

PINEDALE FIELD OFFICE

The Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Pinedale FO was signed in December 1988 (BLM 1988b). This plan provides the management direction for approximately 931,000 acres of public surface land and 1,185,000 acres of federal mineral estate that are administered by the BLM in the Pinedale FO. This plan addresses BLM-administered lands in Sublette, Lincoln, and Teton Counties.

Environmental Baseline

This section presents a summary of the known LAUs in the Pinedale FO and an analysis of the effects of past and ongoing human activities (including Federal, State, tribal, local and private) that may influence lynx and their habitats. There are 15 LAUs that extend out from the Bridger-Teton LAUs on the east face of the Wyoming Range, at the north end in the Hoback Junction area, and on the west face of the Wind Rivers (**Map 6**). These LAUs encompass 227,769 acres on BLM land (**Table 3**).

Potential lynx habitat has been mapped, and is all contained within LAUs. There are 47,098 acres of potential habitat in the FO, representing 21% of the total LAU acreage (**Table 3**).

There are 118 lynx records from the Pinedale FO area, 7 of which are on BLM land (**Table 2, Appendix A**) (WYNDD 2003). Staff with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department observed lynx tracks in the Horse Creek area near Merna; and private individuals reported lynx from Middle Piney Creek near Big Piney (Wyoming Game and Fish 1998). Two lynx were captured and outfitted with radio collars, a male in December 1996 and a female in March 1997 (Squires and Laurion 2000). These animals were followed for a period of three years. The male crossed from the Wyoming Range in the Hoback Junction area and traversed into the Wind Rivers, across the northern end of the FO (Andrews 2003).

Existing Conservation Measures

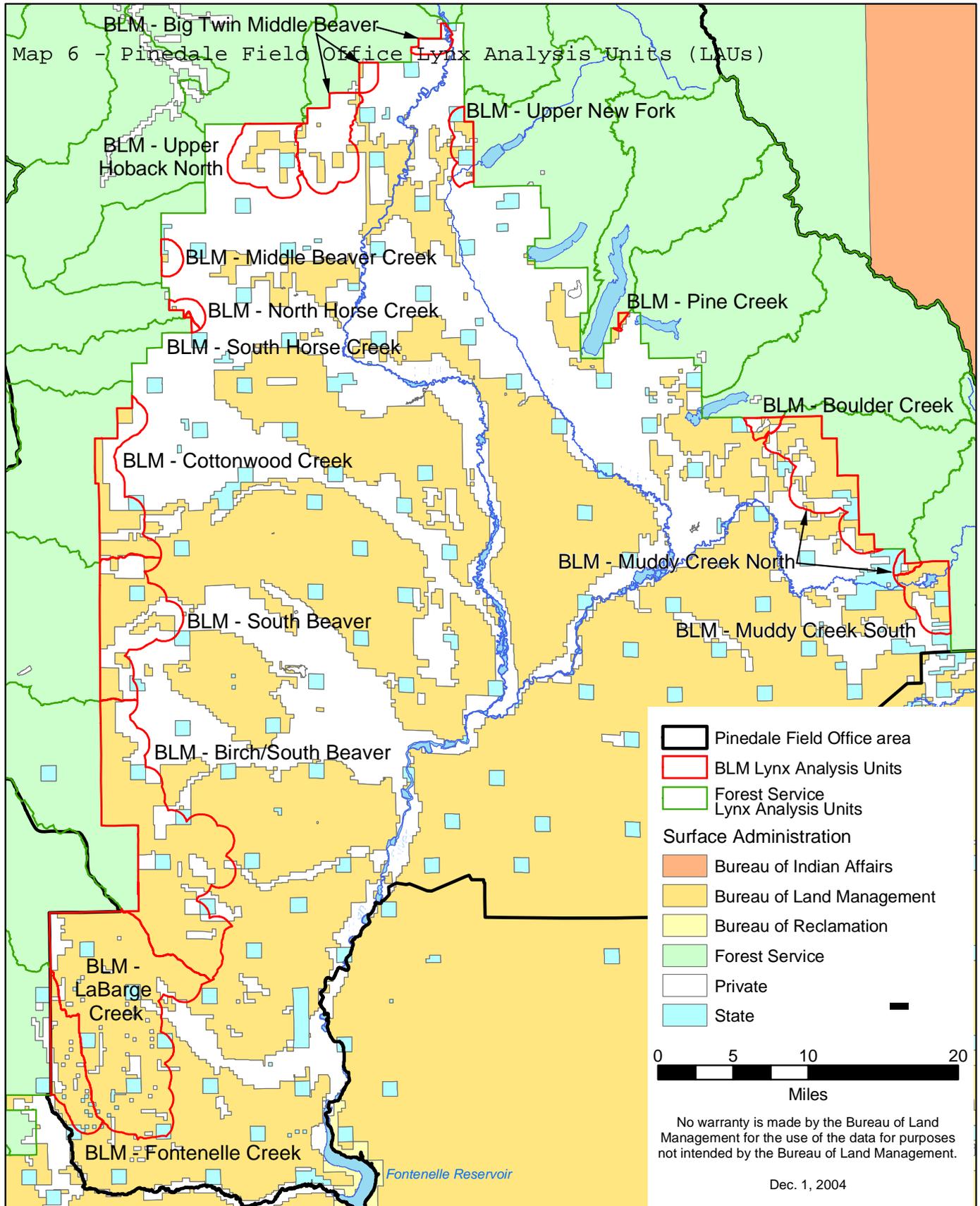
The following section presents measures included in the Pinedale RMP that may directly or indirectly minimize impacts to the lynx.

(a) “Threatened and endangered (T&E) species and their habitats will be protected. Actions which would degrade habitat to a point of jeopardizing the continued existence of a T&E species will not be allowed. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be consulted on any action with reasonable potential to affect endangered species or their habitats. A biological assessment will be prepared on all proposals where T&E species habitat will or may be affected and a biological opinion will be requested from the USFWS. All actions will include consideration for T&E plant and animal species. The Pinedale FO will continue to be inventoried to identify potential habitat and occurrence of T&E species. Identification of habitat occupied by T&E species and habitat with potential to help support these species would be managed in accordance with the national recovery plans.” (BLM 1988b, p.21).

(b) “Habitat occupied by federally listed T&E plant and animal species will be monitored to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act)” (BLM 1988b, p.21).

(c) “To protect important raptor nesting habitat, activities or surface use will not be allowed from February 1 through July 31 within certain areas encompassed by the authorization. The same criteria apply to defined raptor winter concentration areas from November 15 through April 30” (BLM 1990a, Appendix A-1, p. 59). These actions will also protect female lynx with young, and through the winter, in areas where lynx overlap with raptors.

Map 6: Pinedale Field Office Lynx Analysis Units



(d) “Portions of the authorized use area legally described as (legal description), are known or suspected to be essential habitat for (name) which is a threatened or endangered species. Prior to conducting any onsite activities, the lessee/permittee will be required to conduct inventories or studies in accordance with BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines to verify the presence or absence of this species. In the event that (name) occurrence is identified, the lessee/permittee will be required to modify operational plans to include the protection requirements of this species and its habitat (e.g., seasonal use restrictions, occupancy limitations, facility design modifications)” (BLM 1990a, Appendix A-1, p.59).

Analysis of Proposed Management Actions and Effects

The Pinedale RMP (BLM 1988b) includes descriptions of each management prescription applied within the FO. These activities are summarized in the Introduction, above. Refer to the Pinedale RMP for a complete explanation of each prescription.

Surface Disturbance Restriction Decisions

Management Actions

Necessary protection from surface-disturbing activities will be provided for wintering wildlife on about 461,090 acres of crucial and noncrucial winter range. Seasonal restrictions will be incorporated into all land use authorizations where appropriate. This includes approximately 13,440 acres of noncrucial elk winter range in the Bench Corral area; approximately 3,400 acres of noncrucial elk winter range in the Miller Mountain area; and approximately 12,800 acres of noncrucial deer winter range in the Mesa area.

No surface occupancy will be allowed on elk feedgrounds. Exceptions may be allowed if analysis indicates that proposed activities will either benefit or cause no adverse impacts to the elk. Further public input will be required for exceptions that are not designed to specifically benefit elk. No activity or surface disturbance will be allowed in elk calving areas during periods of use, usually between May 1 and June 30.

