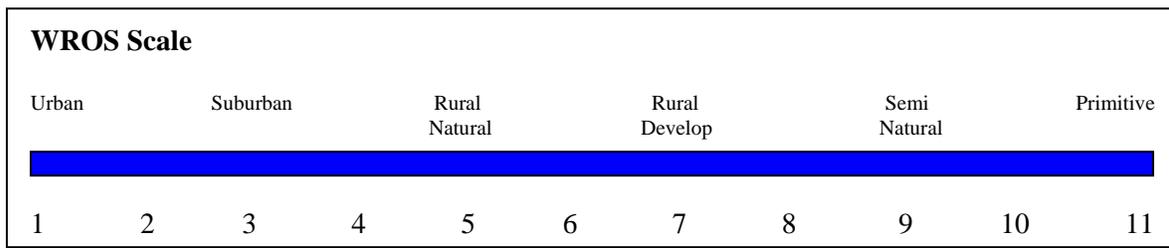
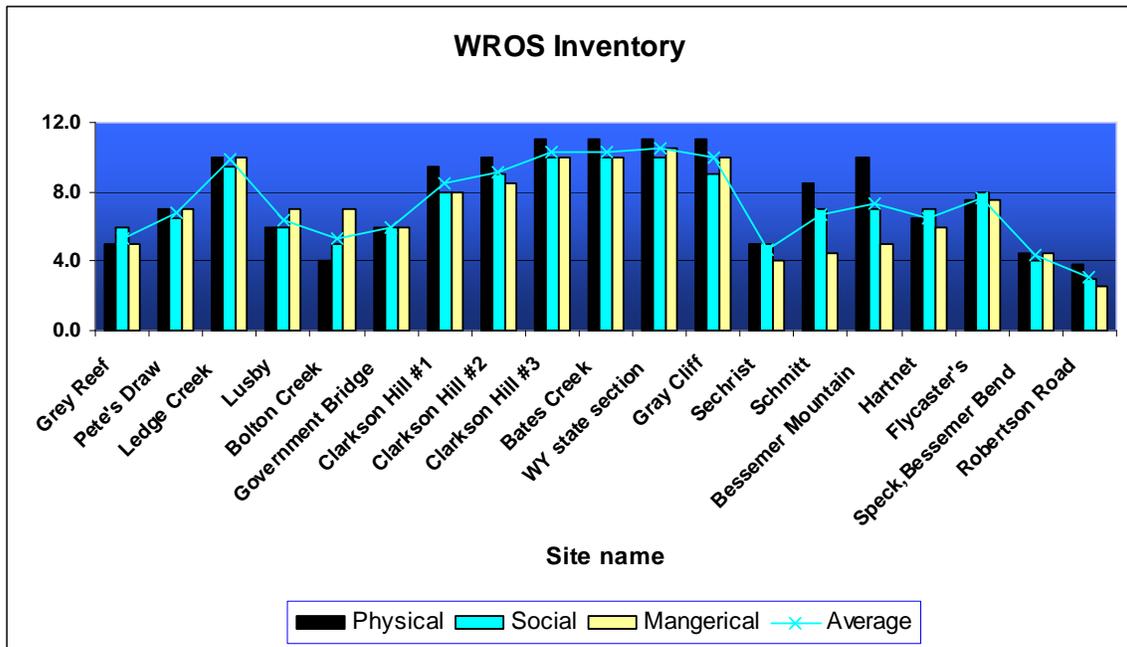
Rural Developed: Small towns, ranching and farm communities are representative of rural areas. While development may be common, the pastoral setting provides a link to the natural environment. Open space and natural landscapes are interspersed with primary road networks and small scale human developments such as ranch houses and agricultural land uses. Natural appearing shorelines are common even with the use of water control devices and structures. Because human activity and natural resource modification are common and frequently encountered, these areas provide occasional opportunity to experience the natural environment. However, these areas are less developed and more tranquil than the suburban setting. Opportunities to experience brief periods of solitude and change everyday sights and sounds is important. Socialization both within and outside one's social group is common and the presence of other visitors is expected. A moderate level of comfort and convenience is important as well as the sense of safety and security. These areas are typically attractive for day use and weekend visitors from more developed local communities.

Rural Natural: Rural Natural settings are typically a distance from urban communities. Natural features are predominant on the landscape, while the presence of human development is occasional or infrequent. Agricultural, tourism and outdoor recreation are the primary industries. These areas generally have secondary and unpaved roads, small cabins, single residences and ranches. Power lines, small stores and fuel services are typical human developments found here. Management presence is occasionally noticed in the form of patrols, facilities, signage and conveniences. Opportunities to experience the sights, smells and sounds of the natural environment are common as are occasions to enjoy periods of solitude. Socialization is not as important as seen in more developed areas, although, the presence of other visitors is expected and tolerated. Opportunities to relieve stress and get away from the built environment is high among visitor priorities. A high sense of security and convenience is not expected and is generally replaced by a sense of independence and freedom. The area may be attractive to extended weekend and longer term visitors desiring to experience the outdoors and get way from large groups of people.

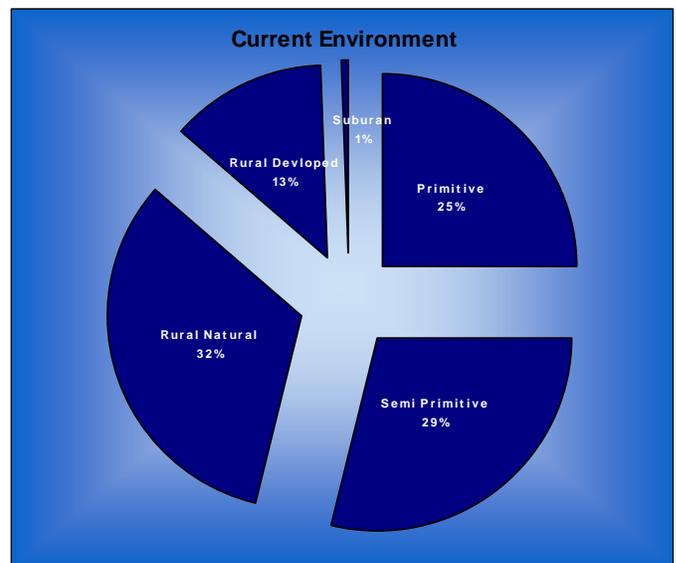
Semi-Primitive: Semi-Primitive areas are generally long distances from highly developed communities. These areas lie just outside the borders of rural natural communities. Developments are minor and the sights and sounds of human activity are few, but may include evidence of human activity such as farming operations, power lines, livestock, small out buildings, old roadways and historic structures. Management in the form of patrols, limited facilities, and signage is seldom noticed. Visitors are expected to have the equipment and skills to navigate and enjoy the setting. Facilities are limited and blend well with the landscape. Resource protection is high as a management priority. Opportunities to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the natural environment is widespread. Visitors enjoy the sense of solitude and remoteness. Challenge, adventure and self-reliance are important to visitors along with ecosystem health. Overnight stays are typically with fewer conveniences, tent camping is common. Extended stays may be accommodated.

Primitive: Primitive areas are generally large expanses of natural resources, far from development and human activity. Human developments are rare and generally go unnoticed. Management relies on visitor cooperation and stewardship and focuses on resource protection, restoration and monitoring. A sense of remoteness and solitude, wilderness and self-reliance is important to the visitor experience. Visitor comforts and conveniences are not appropriate. Benefits of primitive areas include a sense of freedom, relaxation, tranquility, nature appreciation and wonderment. Recreational opportunities provided for include fly fishing, hunting, floating and backpacking to name a few. Visitation often requires planning, travel and physical exertion.

