



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Wyoming State Office

P.O. Box 1828

Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009-1828



IN REPLY REFER TO:

6500 (930) P

December 29, 2009

EMS TRANSMISSION: January 4, 2010  
Instruction Memorandum No. WY-2010-013  
Expires: 9/30/11

To: District Managers and Deputy State Directors  
From: State Director  
Subject: Oil and Gas Leasing Screen for Greater Sage-Grouse

**Program Areas:** Fluid Minerals – Leasing  
Wildlife Management – Greater Sage-Grouse

**Purpose:** This Instruction Memorandum (IM) transmits the oil and gas leasing screen for Greater Sage-Grouse and guidance for its use in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wyoming Field Offices. The purpose of the screen is to assist the Field Office specialists in determining appropriate recommendations for leasing of lands in Greater Sage-Grouse Core Areas, as defined by the Wyoming Governor's Sage-Grouse Implementation Team. The guidance provides a consistent, landscape management approach for the Wyoming (WY) BLM Field Offices in order to conserve habitat for the Greater Sage-Grouse within Core Areas and in support of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's objective to maintain or enhance all populations of Greater Sage-Grouse within the same Core Areas, as defined. The Wyoming State Office of BLM will conduct a periodic review of this parcel screen to determine its effectiveness and implementation, and to make any necessary changes to improve the conservation and management of Greater Sage-Grouse habitats.

**Policy/Action:** It is the policy of the WY BLM to manage Greater Sage-Grouse habitats in support of population objectives set by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD). The following screen for nominated parcels (Figure 1) is consistent with separately issued guidance for Wyoming BLM Policy for Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management, Policy on Wyoming Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Administered Public Lands including the Federal Mineral Estate.

The screen is also consistent with the Wyoming Governor's Sage-Grouse Implementation Team - Core Population Area Strategy, and the associated Executive Order issued by the Wyoming Governor in 2008 (Order 2008-2).

Instructions for use of the screen (Figure 1):

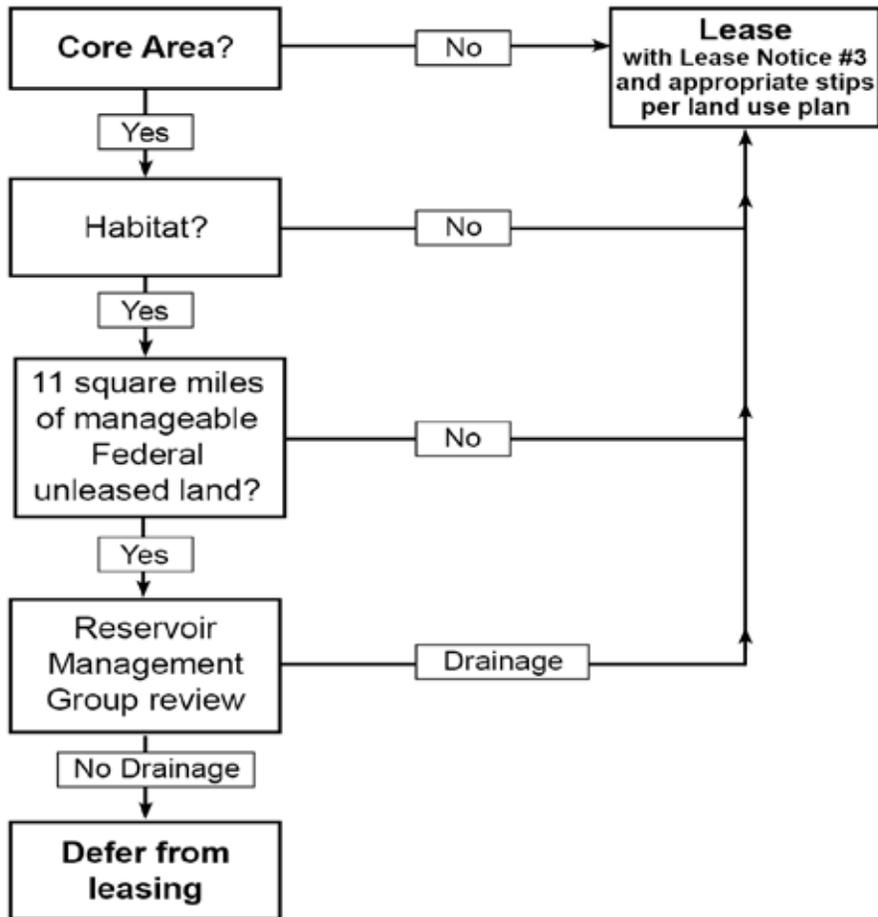
Evaluate the parcels by answering the following questions:

1. Is the parcel wholly or partially inside a Core Area? YES or NO?
  - Note that specialists must continue to use the most up to date GIS information and layers that reflect any changes in Core Areas or their boundaries.If YES, move to question 2.  
If NO, recommend for lease sale with attached Lease Notice #3 (Attachment 1), include CSU - Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species Stipulation (Attachment 2), and all other land use plan-derived stipulations as appropriate.
2. Is the Parcel within suitable habitat for sage-grouse? YES or NO?
  - Note, in areas where Field Offices have access to mapped habitat and information, reference the origin of the maps and information when making this determination.
  - In areas where reliable habitat maps and information are not available, specialists are directed to use the land use plan-derived sage-grouse stipulations, usually timing limitation stipulations (TLS) as indicator of habitat presence/absence.If YES, then move to question 3.  
If NO, recommend for lease sale with attached Lease Notice #3 (Attachment 1), include CSU - Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species Stipulation (Attachment 2), and all other land use plan-derived stipulations as appropriate.
3. Is the parcel a part of at least eleven square miles of contiguous, manageable, unleased Federal minerals? YES or NO?
  - This screen component will assist BLM in identifying opportunities where BLM can conserve large contiguous blocks of manageable, unleased habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse within the Core Areas.
  - *Manageability* may include, but is not limited to, land and mineral ownership patterns, arrangement, and any existing development or disturbances that will affect or influence habitat functionality? Include review of any adjacent Fee and State lands.If YES, then refer to the State Office Reservoir Management Group (RMG) for preliminary review for potential drainage.  
If NO, recommend for lease sale with attached Lease Notice #3 (Attachment 1), include CSU - Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species Stipulation (Attachment 2), and all other land use plan-derived stipulations as appropriate.
4. Did the RMG identify that the parcel has potential drainage issues? YES or NO?
  - Technical review is conducted by the Reservoir Management Group.If YES, recommend for lease sale with Lease Notice #3, include CSU - Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species Stipulation, and include all other land use plan-derived stipulations as appropriate.  
If NO, then recommend parcel for deferral.

For all nominated parcels that meet all of the criteria specialist may recommend deferral for sage-grouse habitat conservation. Deferred parcel areas will remain deferred from leasing until conservation planning and management potential can be evaluated in the context of a Land Use Planning action (i.e., revision, maintenance, or amendment). This approach will ensure appropriate conservation measures and strategy can be effectively applied within Core Areas.

Figure

### Nominated Parcel Screen for Greater sage-grouse



1.

**Timeframe:** Effective immediately.

**Budget Impact:** None.

**Manual or Handbook Sections Affected:** No manual or handbook sections are affected.

**Coordination:** This IM was developed through the Wyoming State Office Leasing Stipulation Committee and coordinated among the Washington Office BLM Division of Fish, Wildlife and Plant Conservation and the Wyoming BLM Field Offices, the Wyoming Office of the Governor,

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Cheyenne Field Office, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

**Contacts:** Chris Keefe, Wildlife Biologist, (307) 775-6101, Vickie Mistarka, Physical Scientist, (307) 775-6199, Bill Hill, Deputy State Director, Resources, Policy and Management, (307) 775-6113 and Larry Claypool, Deputy State Director, Minerals Lands and Realty, (307) 775-6148.

Signed by:  
Bill Hill  
Acting State Director

Authenticated by:  
Pamela D. Hernandez  
Wyoming Central Files

2 Attachments:

- 1 - Lease Notice #3 (1 p.)
- 2 - Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species Stipulation (1 p.)

Distribution

Director (230), Room 204, LS	1 (w/o atch.)
CF	2 (w/atc.)
Field Managers	1 (w/atc.)

Attachment 1:

**LEASE NOTICE NO. 3**

Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat: The lease may in part, or in total, contain important Greater Sage-Grouse habitats as identified by the BLM, either currently or prospectively. The operator may be required to implement specific measures to reduce impacts of oil and gas operations on the Greater Sage-Grouse populations and habitat quality. Such measures shall be developed during the Application for Permit to Drill on-site and environmental review process and will be consistent with the lease rights granted.

THIS NOTICE APPLIES TO ALL PARCELS

Attachment 2:

### **Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Stipulation**

CSU (1) The lease area may now or hereafter contain plants, animals, or their habitats determined to be threatened, endangered, or other special status species. BLM may recommend modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that will contribute to a need to list such a species or their habitat. BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat. BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq., including completion of any required procedure for conference or consultation; (2) as mapped on the Casper Field Office GIS database; (3) protecting [*Centrocercus urophasianus* (Greater Sage-Grouse)].