Sage grouse nesting areas will be protected in accordance with the Wyoming BLM mitigation guidelines. Surface occupancy or use, including but not limited to the drilling of wells, the construction of well pads, roads, pipelines, or other types of rights of way, and/or the installation of permanent or high profile structures (buildings, storage tanks, overhead powerlines, etc.) within 1/4 mile of a sage grouse lek (strutting ground) will be restricted or prohibited unless the operator and Authorized Officer arrive at an acceptable plan to mitigate anticipated impacts. Activity will generally be restricted to existing roads and trails. Other activities may be allowed if environmental analysis indicates that nesting sage grouse concentrations will not be adversely affected. Activity between the hours of 12 midnight and 9:00 a.m. will not be allowed within approximately one half mile of leks (e.g., during strutting season).

Seasonal restrictions will be applied to active raptor nests. Priority for further inventory of raptor nest locations will be given to areas where activities and surface disturbance are proposed.

No surface disturbance will be allowed within 500 feet of riparian habitat, wetland, and (or) live water unless a high potential for successful rehabilitation exists and(or) impacts will be temporary in nature. No surface disturbance will be allowed on the Upper Green River special recreation management area, except as identified in a management plan for that area. No surface disturbance will be allowed within one-quarter mile or the visual horizon (whichever is closer) of contributing segments of historic trails. Waste disposal facilities (e.g., drilling fluid pits, solid waste, and sanitary facilities) will not be authorized on floodplains, wetlands, and related riparian zones. Surface disturbance will be minimized in crucial

watersheds, such as Soap Holes Basin and Tip Top, with emphasis on reducing soil erosion and sediment and salinity contributions to the Green River Basin water system. Surface-disturbing activities will be appropriately restricted in accordance with the BLM Mitigation Guidelines for Surface Disturbing and Disruptive Activities and standard practices applied to surface-disturbing activities.

No surface occupancy will be allowed on cultural sites 48SU301, 48SU350, and 48LN300, and on developed and semi-developed recreation sites. No exceptions will be allowed without further public input. The NSO established for cultural resource site 48SU301 was established on a 160 aliquot part subdivision so that it could be readily and legally described in land description terms. The intent of the NSO is to prohibit surface occupancy on the physical cultural resource properties of the site. It is also intended to prohibit surface occupancy within the immediate viewshed of the various site properties (i.e., that portion of the viewshed that occurs within the NSO boundary). It was not intended to prohibit surface occupancy in those portions of the NSO that occur outside the viewshed and that contain no cultural properties.

No surface occupancy will be allowed in the Rock Creek drainage within the Rock Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (approximately 4,200 acres). The only exceptions are activities proposed to benefit the Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat. No exceptions will be allowed without further public input.

Effects Analysis

Implementation of surface disturbance restrictions throughout the Pinedale planning area will not detrimentally impact lynx behavior or habitats. Measures intended to restrict surface disturbances and minimize the effects from activities that disturb the surface will most likely result in secondary effects that are beneficial to the lynx and its prey.

Determination

Implementation of surface disturbance restriction management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **beneficial effects**. Efforts intended to limit activities that disturb the surface and their potential impacts may benefit lynx and their prey.

Air Quality Management

Management Actions

No specific management actions are presented with this program. However, actions conducted under other resource programs, including fire or mining, will be conducted in a manner so as to avoid violation of the Wyoming and National ambient air quality standards. There are currently no air quality monitoring stations within any lynx habitat or LAUs in the Pinedale FO area.

Effects Analysis

Actions related to air quality management will result in no impacts to lynx behavior, denning habitat, or foraging habitat. The actions associated with air quality management are extremely small in scope, of short duration, and unlikely to occur in lynx habitat.

Determination

No monitoring stations are currently in any lynx LAUs on BLM lands within the Pinedale FO.

Implementation of air quality management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988), will have **no effect** on the lynx, due to a lack of overlap of management activities and lynx habitat.

Minerals Management

Management Action

The 7,636-acre Scab Creek area will be closed to oil and gas leasing. The remainder of the planning area (approximately 1,185,000 acres) will be open to consideration for leasing, exploration, and development of oil and gas. Once an oil and gas lease has been issued, it constitutes a valid existing right and BLM cannot unilaterally change the terms and conditions of a lease. Therefore, in areas where oil and gas exploration and development activities are restricted or in areas closed to oil and gas leasing, an existing lease in the area would not be affected by the closure and restrictions cannot be added to the lease. Closures and additional lease restrictions could not be fully implemented until after a lease expires and new leases are issued for the same area. However, additional restrictions can be applied at the Application for Permit to Drill (APD) stage, and at subsequent development stages, that would mitigate potential impacts from oil and gas operations within existing lease areas so long as rights to develop the leases remain intact.

The BLM will evaluate industry-proposed measures to protect health and safety through the drilling permit process. Of particular concern will be the requirements of approved contingency plans for hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) release. Requirements of operators could include conducting dispersion analyses to determine ambient H₂S concentrations during well blowouts, collecting onsite meteorological data, preparing detailed evacuation plans, and placing offsite warning signs.

The Riley Ridge Project Monitoring Program will be continued. Further monitoring will include gathering of geological data in the Deadline Ridge-Graphite Hollow crucial elk winter range to aid in preparation of the proposed activity plan. Monitoring will be coordinated with other resource monitoring programs such as wildlife, surface and ground water quality, grazing, and cultural resources, as appropriate.

Geophysical notices of intent will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. All acreage in the planning area will be subject to various appropriate limitations (e.g., vehicle use restrictions), including about 517,170 acres subject to seasonal limitations. In addition, the use of explosive charges may not be allowed in any area if analysis determines that unacceptable adverse impacts would occur. Generally, all authorizations will be issued with appropriate application of surface disturbance impact minimization requirements.

Specific limitations include: Approximately 7,636 acres in the Scab Creek area will be closed to geophysical activities; areas closed to ORV use will also be closed to vehicle use for geophysical activities; in the Beaver Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), geophysical vehicles will be restricted to existing roads and trails; geophysical vehicle travel through developed and semi-developed recreation sites will be restricted to established roads and trails, geophysical activities in the remaining no surface occupancy (NSO) areas (mostly cultural sites and elk feedgrounds) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may be restricted if unacceptable impacts would occur to other resources (e.g., water quality, cultural, wildlife, recreation, and visual resource values).

The Rock Creek ACEC and surrounding area (about 17,000 acres) will be available for consideration for oil and gas leasing with appropriate stipulations, following the completion of an activity plan and associated environmental analysis. That portion of the Rock Creek ACEC within the Rock Creek

watershed boundary will be leased with an NSO stipulation for protection of the pure strain of Colorado River cutthroat trout in Rock Creek.

Leasing guidelines and objectives in the remaining parts of the Rock Creek ACEC and portions of the adjacent Deadline Ridge-Graphite Hollow crucial elk winter range will be established in a site-specific minerals/wildlife management plan (activity plan) and environmental analysis. This plan will include an evaluation of the ongoing elk habitat use study and compilation of geologic data.

The plan will also include the following direction:

Oil and gas leasing direction, regarding related activities in the evaluation area east of the Rock Creek ACEC, will be designed to ensure continued elk winter use in the Deadline Ridge-Graphite Hollow area. Oil and gas development will be allowed if determined to be compatible with continued elk use of the crucial winter range. No substantial adverse impacts to this elk habitat will be allowed.

Oil and gas leasing direction, regarding related activities in the evaluation area west of the Rock Creek ACEC, will be guided by the RMP multiple use guidelines and objectives. Evaluation may allow for some development on this portion of the crucial elk winter range, as long as RMP planning objectives are met.

The Deadline Ridge-Graphite Hollow wildlife/leasing study and activity plan will identify any suitable areas for surface occupancy based on the previously mentioned mineral leasing guidelines and objectives. Any requests for relief from leasing restrictions that are in conflict with these guidelines and objectives will be analyzed on an individual basis. Based on the analysis, either the conflicting actions would be denied or a plan amendment would be initiated to modify the plan objectives.

Upon completion of the Deadline Ridge-Graphite Hollow activity plan, large contiguous areas may be offered for lease with the NSO stipulation. These areas may only be accessed through directional drilling. The NSO stipulation would be used, rather than a no lease provision, under the assumption that industry is the best judge of whether technology would enable access to the oil and gas resources in compliance with the terms of the lease.