The WROS inventory results for the North Platte River spanning from Grey Reef the to Roberson Road Bridge results are given in the following tables:



Site Name	Average Score	WROS Classification
Grey Reef	RD5	Rural Developed
Pete's Draw	RN7	Rural Natural
Ledge Creek	SP10	Semi-primitive/Primitive
Lusby	RN6	Rural Natural/Developed
Bolton Creek	SP8	Semi-primitive
Government Bridge	RD6	Rural Natural/Developed
Clarkson Hill #1	SP8	Semi-primitive
Clarkson Hill #2	SP9	Semi-primitive
Clarkson Hill #3	P10	Semi-primitive/Primitive
Bates Creek	P10	Semi-primitive/Primitive
WY state section	P11	Primitive
Gray Cliff	SP10	Semi-primitive
Sechrist	RD5	Rural Developed
Schmitt	RN7	Rural Natural
Bessemer Mountain	RN7	Rural Natural
Hartnet	RD6	Rural Developed
Flycaster's	RN8	Rural Natural
Speck/Bessemer Bend	RD4	Rural Developed
Robertson Road	S3	Suburban



The following table provides juridical status, access routes and recreational facilities:

NAME	OWNERSHIP	ACCESS	FACILITIES
Grey Reef	Nat. County	Cnty Rd	toilet boat, boat ramp, campsites, signage, access rd
Pete's Draw	BLM	Cnty Rd	toilet, picnic table, fire ring, access rd
Ledge Creek	BLM	River only	portable toilet, signage
Lusby	G&F	G&F easement	signage, toilet, boat ramp, access rd
Bolton Creek	BLM	Cnty	primitive camping ,access rd, signage
Government Bridge	BLM	State Hwy	boat ramp, parking, access road, signage
Clarkson Hill #1	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	primitive camping, two-tracks
Clarkson Hill #2	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	primitive camping, two tracks,
Clarkson Hill #3	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	primitive camping, two tracks
Bates Creek	BLM	G&F easement, Cnty Rd	none
WY state section	state	unnamed 2-track, river	two-tracks
Gray Cliff	BLM	unnamed 2-track, river	none
Sechrist	G&F	State Hwy	boat ramp, toilet, signage, parking lot,
Schmitt	G&F	State Hwy	parking lot, signage
Hartnet	G&F	Cnty Rd, river,	parking, access road ,signage
Bessemer Mountain	BLM	River	signage
Flycaster's	G&F	Cnty Rd, G&F easement	parking, toilet, signage
Speck/Bessemer Bend	BLM, G&F	Cnty Rd	parking, boat ramp, toilet, interpretive trail
Robertson Road	G&F	Cnty Rd	parking, boat ramp

Appendix 2
Soil Types

Landing Site Name	Soil Name	Potentially Dominant Characteristic Vegetation	Erosion Hazard
<u>Grey Reef</u>	<i>112 Arvada-Absted-Slickspots complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Birdsfoot sagebrush, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	<i>142 Cambria-Zigweid complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Birdsfoot sagebrush, Needleandthread	Slight-severe
	<i>243 Redsun-Rock outcrop complex</i>	Juniper, bluebunch wheatgrass	Moderate
	<i>302 Vonalee-Slickspots complex</i>	Needleandthread, Streambank wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass	Slight-severe
<u>Pete's Draw</u>	<i>162 Cragosen gravelly loam</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>302 Vonalee-Slickspots complex</i>	Needleandthread, Streambank wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass	Slight-severe
	<i>310 Zigweid loam</i>	western wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
<u>Ledge Creek</u>	<i>113 Arvada, rubon-Slickspots complex</i>	<i>Alkali sacaton, Basin wildrye, greasewood</i>	Slight
	<i>174 Draknab loamy fine sand</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight
	<i>174 Draknab loamy fine sand</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight
<u>Lusby</u>	<i>155 Clarkelen sandy loam, gravelly substratum</i>	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed	Slight
	<i>174 Draknab loamy fine sand</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight
	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>229 Orpha loamy sand</i>	prairie sandreed, sand bluestem	Moderate-severe
<u>Lusby</u>	<i>234 Prtrie clay loam,dry</i>	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
<u>Bolton Creek</u>	<i>194 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex</i>	Alkali sacaton, Basin wildrye, greasewood	Slight

	234 Prtrie clay loam,dry	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
<u>Government Bridge</u>	142 Cambria-Zigweid complex	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-Severe
	155 Clarkelen sandy loam, gravelly substratum	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed	Slight
	209 Keyner-Absted-Slickspots complex	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	229 Orpha loamy sand	prairie sandreed, sand bluestem	Moderate-severe
	234 Prtrie clay loam,dry	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
<u>Clarkson Hill #1</u>	229 Orpha loamy sand	prairie sandreed, sand bluestem	Moderate-severe
	234 Prtrie clay loam,dry	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
	275 Shingle-Taluce Rock outcrop complex	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Moderate-severe
	283 Theedle-Shingle-Kishona complex	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread, muttongrass,	Slight-Severe
<u>Clarkson Hill #2</u>	229 Orpha loamy sand	prairie sandreed, sand bluestem	Moderate-severe
	234 Prtrie clay loam, dry	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
	283 Theedle-Shingle-Kishona complex	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread, muttongrass,	Slight-Severe
<u>Clarkson Hill #3</u>	195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	209 Keyner-Absted-Slickspots complex	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	234 Prtrie clay loam,dry	Gardner's saltbush	Slight
	283 Theedle-Shingle-Kishona complex	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread, muttongrass,	Slight-Severe
	301 Vonalee-Hiland complex	Needleandthread, Streambank wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass, western wheatgrass	Slight-Severe

<u>Bates Creek</u>	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>209 Keyner-Absted-Slickspots complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	<i>283 Theedle-Shingle-Kishona complex</i>	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread, muttongrass,	Slight-Severe
<u>Wyoming State Section</u>	<i>112 Arvada-Absted-Slickspots complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Birdsfoot sagebrush, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	<i>155 Clarkelen sandy loam, gravelly substratum</i>	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed	Slight
	<i>174 Draknab loamy fine sand</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight
	<i>194 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex</i>	Alkali sacaton, Basin wildrye, greasewood	Slight
	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>209 Keyner-Absted-Slickspots complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
	<i>215 Lolote, dry-Rock outcrop complex</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail	Severe
	<i>251 Rivra sandy loam</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>283 Theedle-Shingle-Kishona complex</i>	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread, muttongrass,	Slight-Severe
<u>Gray Cliff</u>	<i>155 Clarkelen sandy loam, gravelly substratum</i>	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed	Slight
	<i>194 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex</i>	Alkali sacaton, Basin wildrye, greasewood	Slight
	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
	<i>215 Lolote, dry-Rock outcrop complex</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail	Severe
	<i>236 Petrie-Arvada complex</i>	Birdsfoot sagebrush, western wheatgrass	Slight-moderate
<u>Sechrist</u>	<i>142 Cambria-</i>	Western wheatgrass,	Slight-severe

	<i>Zigweid complex</i>	Needleandthread,	
	<i>174 Draknab loamy fine sand</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight
	<i>209 Keyner-Absted-Slickspots complex</i>	Western Wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Slight-moderate
<u>Schmitt</u>	<i>142 Cambria-Zigweid complex</i>	Western wheatgrass, Needleandthread,	Slight-severe
	<i>292 Ulm clay loam</i>	Streambank wheatgrass, green needlegrass	Slight-moderate
<u>Bessemer Mountain</u>	<i>243 Redsun-Rock outcrop complex</i>	Juniper, bluebunch wheatgrass	Moderate
<u>Hartnet</u>	<i>264 Roughlock loam</i>	Needleandthread, western wheatgrass	Slight-moderate
<u>Flycaster's</u>	<i>155 Clarkelen sandy loam, gravelly substratum</i>	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed	Slight
	<i>200 Hiland loamy sand, gravelly substratum</i>	Needleandthread, prairie sandreed, Indian ricegrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>251 Rivra sandy loam</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>256 Rock outcrop-Ustic Torriorthents, shallow-Rubble land complex</i>	Na	Na
	<i>264 Roughlock loam</i>	Needleandthread, western wheatgrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>281 Sun-up-Kishona-Rock outcrop complex</i>	Bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Needleandthread	Moderate-severe
<u>Speck/Bessemer Bend</u>	<i>251 Rivra sandy loam</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>195 Haverdad-Clarkelen complex, saline</i>	bluebunch wheatgrass, western wheatgrass	Moderate-severe
<u>Robertson Road</u>	<i>251 Rivra sandy loam</i>	Green needlegrass	Slight-moderate
	<i>295 urban land-Clarkelen,gravelly substratum,complex</i>	Na	Na

Appendix 3
Road Designations

Road #	Type	Length	Action	Justification
TR001	2-track	.12	Close	Encourages trespass
TR002	2-track	.04	Close	Encourages trespass
TR003	2-track	.06	Close	Encourages trespass
TR004	2-track	.05	Close	Unnecessary
TR005	2-track	.01	Close	Unnecessary
TR006	2-track	.09	Continue Administrative Use	Flow measurements
TR007	BLM Improved	.15	Reroute	Redesign Campground
TR008	2-track	.15	Continue Administrative Use	Maintain facilities
TR009	BLM Improved	.14	Maintain (add traffic control structures)	Recreation Access
TR010	BLM Improved	.35	Maintain	Recreation Access
TR011	BLM Improved	.06	Maintain	Recreation Access
TR0012	BLM Improved	.33	Maintain (add traffic control structures)	Recreation Access
TR0013	2-track	.60	Improve	Recreation Access
TR0014	2-track	.12	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0015	2-track	.02	Close	Unnecessary
TR0016	2-track	.47	Maintain	Recreation Access
TR0017	2-track	.12	Close	Unnecessary
TR0018	2-track	.09	Close	Redundant, non-use
TR0019	2-track	.10	Close	Erosion, Riparian concerns
TR0020	2-track	.41	Close	Erosion, drainage crossing, trespass
TR0021	2-track	.07	Close	Erosion, trespass
TR0022	2-track	.10	Close	Unnecessary
TR0023	2-track	.35	Improve, reroute	Recreation Access
TR0024	2-track	.10	Close	Redundant
TR0025	2-track	.05	Close	Unnecessary, redundant
TR0026	2-track	.24	Improve, reroute	Accommodate campground design
TR0027	2-track	.19	Close	Degrading of riparian area, accommodate tent camping
TR0028	2-track	.02	Close	Degrading of riparian area
TR0029	2-track	.05	Utilize for parking	Tent campground parking
TR0030	2-track	.08	Close	Seldom used, unnecessary
TR0031	2-track	.15	Improve, reroute	Recreation Access
TR0032	2-track	.03	Close	Unnecessary, Redundant