Leasing with the NSO stipulation could become necessary if the area is characterized by steep, and in many cases unstable slopes, with stream/riparian zones "filling" the valley bottoms. Any disturbance on the steep slopes or in the riparian zone threatens the crucial elk and cutthroat trout habitats directly.

With the exception of withdrawn lands, the planning area will be open to mineral location. Areas identified in the future as needing total protection from locatable mineral activities will be closed to mineral location and considered for withdrawal. For example, if analysis of the Rock Creek drainage portion of the Rock Creek ACEC indicates that this level of protection is necessary, a withdrawal from mineral location will be initiated on the area (approximately 4,200 acres).

Applications for mineral sales (e.g., sand, gravel) will be analyzed and processed on a case-by-case basis and appropriate surface disturbance impact minimization requirements will be included in permits. The established common use area in sections 15, 22, 27, and 34, T27N, R115W, will remain available for development. However, those portions of the common use area in sections 15 and 22 will be managed under the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review until Congress acts upon the wilderness recommendations.

In the Pinedale FO, oil and gas drilling is occurring in high-elevation forested areas, on the east side of the Wyoming Range. The APDs are on hold, and 12 wells are waiting for APDs at present. Some of these are in an LAU (Carroll 2003).

Effects Analysis

Human activity associated with oil and gas and mineral development can negatively impact lynx behavior by causing them to avoid or abandon these areas. Construction of roads, pads, or access by OHVs, and other facilities associated with development of mineral resources will alter or destroy existing terrestrial habitats that may be suitable lynx foraging habitats or linkages between suitable habitats, such as in forested or shrub-steppe habitats. Increased vehicle traffic associated with mineral and geology exploration, development, and operation may lead to increases in vehicle collisions with lynx and increased intrusion by non-specialized competing predators such as bobcat, coyote, and wolf. Additional impacts are a consequence of increased access into habitat, increased fragmentation, loss of snowshoe hare and red squirrel habitat, associated noise and human activity, associated hazards (such as chemical toxins), and temporal and spatial project considerations.

Determination

Implementation of geology and mineral management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to the lynx or its habitat.

Conservation Measures in place (Section 4) include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000), as well as stipulations and conditions of approval for minerals development that place limits on timing and surface use and occupancy that are developed at the leasing and NOS/APD stages, and the minimization of snow compaction when authorizing and monitoring developments.

Natural History and Paleontological Resources Management

Management Action

Natural history and paleontological resource values will be managed to protect and preserve representative samples of these values that are present in the planning area.

Effects Analysis

Actions associated with natural history and paleontological resource management are unlikely to occur (they are very infrequent), are typically in a very small area, have little impact, and are of short duration. These activities are unlikely to occur in lynx habitat.

Determination

Implementation of natural history and paleontological resource management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), are **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **discountable effects**. This determination is based on the relatively small amount of suitable lynx habitat on BLM-administered lands, the protections in place for threatened and endangered species, and the low potential for these resource management actions to occur in lynx habitat or LAUs which might cause harassment, displacement, injury, and mortality of lynx.

Soils and Watershed Management

Management Action

The BLM Mitigation Guidelines for Surface Disturbing and Disruptive Activities and the standard practices applied to surface-disturbing activities are used to control nonpoint sources of water pollution. These are examples of best management practices (BMPs) relative to the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended. As other BMPs for nonpoint sources of water pollution are developed, they will be incorporated into the guidance for this plan where they conform with the RMP objectives.

Projects proposed on BLM-administered lands will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for effects on soil and water resources. Soil management practices will be applied on a site-specific basis using soil survey data, and will be related to the soil characteristics such as the steepness of slopes, the length of slope, and soil chemistry and composition. Watershed management practices will follow similar guidelines.

Examples of management practices to be applied throughout the planning area include seasonal closures due to saturated soil conditions and the standard practices applied to surface-disturbing activities. At certain times of the year, use will be precluded until soil moisture is such that the use or activity will not result in degradation of the soil resource and watershed condition. These closures occur predominately in the spring and autumn.

A monitoring program for specific surface waters will be continued to identify trends on water quality. Public drinking water at recreation sites will also be protected and monitored to be in compliance with EPA safe-drinking water standards.

A Level II ground water study of the Riley Ridge/LaBarge area will be completed to define the ground water resource and to determine what additional ground water monitoring and protective measures are necessary in regard to subsurface activities conducted in the area (e.g., oil and gas drilling activities).

Ground water protection will continue to be provided by applying appropriate procedures. Special precautions will be taken to ensure protection of ground water quality when surface disturbance is to occur on ground water recharge zones.

An activity plan for reducing erosion and channel degradation will be prepared for the Tip Top watershed. Specific actions could include road maintenance, recontouring, and reseeding of disturbed sites to help achieve soil stabilization.

A watershed/recreation plan will be prepared on the Stuart Point-Mount Airy area for reducing sedimentation while still allowing off-road vehicle (ORV) use. A more detailed description of this area can be found in the ORV section.

All actions will comply with Executive Orders 11988 Floodplain Management and 11990 Protection of Wetlands, and the State of Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality water quality standards.

Effects Analysis

Soil Resources Management:

The implementation of soils management involves planning for disallowing actions that will cause soil erosion and modifying others to avoid soil erosion. There are no impacts from this management action on

lynx. However, activities associated with soil mapping/sampling may include surveying, core drilling, use of pick-up truck mounted soil augers and core samplers (1 ½” to 2” in diameter) and back-hoes (usually around 12-24” in width and pits may be up to 6’ deep) for digging soil characterization pits and trenches, using hand held shovels to dig holes or pits, and associated human and vehicle disturbances. These trenches are backfilled and revegetated/reseeded when surveys are complete. Disturbances are usually very small of short duration in nature and will reclaim to the native terrain/vegetation quickly. Surface soil erosion studies may also be conducted. These soil resource related activities in the planning area are mainly in support of other programs. Soil mapping and identification may require the digging of trenches to identify and measure soil horizons below the surface. Other surface disturbing activities associated with soil resources may include reclamation of abandoned mine lands (AML) and open shafts, removal of waste rock in floodplains or streams, or cleanup of tailings. These reclamation programs are covered under the hazardous materials section of this document.

Water Resources Management: Activities authorized under water resources management may include implementation of watershed plans, identification of heavy sediment loads, monitoring and treating soil erosion, evaluating and restricting surface development activities, and monitoring water quality.

Monitoring of streams and rivers for water quality would be very small and short term in nature (a few hours or less). Monitoring would be done with small, hand held kits on site, or water samples would be collected and analyzed in a laboratory off site. Other activities would be to measure stream channelization and evaluate streambank and riparian conditions. Access for these activities would be primarily by vehicle (pickup truck, etc.) and monitoring would be done by personnel walking into and along streams and rivers. Permanent in-stream flow monitoring and continuous water quality analysis gauging stations would be small structures that would require some construction to build (backhoe, concrete truck or a lift to place a pre-built structure) and some disturbance to streams or rivers during construction and occasional maintenance activities.

Other smaller scale water resource activities would include plugging abandoned wells to prevent contamination or cross contamination of water aquifers and reclaiming (recontouring and revegetating) the associated drill pad. This activity would consist of pouring concrete into the well casing to plug the well, requiring: vehicles, concrete trucks, concrete pumper trucks, personnel, etc. Reclamation of the drill pad after plugging would require the use of loaders, backhoes, graders or bulldozers, seeding equipment, and trucks and trailers to haul the equipment. Instream flow control structures such as drop structures (made of logs, rock baskets, or concrete); weirs; revetments (streambank erosion control structures (trees, logs, etc.)); rip-rap (rocks, boulders, logs, etc.); placing gravel or concrete in streams for crossings and fish spawning; culverts, all requiring equipment and personnel to construct. Equipment might include: vehicles, backhoes, bulldozers, skid loaders, concrete trucks, etc. Planting of riparian plant species to reduce erosion and sediment movement along watercourses would be done either using hand held tools (shovels, augers, or just jamming stems into the ground (willows, cottonwoods, etc.)) or with smaller equipment like motorized augers, backhoes, tree spades, etc.).

The above types of actions associated with watershed management would take place very rarely, if at all within any lynx habitats or LAUs and would likely have minimal or no negative impacts on lynx behavior or their denning or foraging habitats. The activities associated with this management action are infrequent, small in scale, and not likely to occur in lynx habitat. Actions associated with watershed management are likely to improve riparian vegetation and habitat for lynx and their prey.

Determination

Implementation of soil and water resource management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **discountable effects**. This determination is

based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to the lynx or its habitat and will minimize or remove impacts to lynx, lynx habitat, or LAUs. Management of soil and water resources is not expected to detrimentally impact lynx behavior or suitable denning or foraging areas. The activities associated with this management action are infrequent, localized or small in scale, and generally not likely to occur in lynx habitat. Implementation of soil and water resource management actions may maintain or improve the condition of some habitats and therefore may result in secondary beneficial effects to foraging or linkage habitats.

Wildlife Habitat Management

Management Actions

In the Deadline Ridge-Graphite area, management emphasis will be placed on maintaining crucial elk winter habitat. In elk feedgrounds, management emphasis will be on maintenance of habitat quality and continued use of the areas as elk feedgrounds. To maintain the integrity of the elk feedgrounds, certain activities would be constrained on lands near them. The NSO restriction would be imposed for all activities except those that have impacts which are temporary in nature or that are compatible with elk habitat management.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be consulted on any action with reasonable potential to affect endangered species or their habitats. A biological assessment (BA) will be prepared on all proposals where T&E species habitat will or may be affected and a biological opinion will be requested from the USFWS.

Threatened and endangered (T&E) species and their habitats will be protected. Actions that would degrade habitat to a point of jeopardizing the continued existence of a T&E species will not be allowed. The Pinedale planning area will continue to be inventoried to identify potential habitat and occurrence of T&E species. Identification of habitat occupied by T&E species and habitat with potential to help support these species would be managed in accordance with the national recovery plans. Potential habitat includes high density prairie dog towns for black-footed ferrets, wetlands for whooping cranes, high cliffs over riparian zones for peregrine falcons, and cottonwood stands along the Green, New Fork, and East Fork rivers for bald eagles. Management prescriptions for potential habitat will include consideration for future occupancy by T&E species. Key habitat characteristics will be identified to help ensure maintenance of high quality areas for natural reoccupation.

Habitat occupied by federally listed T&E plant and animal species will be monitored to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act. The Colorado River cutthroat trout (once a Category 2 species, but now no longer considered for listing under the ESA (FRN April 20, 2004)) will be monitored in cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Areas with habitat having potential to support transplanted or introduced wildlife species (other than T&E species) will be identified in the development of activity plans and managed in accordance with the RMP objectives. Proposals for introductions or species transplants to BLM-administered public lands will be evaluated and analyzed, and the impact to and of other resources will be considered. Cooperative agreements will be developed, if necessary, to facilitate species transplants and habitat management.

Mule deer, elk, antelope, and sage grouse use patterns will be monitored. Habitat trend for the species will be interpreted through survey data collected, in cooperation with livestock and watershed studies and monitoring activities. Interdisciplinary selection of key areas and plant species will ensure that crucial habitats are monitored.

The East Front Aquatic Habitat Management Plan (HMP) will be implemented to promote riparian habitat management and protect the Colorado River cutthroat trout. In addition, this HMP and the Upper Green River HMP will include consideration of habitat improvement and related projects for enhancing habitat for waterfowl and aquatic species.

Riparian area maintenance, improvement, and restoration will help promote quality fish habitat on streams and lakes. Coordination with WGFD will continue on the Comprehensive Management and Enhancement Plan for the Colorado River cutthroat trout in Wyoming to improve habitat and expand the range of these trout so they are no longer in threat of extinction. Efforts to control siltation into the East Fork and New Fork rivers will be pursued to improve the water quality of these fisheries. Water Quality Standards for other fishing streams and lakes will be coordinated with WGFD and the State Department of Environmental Quality. Adherence to these standards will help maintain existing fish habitat.

High priority will be given to improvement of wildlife habitat through vegetation manipulation. Any areas identified in the future as suitable for treatment to benefit wildlife will be considered.

Vegetation treatments for livestock grazing and other resource objectives will include consideration of wildlife objectives and related restrictions. Habitat will also be enhanced by other improvements, such as development of water facilities. During development and implementation of activity plans (e.g., allotment, timber, watershed, or wildlife habitat management plans), consideration of habitat improvement needs and locations will be included. Waterfowl habitat will be considered for enhancement through improvements, specifically the Upper Green River HMP and East Front Aquatic HMP update, will provide waterfowl and fisheries habitat improvement projects. Road closures may be imposed to protect fisheries and elk habitat. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is conducting a study of big game response to oil and gas development on the Riley Ridge natural gas project area. Findings and recommendations from this study will be used in considering future development of minerals on big game ranges.

Effects Analysis

The implementation of management actions associated with wildlife habitat management will likely have positive effects by maintaining or improving existing habitat conditions that will benefit lynx and their prey. Many of the actions are, in fact, directed at lynx habitat improvement. Management actions associated with wildlife habitat management have potential impacts that are dependent on several factors including the number of people involved with each field effort, the time of year, duration of field activities, use of heavy machinery versus hand tools, and type of lynx habitat affected. Lynx have a reasonable tolerance for human presence and may not alter how they use the landscape as a consequence (Aubry et al. 2000). In addition, precautionary measures for endangered species should provide additional protection. The implementation of these actions will likely have positive effects by maintaining or improving existing habitat conditions, especially riparian areas, which will benefit lynx and their prey. In some cases, however, lynx would likely avoid areas where activities are taking place due to the temporary disturbance created by these activities

Determination

Implementation of wildlife habitat management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx due to **insignificant effects**. Although there is the possibility of some occasional and small degree of disturbance, this determination is based on the potential for these actions to benefit the lynx by maintaining or enhancing habitats used by snowshoe hares, sage grouse, and

jackrabbits in shrub steplands, mountain shrublands, Douglas fir, Engelmann spruce-subalpine fir, and aspen-conifer forestlands.

Livestock Grazing Management

Management Actions

The current grazing preference objective of 107,907 animal unit months (AUMs) will be maintained or increased through implementation of allotment management plans (AMPs), range improvements, and vegetation manipulation. If these measures fail to provide the grazing preference objective, while providing for protection of other resource values as established in the plan, livestock reductions may become necessary. Any adjustments in livestock grazing use will be made as a result of monitoring and in consultation with grazing permittees and other affected interests.

The 20,991 acres of unallotted forage on public lands will be considered for allocation on a case-by-case basis in accordance with RMP goals and objectives. The number of AUMs to be allocated will be determined after the lands have been evaluated. Adequate stock trails will be maintained to support livestock trailing needs. Adequate forage for wintering elk will be provided to the extent possible (population levels based on Wyoming Game and Fish Department 1987 population objectives) in the Bench Corral, Miller Mountain-Fort Hill, Riley Ridge, and Graphite elk winter ranges. In cases where adequate forage for wintering elk is not available, adequate forage could be provided through a combination of management practices, including livestock grazing systems, grazing adjustments, and vegetation manipulation. Livestock water developments on crucial elk winter ranges will only be allowed if they do not result in adverse impacts to the crucial range.

Initial categorization is 41 “I” allotments, 141 “M” allotments, and 26 “C” allotments. New allotment management plans (AMPs) will be written and implemented on “I” allotments. New AMPs or activity plans will require environmental analyses. All grazing systems will be designed to maintain or improve plant diversity. Specific objectives will be determined during AMP preparation to provide forage diversity for antelope, mule deer, and sage grouse as well as livestock. Grazing systems will be designed to limit forage competition for forbs and other desirable plants, particularly in the spring of the year.

Some allotments have very small acreages available for treatment. Because of the high cost of treating such small areas, they are not likely to be treated. Other allotments containing large acreages may not receive the total projected treatment due to resource considerations (e.g., sage grouse nesting areas and erodible soils). Acreage of brush control may increase or decrease on certain allotments depending on rangeland management needs addressed in AMPs and other activity plans.

All brush control projects will involve site-specific environmental analysis; coordination with affected livestock operators and the WGFD; and will include multiple use objectives for other resource uses including livestock, wildlife, and watershed.