TR0033	2-track	.27	Improve, (add traffic control structures and bump-out parking)	Recreation Access
TR0034	2-track	.02	Close	Unnecessary
TR0035	2-track	.05	Close	Has no benefit
TR0036	2-track	.04	Close	Closure is beneficial to riparian condition
TR0037	2-track	.44	Reroute	Accommodate campground development
TR0038	2-track	.09	Improve	Boat ramp and parking access
TR0039	2-track	.42	Close	Unstable, Erosion problems, unnecessary
TR0040	2-track	.23	Improve	Buffaloberry campground and access
TR0041	2-track	.05	Improve	Parking Access
TR0042	2-track	.39	Close (temp)	Severe erosion issues may upgrade if no suitable access is secured
TR0043	2-track	.94	Close	Severe erosion, habitat improvement
TR0044	2-track	.06	Close	Severe erosion habitat improvement
TR0045	2-track	.22	Close (temp)	May be used after restoration
TR0046	2-track	.05	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0047	2-track	.14	Improve	Recreation Access
TR0048	2-track	.18	Maintain	Overlook area
TR0049	2-track	.07	Close	Unsafe, unnecessary
TR0050	2-track	.30	Improve (needs crossing)	Power line maintenance, recreation access: parallel roads
TR0051	2-track	.20	Close	Does not provide access to viable roads or river access
TR0052	2-track	.29	Improve	Power line maintenance, recreation access: parallel roads
TR0053	2-track	1.32	Reroute	Recreation access
TR0054	2-track	.23	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0055	2-track	.12	Close	Ends at head-cut
TR0056	2-track	.50	Close	Unnecessary, no recreation value
TR0057	2-track	.28	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0058	2-track	.05	Close	Non-use, ends at head-cut
TR0059	2-track	.71	Maintain	Power line maintenance
TR0060	2-track	.22	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0061	2-track	.45	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0062	2-track	.62	Maintain	Provides hunting access
TR0063	2-track	.39	Maintain	Provides hunting access
TR0064	2-track	.10	Close	Does not add to recreation values facilitates erosion

TR0065	2-track	.73	Maintain	Provides access to private developments
TR0066	2-track	.55	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0067	2-track	.73	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0068	2-track	.01	Close	Encourages trespass
TR0069	2-track	.53	Maintain	Provides recreation access
TR0070	2-track	.91	Close	Encourages trespass and drainages issues
TR0071	2-track	1.06	Close	Maintain provides recreation access
TR0072	2-track	.47	Close	Trespass concerns and erosion issues
TR0073	2-track	.11	Close	Encourages trespass, does not to recreation values, erosion issues
TR0074	2-track	.66	Close	Public can not legally access
TR0075	2-track	.42	Maintain	Power line maintenance
TR0076	2-track	.49	Close	Does not add to recreation values, erosion.
TR0077	BLM improved	.13	Maintain	Recreation access
TR0078	2-track	.82	Close	Unstable, erosion problems
TR0079	2-track	.16	Maintain	Power line maintenance
TR0080	2-track	.93	Maintain	Provides recreation access
TR0081	2-track	.92	Maintain	Provides recreation access
TR0082	2-track	1.83	Maintain	Provides recreation access
TR0083	2-track	.18	Close	Encourages trespass

Appendix 4
Vegetation
Restoration Species

Seed mix for closed roads and/or trails, upland areas, and campgrounds:

<i>Loamy and Sandy Loam Textured Soils</i>			
Common Name	Cultivar	Scientific Name	LBS/PLS/Acre
Thickspike wheatgrass	Critana	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Slender wheatgrass	Revenue	Elymus trachycaulus	2.0
Streambank wheatgrass	Sodar	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Prairie junegrass		Koeleria macrantha	0.5
Sandberg bluegrass	Common	Poa sandbergii	0.5
American vetch	Common	Vicia americana	2.0
White evening primrose	Common	Oenothera pallida	0.5
Blue flax	Appar	Linum lewisii	0.5

<i>Clay and Dense Clay Soils</i>			
Common Name	Cultivar	Scientific Name	LBS/PLS/Acre
Western wheatgrass	Rosana	Pascopyrum smithii	2.0
Streambank wheatgrass	Sodar	Elymus lanceolatus	2.0
Slender wheatgrass	Revenue	Elymus trachycaulus	2.0
Green needlegrass	Lodorm	Nassella viridula	2.0
Sandberg's bluegrass	Common	Poa sandbergii	0.5
Gardner's saltbush	Common	Atriplex gardneri	1.0

Woody Species:

Narrowleaf Cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*):

This is a small to medium sized tree that grows up to 60 feet tall. It grows where there are large amount of coarse substrates such as gravel and cobbles. Consider using this species in the abandoned gravel pit area. This species tends to sprout more than plains cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*). Field propagation of this species is relatively easy. Use dormant unrooted hardwood cuttings. Ensure the base is placed into permanent moist zone. Recommendations are the cuttings are long and tapering. Cut off the top 2 to 3 feet of the cutting to enhance rooting. Remove by rubbing all but the top 4 to 5 buds. This will result in a tree-like growth rather than shrub-like growth.

Plains Cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*):

This is a medium sized tree that grows 80 to 100 feet tall. It prefers rich moist soils found along water courses. Consider planting this species closer to the riverbank for shade and perches for raptors. It is intolerant of competition. Cottonwoods tend to seed into a new flood plain and develop as pure, even-aged stands. The Lakota know them as canyáh'u, meaning "peel off wood," and the Omaha as maa-zho . The Dakota ate the sweet inner bark of young sprouts of cottonwood trees in the spring. They also fed young cottonwood branches to their horses. A dye was made from the leaf buds. The Sacred Pole, used in ceremonies of the Omaha Indians, is made of cottonwood.

Boxelder (*Acer negundo*):

This is a small to medium sized tree that grows to 65 feet tall. It is prone to sprouting (suckering) and is fast growing. It can grow 3 to 4 feet per year. Consider using for screening between campsites. It is tolerant of prolonged flooding but also grows well in upland areas in a variety of soils.

Silver Buffaloberry (*Sheperdia argentea*):

This is a spreading shrub that occasionally forms thickets to 16 feet tall. Habitat is generally seasonally wet, well-drained alluvial floodplains near rivers and streams on sandy to coarse texture soils. It is tolerant of some flooding, but intolerant of prolonged flooding and permanently high water tables. Consider using around the campground near the abandoned gravel pit. It should be noted that seed is extremely scarce now.

Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*):

This is a shrub or small tree that grows up to 26 feet tall. It can form thickets. It is prone to sprouting. It can tolerate weakly saline soils but is not tolerant of poor drainage or prolonged flooding. Could be used for screening in campground areas.

Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*):

This is an erect to rounded shrub that grows 6 to 10 feet tall. This species can be propagated from seed or cuttings. It is root-spreading. It is adapted to fertile, moist, well developed, well-drained soils. Recommend planting near the river bank where there are deep, well developed soils. Some of the tent camping areas might be suitable for this species.

Skunkbush Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*):

This is a small to medium much branched shrub that grows 3 to 10 feet tall; stems are numerous, slender and multibranched. It has spreading rhizomes which enables the plant to increase in area. It would provide good screening cover between camp sites, particularly in the main campground area. Habitat includes rocky hillsides, canyon bottoms, rocky riparian areas, stabilized blow sands and well-drained shorelines. These sites are typically excessively drained with low water holding capabilities.

Woods Rose (*Rosa woodsii*):

This is an erect medium sized shrub that grows 3 to 7 feet tall. It grows as individual plants or dense thickets. It grows on open slopes, roadsides and river and stream bottoms. It is intolerant of poor drainage, high water table and prolonged flooding. Propagation is by seed. Consider using in select locations along river and campground areas.

Saskatoon Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*):

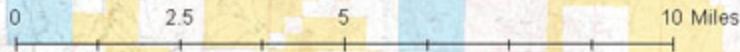
This is a deciduous shrub that grows 3 to 15 feet tall. It is adapted to a wide range of soils types. Consider for screening purposes.

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan



Legend

- RAMP Boundary
- Highways
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water



Map No. 1

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan

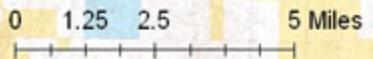


Legend

- RAMP Boundary
- <all other values>
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water

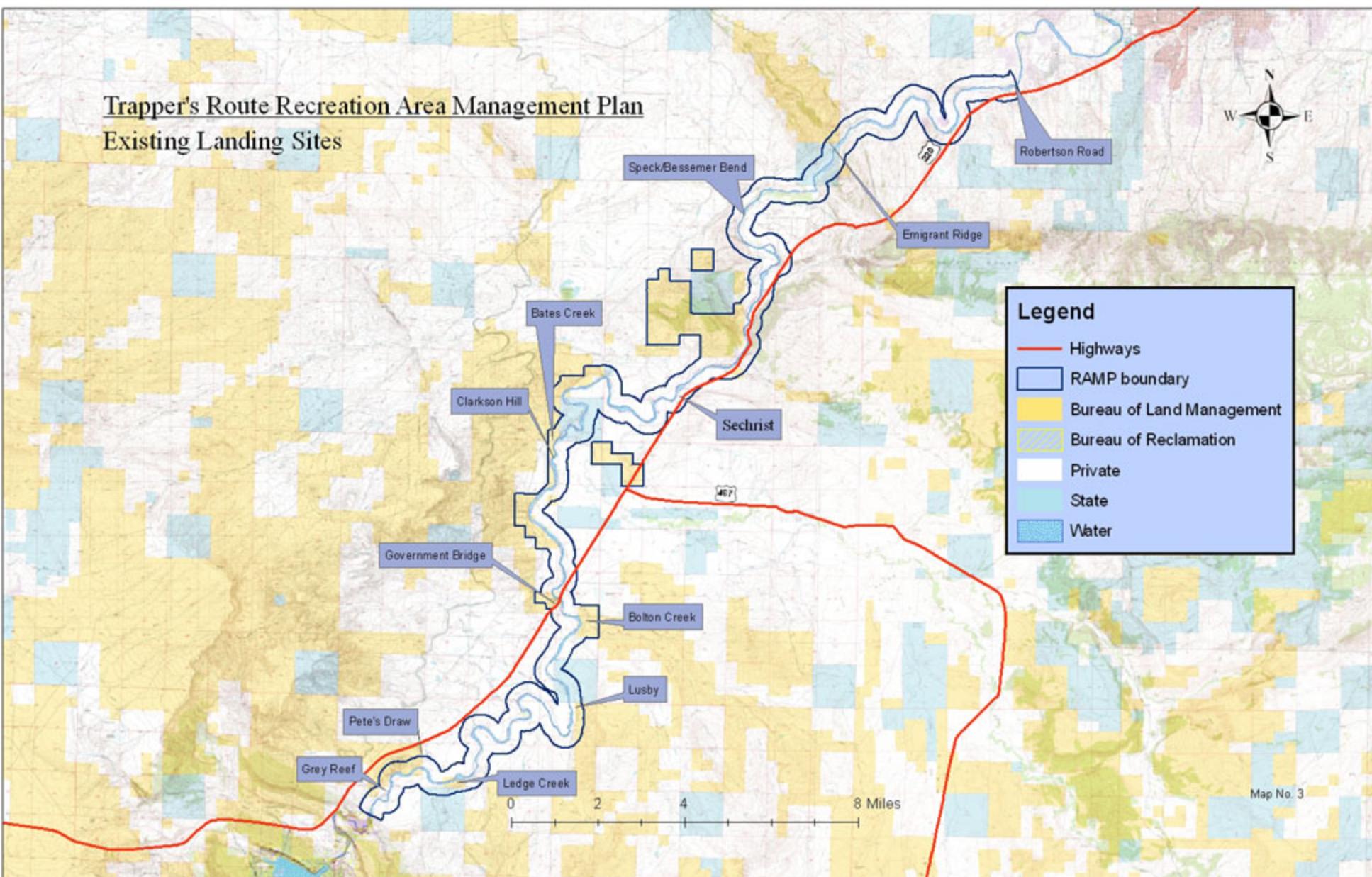
Existing Planning Restrictions (apply to public lands only)

- Withdrawals *Not available for mining claims*
- NSD *No Surface Occupancy (excluding recreational facilities); no new Sand and Gravel Operations*
- Bald Eagle Feeding Habitat *No surface activity (Nov 1 - Mar 31)*
- ROW Exclusion Area *No new Rights-Of-Way, OHV limited to designated roads/trails*



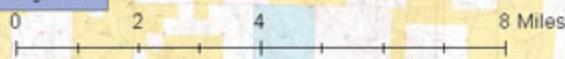
Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan

Existing Landing Sites



Legend

- Highways
- RAMP boundary
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water

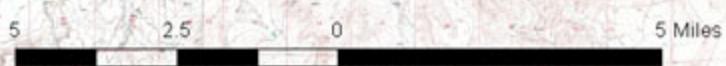
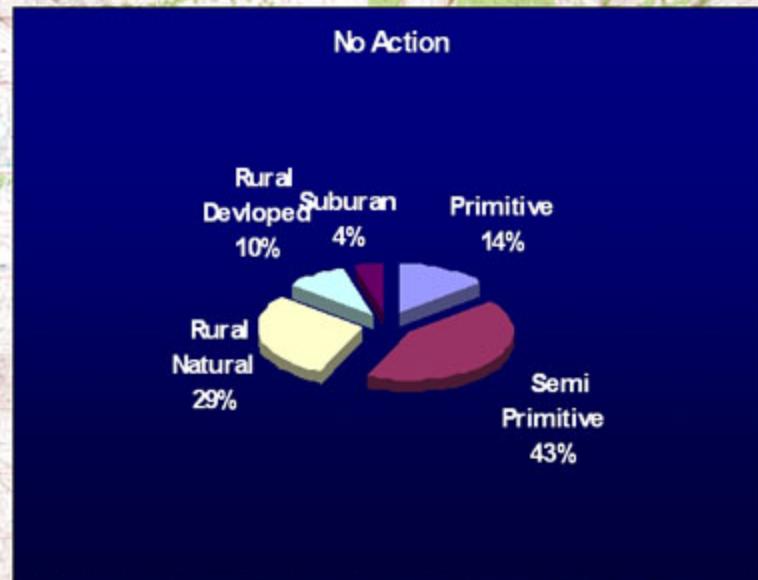


Map No. 3

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan

No Action Alternative

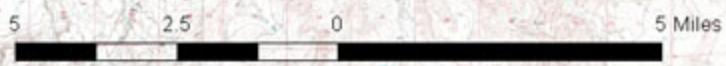
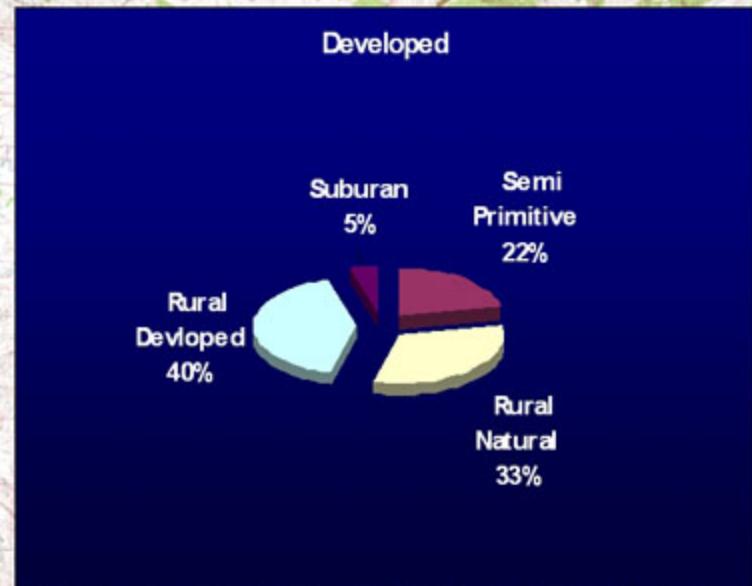
WROS Ratings



Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan Developed Alternative

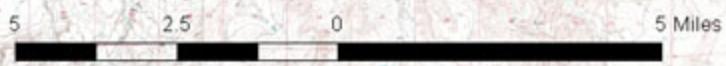
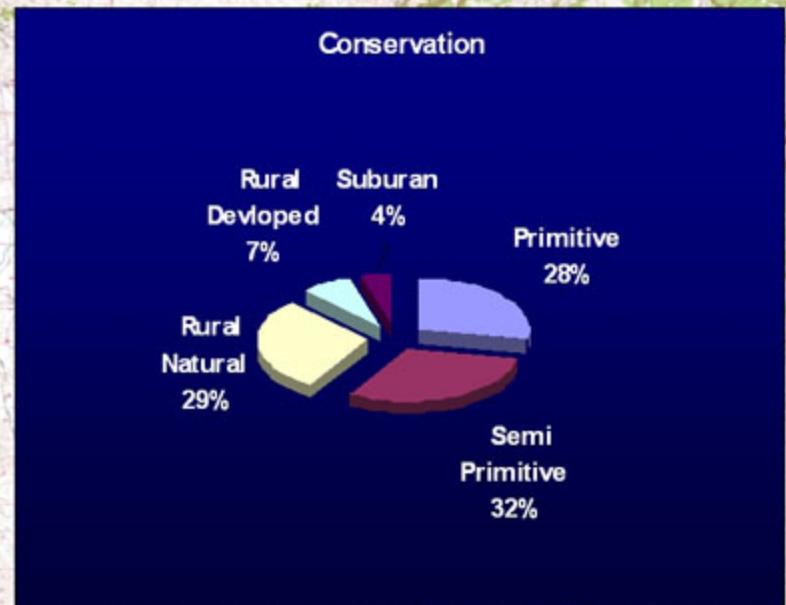


WROS Ratings



Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan Conservation Alternative

WROS Ratings

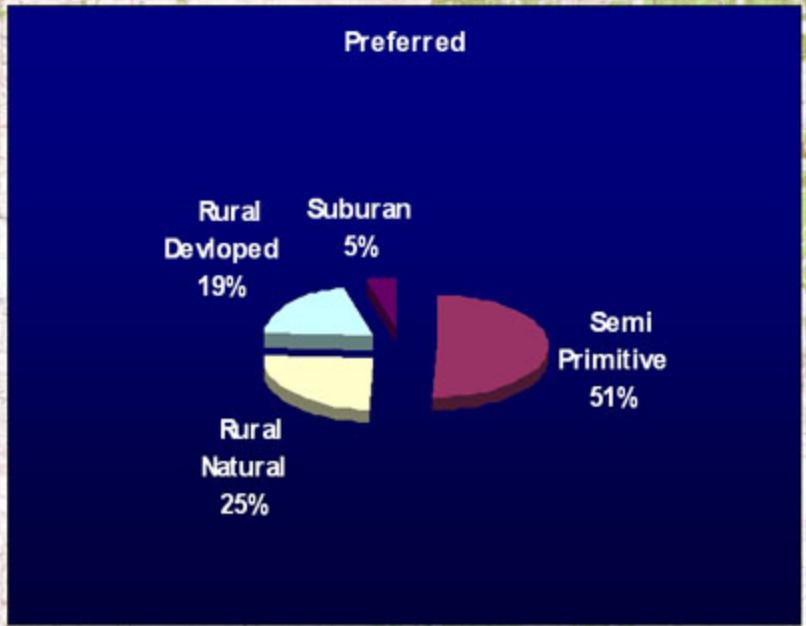
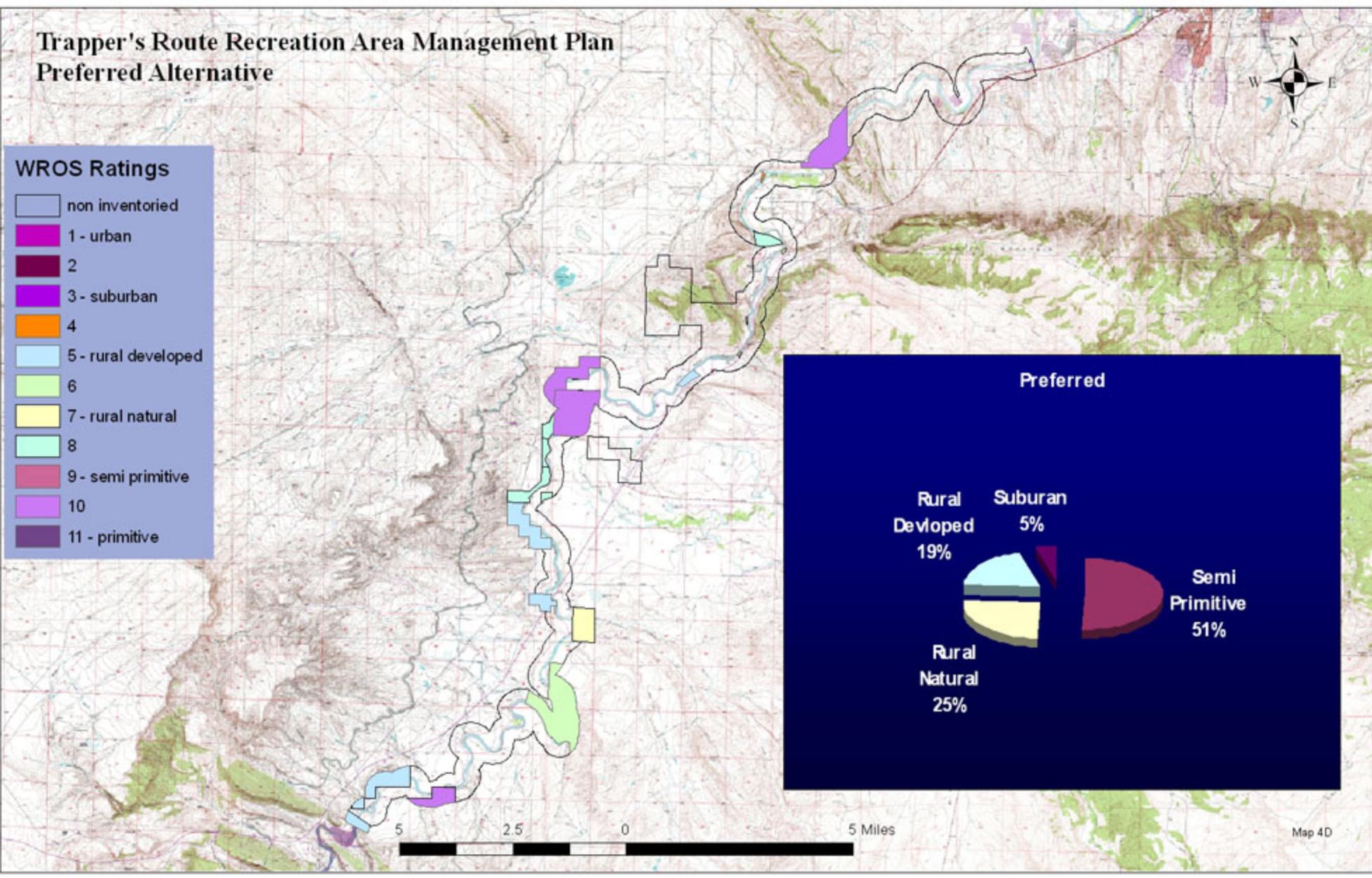


Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan Preferred Alternative



WROS Ratings

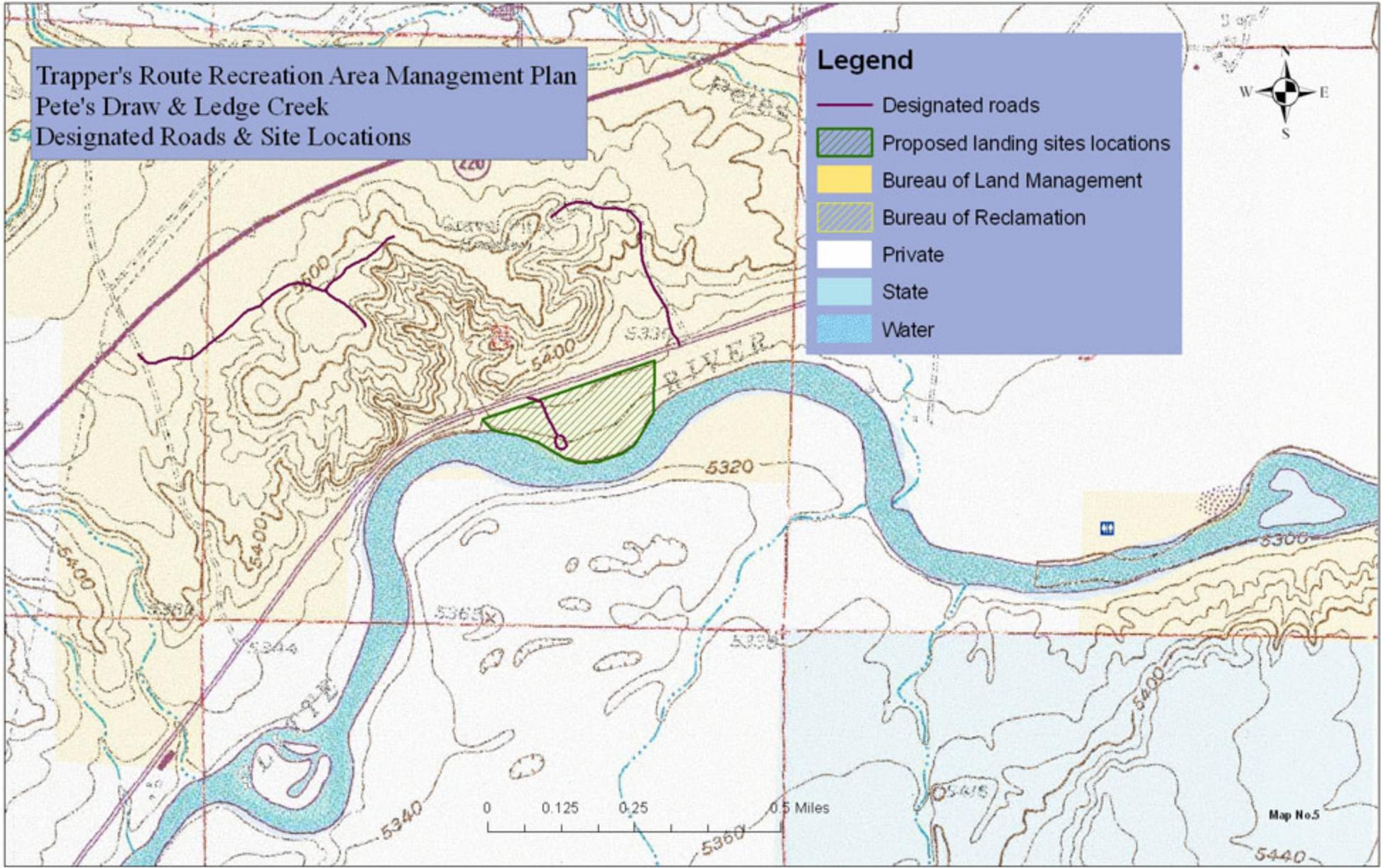
- non inventoried
- 1 - urban
- 2
- 3 - suburban
- 4
- 5 - rural developed
- 6
- 7 - rural natural
- 8
- 9 - semi primitive
- 10
- 11 - primitive



Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan
Pete's Draw & Ledge Creek
Designated Roads & Site Locations

Legend

- Designated roads
- Proposed landing sites locations
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water



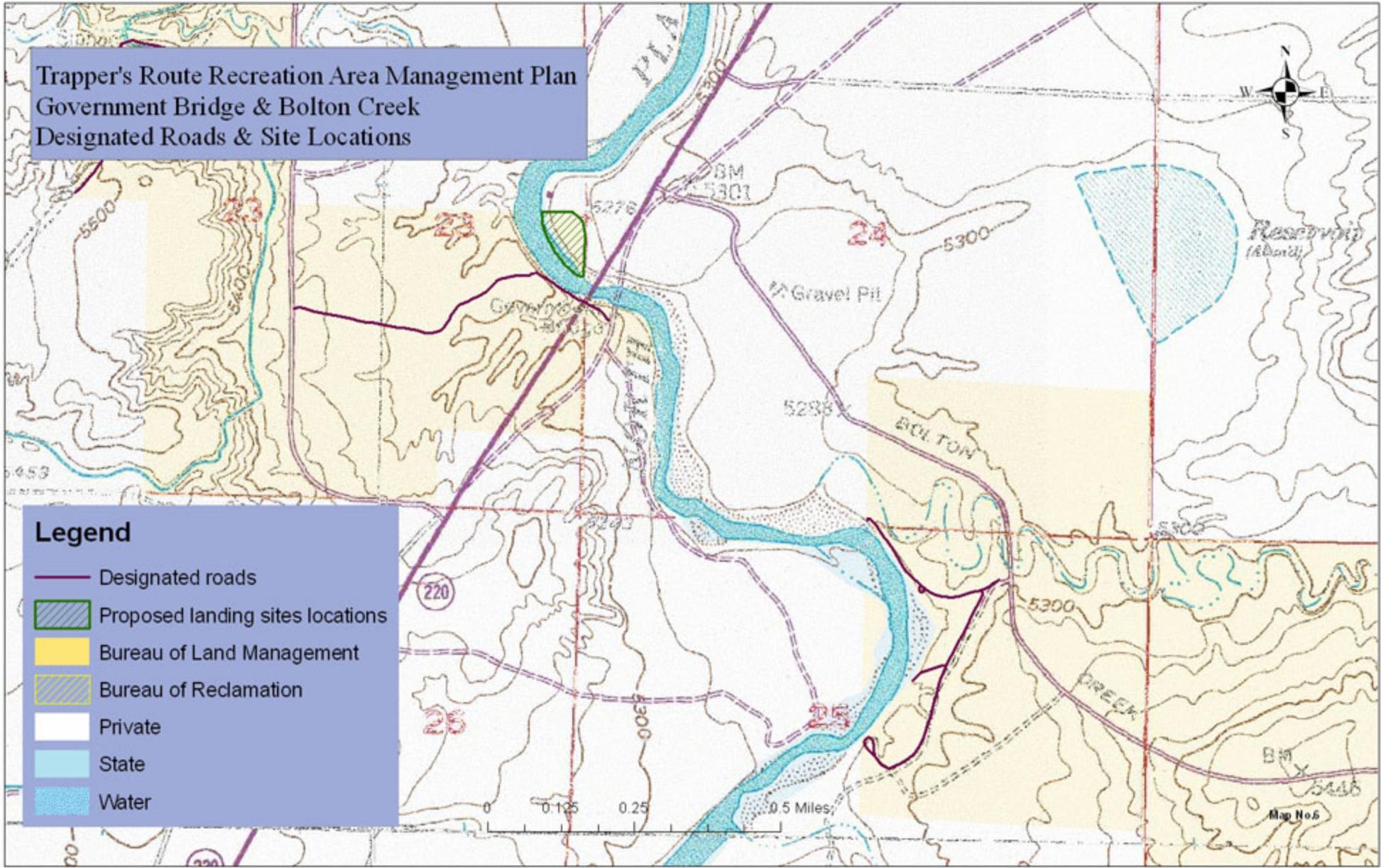
0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

Map No.5

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan
Government Bridge & Bolton Creek
Designated Roads & Site Locations



- Legend**
- Designated roads
 - ▨ Proposed landing sites locations
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - ▨ Bureau of Reclamation
 - Private
 - State
 - Water

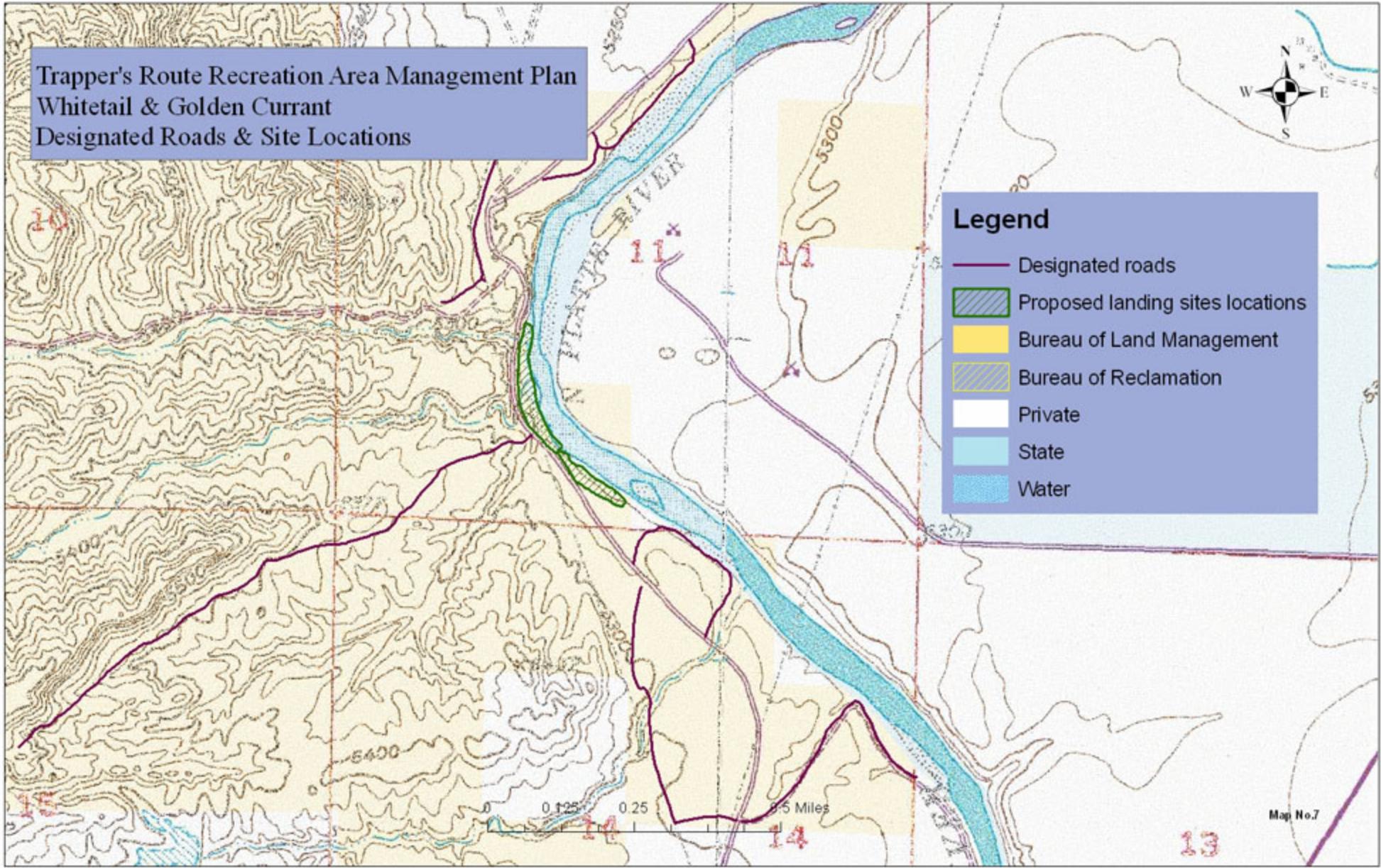


Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan
Whitetail & Golden Currant
Designated Roads & Site Locations