Prescribed fire will generally be the preferred method of vegetation manipulation for the conversion of brushland to grassland. Wildfires occurring in areas with a fire prescription will be allowed to burn as long as they remain within the prescriptions and meet land use objectives. Other vegetation manipulation methods will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

To reduce streambank degradation, salt blocks for livestock and wildlife use will not be placed within 500 feet of live water, wetland, or riparian areas, unless activity plans show that it is necessary to meet management objectives.

Any forage increases realized from management prescriptions and range improvement practices will be allocated to wildlife, watershed, and livestock. Site-specific objectives for wildlife, watershed, and livestock grazing will be developed to identify each resource use to receive a forage allocation.

Actual forage allocation from forage increases will be based on site-specific analysis and must conform to the multiple use objectives of the activity plans. The allocation of forage resulting from treatments financed by permittees, as in “M” category allotments that do not have crucial wildlife ranges, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. More forage may be allocated to livestock grazing than to other resource uses, in accordance with the current federal grazing regulations, including consistency with the multiple use management objectives set forth in this document. Consultation with the affected parties will be necessary at the outset of planning for the project allocating increased forage to ensure satisfactory proportioning of the additional forage.

Monitoring of the range and the vegetation resource will be conducted at a level sufficient to detect changes in grazing use, trend, and range conditions. These data will be used to support and direct grazing management decisions consistent with national policy. Ecological range site condition mapping will be completed.

Effects Analysis

Although the RMP and the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management on BLM land provide some regulatory guidance for protecting the riparian areas used by snowshoe hares for foraging and by lynx for movement corridors, impacts to these areas do occur. Domestic livestock grazing in riparian areas can alter the structure and composition of aspen and riparian shrubs that hares depend upon. In areas with high elk numbers, this loss of vegetation can be further exacerbated. Grazing also may lead to other adverse environmental effects, including increased soil erosion, degradation of stream bank conditions, introduction of noxious weeds, and the reduction of viable aspen and riparian shrub recruitment (Chaney et al. 1990; Kaufman and Krueger 1984; Menke et al. 1996). Grazing also causes a reduction in fine fuels, thus affecting fire regimes and subsequent regeneration.

In areas within the elevational range of lynx, grazing in shrub-steppe communities also may have impacts on lynx. This occurs when cattle graze on the intermixed grassland understory, which, especially with spring grazing, encourages growth of the sage. Mid- to late seral stages and a lack of heavy grazing have been suggested as the goal in managing shrub steplands for lynx (Ruediger et al. 2000), but the availability of a well-developed understory of grasses is also important. Sage grouse and jackrabbits, both alternate prey species for lynx, prefer the edges created by interspersed grassland patches within the shrub steppe rather than solid sagebrush. Lynx will use these sagebrush areas for foraging when prey are abundant there, and will make exploratory and dispersal movements outside of their forested habitats onto shrub-steppe communities, during which they would require alternate prey such as sage grouse, jackrabbits, and ground squirrels.

Conservation Measures in place (Section 4) for livestock grazing management include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000), as well as: restrictions on livestock in openings created by fire or timber harvest; evaluation and careful management of grazing in aspen stands, shrub-steppe communities, and riparian areas; restrictions on over-snow access; requirement that predator control activities be conducted by Wildlife Services through a formal Section 7 consultation; and that weed assessments and control be conducted so as to optimize snowshoe hare habitat in high-elevation riparian areas.

Fencing activities authorized by the livestock grazing management program may include fence construction and repair, designing and implementing grazing systems, and building livestock enclosures for important riparian habitat. Water management activities associated with range management may include the development of reservoirs, springs, pipelines, and wells, and access authorization. Permit and lease management activities include conducting monitoring studies, performing project work to enhance and improve riparian zones and uplands, managing stock driveways, and developing management plans and agreements.

In some cases cross fencing (subdividing an allotment, pasture or ranch by fencing) is used to accomplish management needs or when a parcel is leased by more than one lessee. Temporary fencing, including electric fencing may be authorized to accomplish management goals. Fencing might be used to reduce grazing intensity, distribute grazing away from important resources (streams, springs, riparian areas, wetlands, cottonwood galleries, etc.). When fencing is proposed, either permanent or temporary, fences are built to standards developed in the Fencing BLM Manual Handbook (H-1741-1, Fencing, Rel. 1-1572, 12/6/1989). These standards are required to reduce the amount of restriction or hazards to wildlife. Fence construction and maintenance would likely require access to the site, possible removal of vegetation or uneven surface materials (rocks, trees, sand, etc.), stringing wire, digging postholes, building fence braces, building rock jacks, cutting or removing on or off site building materials (fence posts, rails, gathering rocks, etc.), weed management (spraying, cutting, pulling, etc.), or if the project is large enough, the possibility of camps for workers. The use of corrals for confinement of livestock for various purposes (sheep shearing, overnight holding of livestock, etc.) would require construction and maintenance activities including, hauling building materials, heavy equipment use, access to the corral site, etc.

The livestock grazing program may also include rangeland improvements such as stock water ponds, pits, or reservoirs; pipeline and trough systems; spring developments; storage tanks and troughs; wells; or temporary tanks and water hauling. These off-stream water improvements better distribute the use and intensity of use by livestock away from streams, rivers or wetlands and help protect important riparian areas, but could require the use of hand tools, mechanical or heavy equipment, hauling/transporting materials (gravel, dirt, tanks, etc.), and clearing vegetation. Placement of salt and mineral blocks or riding horseback and physically moving livestock are other forms of livestock distribution.

Rangeland restoration to improve range health is also a part of livestock management. These activities might include aerial seeding and possibly herbicide application, seeding by disking or drilling (using a tractor or other heavy equipment), fertilizing, plowing, chaining, or rangeland pitting.

Most livestock operators use off-highway vehicles (OHVs), i.e.: pick-up trucks; off road vehicles (ORVs), i.e.: motorcycles or "4-wheelers," or ride horseback or walk to access their allotments. "Herding" (moving) livestock through walking, horseback riding, and the use of dogs to distribute livestock on allotments or trailing (move them from one location to another - on or off of allotments), and the use of domestic sheep bed grounds (a temporary site to bed down flock(s) of sheep) and associated sheep herder camps are commonly employed methods of livestock operations. Road construction and maintenance, for access to various livestock operations would again require heavy equipment use, possible mechanical vegetation removal or spraying with herbicides, and material hauling.

Forage needs for wildlife and adequate vegetation cover for watershed protection are considered before additional livestock use is authorized. Livestock management includes, authorizing livestock grazing, and adjusting season of use, distribution, kind, and number of livestock. Salt or mineral supplements may be provided, which causes livestock concentrations, but can also move or distribute livestock away from water sources.

Determination

Implementation of livestock grazing management actions, as provided in the Pinedale RMP (1988b) is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to the lynx or its habitat.

Riparian Management

Management Actions

The objectives for riparian management will be to maintain, improve, or restore riparian value to enhance forage, habitat, and stream quality. Priority for riparian areas management will be given to those areas identified as Wyoming BLM sensitive fish species habitat, including habitat for native cutthroat trout. Management actions may include reductions in livestock numbers, adjustments in grazing distribution patterns, fencing, herding, livestock conversions, etc. Unallotted public lands containing riparian areas will be managed according to the same objective, with emphasis on wildlife and watershed objectives, but not necessarily to the exclusion of livestock uses. Refer to management actions described under all other programs for accomplishing riparian objectives. Riparian management is an integral part of all resources and related management programs. Those activities that affect or are affected by riparian values, will take into account the riparian objectives and direction. Resource values and uses that affect or are affected by riparian values include: wildlife and fisheries habitat, forest resources, livestock grazing, ORV use, visual resources, cultural and historical resources, minerals exploration and development activities, lands and realty activities, watershed and soils resources, recreation uses, fire management, and access.

Effects Analysis

Actions associated with riparian management include increased human presence and use of machinery or fire to implement management actions that may detrimentally influence lynx behavior briefly while they are being conducted. The potential for these effects is low and the intensity is not expected to have lasting detrimental effects to lynx behavior. Implementation of vegetation management actions are likely to result in positive effects to lynx habitats in riparian areas, particularly foraging habitats, such as the creation or expansion of habitats suitable to potential terrestrial prey species.

Determination

Implementation of the riparian management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the low potential for these actions to harass or displace lynx. The long-term results of riparian management may benefit the lynx by creating or supplementing habitats that support snowshoe hares.

Wild Horse Management

Management Actions

The objective of wild horse management will be to resolve conflicts for water and forage between wild horses and other resource uses. All wild horses will be removed from the planning area and made available for adoption through BLM sponsored adoption program. No forage or other resources will be provided to wild horses. There are two wild horse areas, La Barge and desert, but neither are wild horse management areas.

Effects Analysis

Actions associated with wild horse management are expected to be limited to occasional herding, gathering, corralling, and transporting of horses. These activities will not occur in forested habitats. These actions are not expected to detrimentally impact the behavior of lynx or foraging, denning, or travel habitats as they would occur outside of lynx habitat or LAUs.

Determination

Implementation of wild horse management, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), would have **no effect** on lynx. This determination is based on now wild horse management areas within the Pinedale planning area, the extremely low likelihood that lynx would be adversely affected by actions associated with management of wild horses, and the fact that wild horses inhabit lower elevation basins with extremely low occurrence by lynx.

Forest Management

Management Actions

The objectives of forest management will be to provide a supply of forest products to the various segments of the public and to maintain or enhance other resource management objectives. Consistent with forest management and other resource management objectives, the forested lands are classified into four management categories:

Category 1, Intensive Management, will include areas where the forested lands would be managed for multiple-use, but with emphasis placed on forest product utilization and forest management activities.

Category 2, Restricted Management, will include forested lands where wildlife, watershed, and recreation resource values will be emphasized and actions such as partial cutting, extended forest crop rotations, etc., or other restrictions to forest management, would be applied.

Category 3, Management to Enhance or Maintain Other Resources, will only allow forest management activities (e.g., harvesting or thinning) on lands in this category when such activities will benefit resources or values other than forestry or will promote public safety. All forestlands included in this category are not included in the forest management base or in timber harvest calculations.

Category 4, No Forest Management, includes all areas where forest management is excluded.

Approximately 24,223 acres of commercial conifer would be available for production of forest products. Of this 24,223 acres, approximately 20,836 acres would be subject to harvest method/equipment use and minimum cover level restrictions (Category 2). The remaining 3,387 acres would be unrestricted, except for general forest management guidelines applicable to all forest management activities (Category 1). Approximately 13,506 acres of woodland (Categories 1 and 2) will be available for forest product disposals on a demand basis. An additional 3,113 commercial conifer and woodland acres will be removed from the forest base (Categories 3 and 4). The 1,611 acres in Category 3 will be available for forest management activities when such activities are deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the resource being protected (e.g., wildlife, watershed) or to promote public safety. All forestlands in categories 1, 2, and 3 will be available for emergency salvage of timber damaged or killed through insects, disease, wildfire, or other such events.

Forested lands in Categories 1 and 2 will be managed to harvest an estimated 18.2 million board feet of timber over a 20-year period. Average annual harvest level will involve approximately 137 acres, but may vary to meet individual sale area objectives, depending on proposed harvest methods and individual sale conditions.

Sales of forest products (sawtimber, firewood, Christmas trees, posts, poles, and wildlings) will be made available to individuals and to commercial vendors. Forest product sales will be conducted on all forest areas, except where specifically excluded (e.g., the Rock Creek drainage and 7,636 acres in the Scab Creek area).

In addition to harvest, approximately 1,200 acres of precommercial thinning will occur during the 20-year period (BLM 1985a). Precommercial thinning projects will generally be designed to achieve an 8-foot spacing (e.g., roughly 680 trees per acre would be left uncut) and should not significantly affect cover levels.

Within the general forest management objective and guidelines, each of the following four management units has separate sub-objectives and planned actions. The Deadline-Pinegrove unit will be managed to give full protection to the Colorado River cutthroat trout in the Rock Creek drainage and to maintain October 1985 levels of forest cover for wildlife in the remainder of the unit. Approximately 953 acres will be available for harvest over a 20-year period. All forest management activities will be excluded in the Rock Creek drainage. A minimum of 90% of the conifer acreage in the Graphite and Riley Ridge crucial elk winter ranges will be maintained. Annual cover level fluctuations will not be allowed except for emergency salvage. No clearcutting or road construction will be allowed within 1,000 feet of Beaver Creek. Exceptions will be granted only if additional site-specific analysis verifies that such actions will not adversely affect crucial Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat.

The North Piney unit will be managed to give full protection to the elk feedgrounds and to maintain October 1985 levels of forest cover for wildlife, primarily elk. All forest management activities will be excluded from the Finnegan and North Piney elk feedgrounds, except when such management would be necessary to maintain the integrity of the feedground environment. Approximately 680 acres will be harvested for forest products over a 20-year period.

The Miller Mountain unit will be managed to provide full protection to forested portions of the Fort Hill-Fontenelle elk winter range and to maintain approximately 90% of the conifer acreage in the remainder of the unit in cover for wildlife. Forest management activities will be excluded from the Fort Hill elk winter range. Exceptions will be allowed for emergency salvage when the wildlife will benefit. Approximately 396 acres or 10% of the conifer base, excluding the Fort Hill winter range, will be harvested over a 20-year period.

The Eastside-Hoback unit will be managed to give full protection to the forested portions of the elk feedgrounds and to manage the remaining forested lands for forest products on an allowable harvest/sustained yield basis. Approximately 781 acres will be harvested for forest products over the next 20 years. Forest management activities will be excluded from the Franz and Scab Creek elk feedground, except for salvage and sanitation harvests when necessary to maintain the integrity of the feedground environment to benefit the elk.

Effects Analysis

Forestland management actions occur in coniferous habitats, which are the same areas used by lynx. Timber management creates different patterns of forest stand types than the patchwork of early and late succession conditions resulting from fire and other finer-scale disturbance agents (Ruediger et al. 2000).

This reduces habitat quality and quantity for lynx and their prey. Timber harvest may cause reduction of large woody debris, which may eliminate potential denning sites, reduce kitten survival, and reduce availability of snowshoe hares and red squirrels. Pre-commercial thinning has direct negative effect on hare habitat, at least in the short term. Clear cutting (including stand replacement), logging operations, road and landing construction, shearing, helicopter logging, and disease treatment sprayings all have the potential to disturb lynx by eliminating lynx and hare habitat and cover, or causing heavy disturbance in habitat used by lynx and their prey.

Conservation Measures in place (Section 4) include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000), as well as restrictions on pre-commercial thinning, salvage, harvest prescriptions in aspen stands, and improvement harvests, and the protection of linkages and connectivity. These measures will provide protection for lynx and their habitat.

Determination

Implementation of forest management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place, which will protect lynx and their habitat from adverse impacts.

Wilderness Management

Management Actions

Proposed wilderness areas will be managed for wilderness values in accordance with the decision of Congress. The two wilderness study areas (WSAs) in the planning area, the Scab Creek WSA and the Lake Mountain WSA, were evaluated in two previous wilderness environmental impact statements (BLM 1981 and BLM 1983). As a result of these analyses, the BLM recommended the Scab Creek WSA for designation as wilderness and the Lake Mountain WSA for nondesignation as wilderness. Both recommendations are pending further processing and Congressional decision.

Until Congress acts, these WSAs will be managed under the "Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review" (BLM 1987b). Congressional decisions on the Scab Creek and Lake Mountain WSAs will be incorporated into the approved Pinedale RMP. Should Congress designate one or both of the WSAs (partially or entirely) as wilderness, the management of the designated areas will be for wilderness values, as described in the appropriate wilderness EIS. Should Congress not designate one or both areas (partially or entirely) as wilderness, the management of the nondesignated areas will be in accordance with the approved Pinedale RMP. The undesignated areas will lose their identity as WSAs and will be managed along with the adjoining area as prescribed in the approved Pinedale RMP.

Effects Analysis

Management actions associated with wilderness management will not result in detrimental impacts to lynx behavior or their habitats. These actions will result in positive effect to lynx by limiting harassment and disturbance to suitable denning, travel, and foraging areas. The designation of WSA status is simply a designation, and tempers or stipulates from a WSA viewpoint, specific protections or management of other BLM authorized actions. WSA classifications, in and of themselves, do not place on-the-ground projects or ground disturbing activities. Generally, WSA status is a beneficial impact on wildlife and plant species. The Scab Creek WSA encompasses portions of the BLM – Boulder Creek and BLM – Muddy Creek North LAUs, providing added protections for these areas.

Determination

Implementation of the wilderness management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **beneficial effects**. This determination is based on the potential that these actions will limit the harassment and displacement of lynx and maintain or protect suitable lynx habitats.