Legend

- Designated roads
- ▨ Proposed landing sites locations
- Bureau of Land Management
- ▨ Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

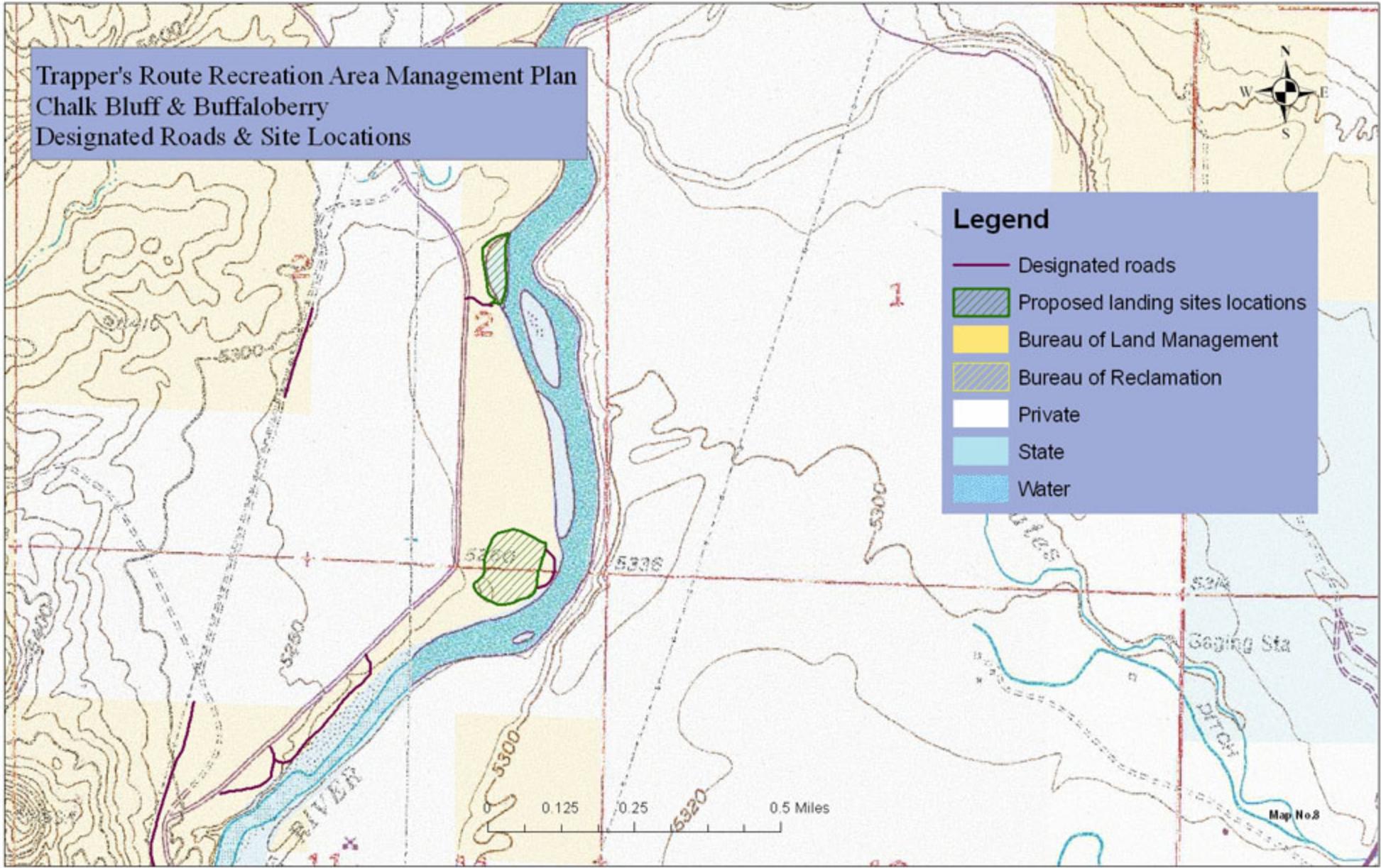
Map No.7

Trapper's Route Recreation Area Management Plan
Chalk Bluff & Buffaloberry
Designated Roads & Site Locations



Legend

- Designated roads
- ▨ Proposed landing sites locations
- Bureau of Land Management
- ▨ Bureau of Reclamation
- Private
- State
- Water

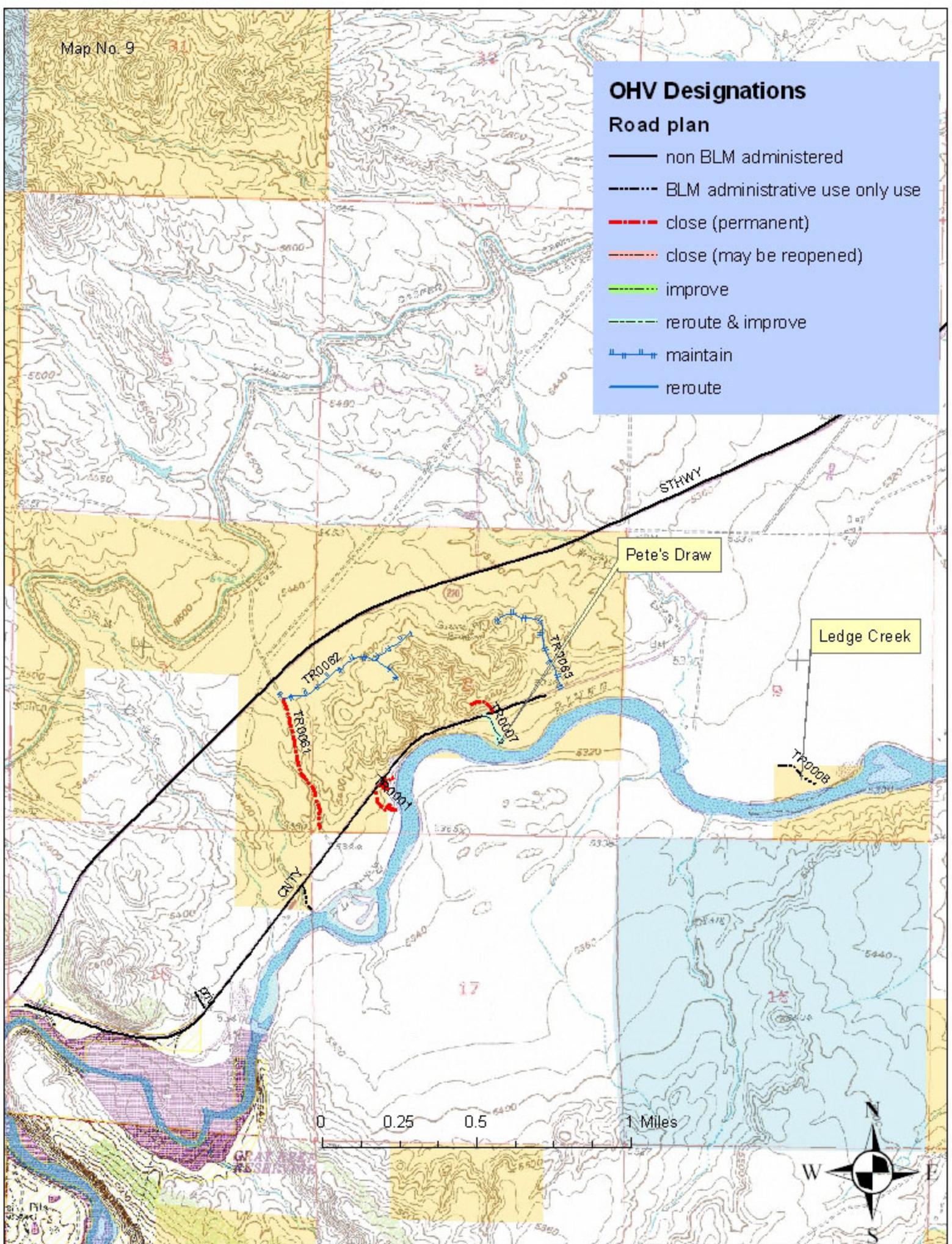


Map No. 9

OHV Designations

Road plan

- non BLM administered
- - - BLM administrative use only use
- . - . close (permanent)
- . - . close (may be reopened)
- . - . improve
- . - . reroute & improve
- + + - + maintain
- - - reroute