Visual Resource Management

Management Actions

The objective of VRM will be to maintain overall integrity of visual resources while allowing for modification and changes to occur to meet other resource objectives. VRM classes have been established in line with overall resource management objectives of the approved Pinedale RMP. These are subject to change and further definition as more inventories and evaluations are conducted. A program will be initiated to improve the visual quality of oil fields in the planning area by working with the companies to reduce the visual impact of existing facilities. Projects of all types within established VRM class areas will generally be required to conform with the objectives and characteristics of the classification, or the project will be modified in order to meet the VRM class objective. Short-term modifications in portions of visual class areas may be approved if a site specific environmental analysis determines that impacts would be acceptable. The VRM class areas will be monitored periodically for cumulative impacts that may potentially conflict with their classifications.

Effects Analysis

Actions associated with visual resource management will not directly impact lynx behavior or habitats. Potentially, a request for movement of a structure or project due to VRM classification out of a higher classification area to a lesser classified area might move the project into lynx habitat or LAU. Impacts to lynx by such moves would be precluded by the lynx conservation measures. The exclusion of some activities and structures from designated view sheds may have a secondary positive effect of limiting disturbance of habitats that may be suitable for lynx or their prey.

Determination

Implementation of visual management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to possible **beneficial effects**. This determination is based on the fact that implementation of the visual resources management involves no anticipated disturbance to lynx habitat and likely will provide a positive effect of limiting disturbance of habitats that may be suitable for lynx or their prey.

Off-Road Vehicle Management

Management Actions

The Bench Corral elk winter range will be closed to all ORV use, including over-the-snow vehicles, from November 15 through April 30. Lands around the Franz, Finnegan, Scab Creek, Fall Creek, and North Piney feedgrounds will also be closed to ORV use and unauthorized human presence from November 15 through April 30. The Deer Hills, Oil Field, and Mesa deer and antelope winter ranges will have a winter travel limitation restricting vehicle travel from November 15 through April 30 on an as-needed basis. These seasonal limitations will be implemented in cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish

Department during severe winters or periods of disturbance of the wildlife wintering in these areas of concern. One hundred twenty acres in the Holden Hill area will be closed to all ORV use.

In general, off-road vehicle use will be monitored periodically to determine actual use and public demands. Monitoring of high density roaded areas will be conducted as described in the section on Access Management. The Desert General Use area will remain open to generalized ORV uses. This is an area of over 224,000 contiguous acres of public land. The Desert Open Area will be monitored to determine if unacceptable impact levels are occurring or being approached, which will require that ORV use be re-evaluated and limited accordingly.

Effects Analysis

In areas designated as “closed” or “restricted,” suitable foraging and denning habitats will likely receive little or no impacts from ORV use. In other areas, where ORV use is limited to existing trails, these definitions are sometimes loosely interpreted by the user group and new roads may be created as well as deepening of unofficial roads. Sometimes these roads become very abundant in some areas, fragmenting vegetation and reducing cover for lynx and their prey.

The Conservation Measures in place for all activities include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000).

Determination

Implementation of ORV management actions, as presented in the RMP, is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to lynx or their habitat.

Recreation Management

Management Actions

Management emphasis will be placed on the current recreation management areas including Scab Creek, the Green and New Fork rivers, Oregon Trail routes, and Boulder Lake. Recreation facilities will be installed where needed to accommodate the anticipated recreation uses and use levels and to provide for adequate public health and safety.

The order of priority for recreation management will be:

- Congressionally designated areas,
- Major rivers and lakes where BLM has clear jurisdiction,
- Areas with outstanding recreation resource values not already provided for in the area, and
- Areas where the recreation capacity is regularly exceeded, threatening other important resource values.

Cooperative recreation projects and those with contributed funding can be given priority for development in conformance with established recreation objectives and priorities. Withdrawals from exploration and development of locatable minerals will be pursued, as necessary, on developed and semi-developed recreation sites (currently about 585 acres). Recreation management for the Scab Creek area, the Green and New Fork rivers, and the Oregon Trail routes will emphasize maintaining or improving the quality of

the sites and the recreation experience. Public lands along the Green and New Fork rivers will be managed to provide fishing and floatboating opportunities. Necessary facilities will be developed to provide for protection of users and the resources. Boulder Lake will be established as a special recreation management area and related recreation facilities will be developed to improve public access and use opportunities. A maximum 16-day camping limit will be implemented throughout the planning area. Areas requiring shorter limits will be posted. Written authorizations will be required for longer periods. A temporary, no overnight camping stipulation may be imposed in an emergency. Where applicable, recreation facilities will be developed and managed in a manner that will maintain, restore, and improve riparian values. Special recreation permits, commercial recreation uses, and major competitive recreation events will include impact minimization developed to ensure the protection of other resources in accordance with objectives of all resource values involved.

Effects Analysis

Actions associated with recreational management and use have the potential to detrimentally impact lynx behavior and habitats. Activities that create compacted snow conditions, such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, reduce the special advantage that lynx have to move through deep snow with their large paws. This allows for the intrusion of less-specialized predators such as bobcats, wolves, and coyotes into areas that would otherwise be the exclusive domain of the lynx. These other predators compete for prey and can prey on lynx. This argument is, however, a source of debate. An increase in human activity associated with management actions or use may cause lynx to avoid or abandon otherwise suitable habitats. Recreational use is often concentrated in riparian areas. Impacts to these habitats may reduce or eliminate foraging habitat for snowshoe hares.

The Conservation Measures in place for recreation management include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000), the no net increase in over-the-snow routes and play areas in LAUs, restriction on actions that degrade or compromise landscape connectivity or linkage areas, requirement that trails, roads, and lift termini be designed to direct use away from diurnal security habitat, and the evaluation of permits that promote snow compacting activities.

Determination

Implementation of recreation management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to lynx or their habitat.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Management

Management Actions

It was determined that five upstream public land parcels along the Green River review segment meet the Wild and Scenic River (WSR) suitability factors and should be managed to maintain or enhance their outstandingly remarkable values for any possible future consideration for inclusion in the NWSRS. The suitable determination is based on the unique qualities of the diverse public land resources and their regional and national significance, making them worthy of future consideration for addition to the NWSRS.

Interim management practices for the five public land parcels along the Green River meeting the scenic classification (involving 8.56 miles along the river) will focus on maintaining or enhancing the

outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, and historic values and the relatively unmodified character of the area in a near-natural setting. Any activities that would conflict with this objective are prohibited. Some intrusions on the public lands involved may be allowed if they are not readily evident or are short-lived, and do not adversely affect maintaining the scenic classification.

Effects Analysis

Because of their isolation, rugged character, and naturalness, designation as a Wild and Scenic River is not expected to detrimentally influence lynx behavior or impact suitable denning, travel, and foraging habitats. These actions will likely result in positive effects by maintaining or enhancing habitats suitable for lynx and their prey. The following WSR segments flow through lynx LAUs: the East Fork River (includes Irish Canyon Creek) – flows through BLM-Muddy Creek South LAU; Scab Creek (includes Jenna Creek) flows through BLM-Muddy Creek North LAU; and Silver Creek (includes North Fork of Silver Creek and an unnamed tributary) flows through BLM-Muddy Creek North LAU. At the time of designation, further consideration of details will be given to potential impacts to Canada lynx.

Determination

Implementation of WSR management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **beneficial effects**. This determination is based on the potential that these actions will help maintain or possibly improve habitats used by lynx and their prey.

Cultural Resource Management

Management Actions

The cultural resources will be managed to: 1) resolve conflicts between cultural resources and other resource uses; 2) provide appropriate levels of protection for significant cultural resources; 3) design cultural resource management actions to maintain the value of cultural resources; and 4) provide for the scientific and educational use of cultural resources. Cultural resource management activity plans (such as the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails Management Plan) will be completed and implemented to identify, salvage, and protect cultural and historical sites. Activity plans will be prepared for any current or future sites listed on, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including sites 48LN300, 48SU350, and 48SU301, and the Overlook Rock Shelter, the Aspen Stone Circle site, the Cora Butte alignment site, the Willow Lake site, and the Boulder Lake site. Site-specific management prescriptions will be developed in the activity plans. Significant cultural resource sites will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. As necessary, withdrawal from exploration and development of locatable minerals on significant cultural resource sites will be pursued.