Pete's Draw

Ledge Creek

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



Clarkson Hill #1

Government Bridge

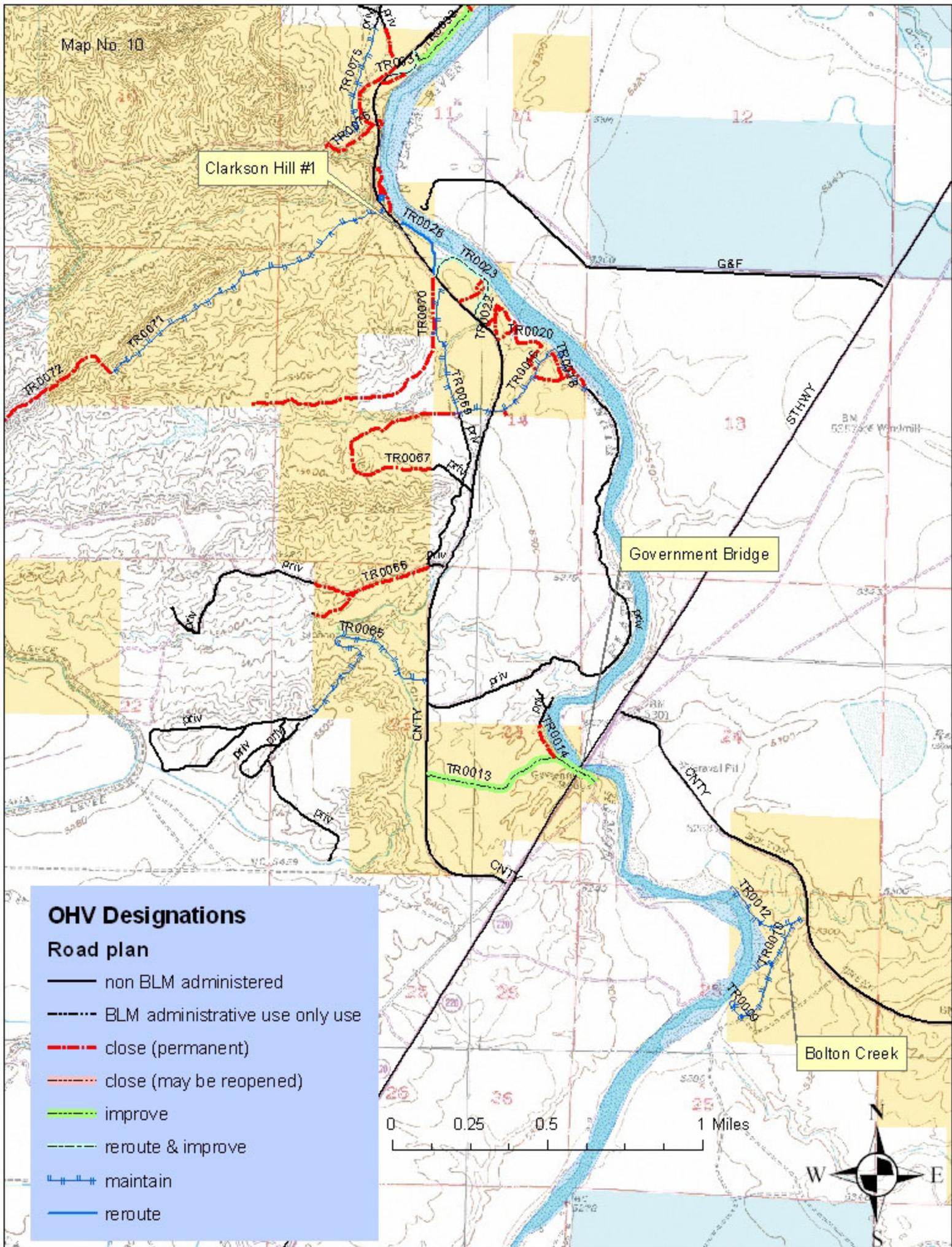
Bolton Creek

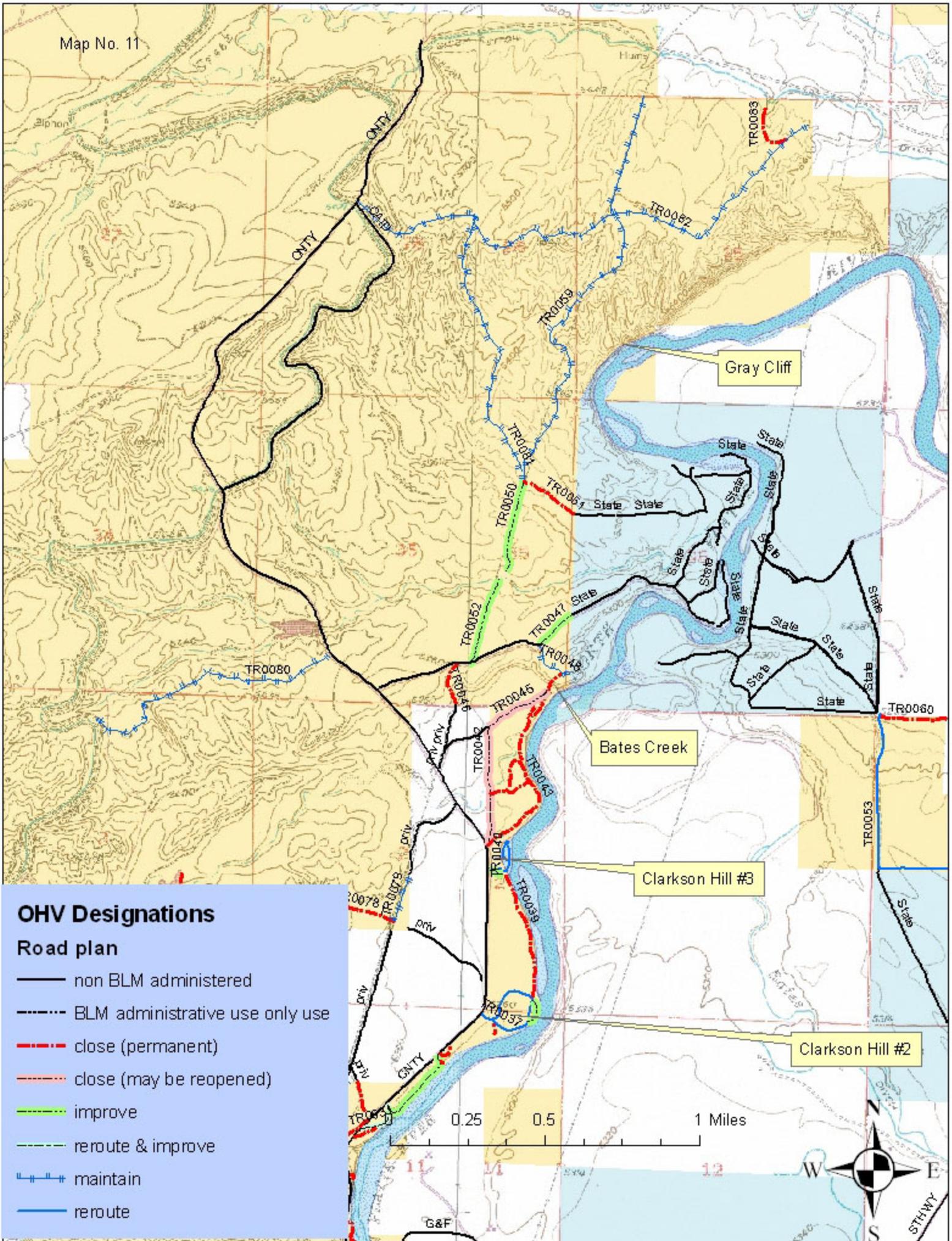
OHV Designations

Road plan

- non BLM administered
- - - BLM administrative use only use
- close (permanent)
- - - close (may be reopened)
- improve
- - - reroute & improve
- maintain
- reroute

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles





OHV Designations

Road plan

- non BLM administered
- - - BLM administrative use only use
- - - close (permanent)
- - - close (may be reopened)
- - - improve
- - - reroute & improve
- - - maintain
- - - reroute

0.25 0.5 1 Miles