Effects Analysis

The BLM performs cultural inventory activities as well as land management activities. During inventory activities, the BLM inventories, categorizes, and preserves cultural resources; conducts field activities; performs excavations; maps and collects surface materials; researches records; and photographs sites and cultural resources. Inventory data collection activities are used for documentation and development of impact minimization plans before other resource program surface-disturbing activities may take place. Inventory activities commonly entail the use of hand tools, power tools, heavy machinery, vehicle use and localized human activity. Inventories are divided into Class I, Class II, and Class III inventories. The BLM does cultural resource inventories normally in response to surface-disturbing projects. Intensity

varies between inventories. Inventories may involve 2-7 individuals and trucks, and may last from one day to several weeks.

Cultural resource land management activities involve managing sites for scientific, public, and sociocultural use; developing interpretive sites; restricting certain land uses; closing certain areas to exploration; prohibiting some surface-disturbing activities; preparing interpretive materials; and allowing the collection of certain invertebrate fossils. The cultural resource program may propose installation of protective fencing of trail segments, stabilize deteriorating buildings, acquire access to sites when necessary, perform certain surface-disturbing activities, pursue land withdrawals, pursue cooperative agreements, protect sites with avoidance stipulations or conditions of approval, and identify and interpret historic trails. Cultural resource interpretive sites, such as historic trails or rock art sites, may be developed to provide public benefits such as scenic overlooks, signs, and walking trails.

Determination

Implementation of cultural resource management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **discountable effects**. This determination is based on the premise that actions associated with cultural and natural history resource management are infrequent in occurrence, are typically in a very small area, have little impact, are of short duration, and the low potential for cultural resource management actions to cause harassment, displacement, injury, and mortality of lynx. These activities are also unlikely to occur in lynx habitat.

Lands and Realty Management

Management Actions

The lands and realty management objective will be to provide land use authorizations in support of public needs. Prior to taking any disposal action, an environmental analysis will be conducted on the proposal and the involved lands will be evaluated for compliance with the disposal criteria listed in and for consistency with objectives of this RMP. Approximately 6,400 acres have been identified as suitable for future consideration for disposal, and another 14,500 acres have been identified as suitable for consideration for disposal only by exchange. Proposals to dispose of any other BLM-administered public lands will be considered and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Special attention will be given to retaining enough public lands at the Cora Y highway crossing, at the south end of Fremont Lake, and at other important wildlife migration routes to provide for free movement of migrating big game animals. Acquisition of nonfederal lands will be pursued by BLM, if needed, to accomplish management objectives of this RMP. Such acquisition will primarily be considered in areas of predominantly federal ownership, when other management options such as cooperative agreements are not available, and then primarily through exchange. Lands actions (e.g., exchanges) will be pursued to enhance and maintain key wildlife habitats. Land exchanges to acquire state and private lands in crucial habitats in important and predominantly federal management areas (e.g., Rock Creek ACEC, New Fork Potholes, key riparian areas) will be pursued.

Desert Land Entry petition applications will be disqualified when the public lands are identified as:

Lands within the capability classes that the Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, is seeking to remove from cultivation under the Conservation Reserve Program.

Lands that the Department of the Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service show as being "nonirrigable."

Lands identified as sensitive, unique, or necessary to fulfill the management objectives of this RMP.

Agricultural land entry petition applications will also be disqualified when the public lands would be utilized for the growth of government price-supported crops, or when use of water supplies would deplete an underground water supply beyond its annual recharge capability, thus threatening existing water users.

Whenever necessary, withdrawals in support of other resource management objectives and actions will be pursued. Public lands within active livestock driveways that are continuing to serve their designated purpose, will continue to be segregated from all forms of disposal under the public land laws. The withdrawals for stock driveways that are not serving their designated purpose will be terminated. Mineral locations on stock driveways will be handled under 43 CFR 3815. Disposal proposals that will not be compatible with the continued use or purpose of stock driveways will not be approved. Existing land withdrawals (held by agencies other than BLM) currently encumbering public lands will be reviewed to determine the need for continuation, modification, revocation, or termination of the withdrawals. Classification and Multiple Use Act retention and disposal classifications (Orders W-19140, W-25810, and W-12668) in Sublette and Lincoln counties will be terminated. In areas covered by these orders, discretionary management under the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) will be consistent with the provisions of the RMP.

Areas closed to mineral leasing, having a no surface occupancy (NSO) restriction, or other otherwise identified as unsuitable for surface disturbance or occupancy in other sections of this RMP will be managed as avoidance or exclusion areas for rights of way. Such areas include, but are not limited to, recreation and cultural sites, the Rock Creek ACEC, and the Deadline Ridge-Graphite evaluation area. However, following a supporting environmental analysis, some types of rights of way projects may be allowed in such areas if they: a) would not create substantial surface disturbance; b) would be located in areas with a high potential for reclamation; c) would have impacts which would be temporary in nature; and d) would be compatible with the resource values being protected.

Areas requiring impact minimization measures and restrictions for surface-disturbing activities will be managed as restricted areas for rights of way. Restrictions include, but are not limited to, seasonal restrictions for wildlife, sensitive watersheds, steep slopes, ORV designations, and other measures necessary to prevent degradation of cultural, historical, and recreational sites. Restricted areas for rights of way include wildlife crucial winter ranges, the Beaver Creek ACEC, the Upper Green River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), and the Soap Holes area. Areas that are not identified as avoidance, exclusion, or restriction areas are considered open to rights of way. Two transportation/transmission corridors are designated. Actual corridor widths will be flexible within the constraints provided in the various resource objectives of the RMP.

Corridors are preferred routes for transportation and transmission facilities. Identification of corridors does not preclude location of transportation and transmission facilities in other areas, if environmental analysis indicates that the facilities are compatible with other resource values and objectives. Further identification of corridors does not mandate that transportation and transmission facilities will be located there if they are not compatible with other resource uses, values, and objectives in and near the corridors or if the corridors are saturated. Each right of way application will be reviewed and analyzed using the environmental data that exist for the area as a basis to determine compatibility with existing uses and resource values.

Effects Analysis

Management of existing access and acquisition of new access to lands administered by BLM will not alter lynx behavior. Improved or new access to lands under new administration may result in positive effects to

lynx habitats by securing these lands and managing them under BLM provisions.

Lands and realty management actions are not expected to negatively impact lynx behavior or habitats. Current BLM land holdings would be evaluated for unique characteristics prior to disposal, including suitability and use by lynx. Lands identified as LAUs or important travel corridors would not likely be available for disposal. Lands not under BLM jurisdiction that are suitable or occupied lynx habitats may be targeted for acquisition and subsequent management by BLM. Such acquisitions would provide benefits to lynx habitats that may not be afforded under non-federal ownership.

Corridors are designated and managed to accommodate power lines, communication towers, pipelines, and roads. Roads can be a source of fragmentation of lynx habitat resulting in reduced mobility, and in mortality to lynx resulting from collisions. The degree of these impacts is correlated with traffic volume and speed, and road width. The construction of roads within rights of way may open new areas to human activity that may cause lynx to avoid or abandon otherwise occupied habitats.

Disposal or transfer of public lands with potential lynx habitat through Desert Land Entry, public sale, exchange, Wyoming indemnity selection, or Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases or patents may affect the lynx's ability to utilize suitable habitat and travel corridors linking desirable habitats. The overall goal of FO staff is to maintain lands that contain potential habitat for the lynx; however, large transfer of acreage due to land tenure actions may occur.

The issuance of ROWs and leases (utility transportation corridors), specifically ROWs for ditches, canals, and roads may affect the lynx if the associated construction is within the vicinity of travel corridors. This may cause short-term behavioral avoidance of these areas by the lynx due to the presence of human activity. The issuance of temporary use permits, and construction activities associated with fencing of revegetation sites require an analysis to determine if they are present in potential habitat areas and travel corridors and would have similar short-term avoidance impacts.

The acquisition of access easements as well as Rights-of-way/leases include powerlines, communication sites, pipelines, ditches and canals, roads (includes stream crossings), well pads, reservoirs, buried telephone and fiber optic lines, wind power generation farms and facilities, compressor stations and other facilities, temporary use permits, and fence re-vegetation sites and designate, cancel, or change stock trail driveways activities may cause short-term behavioral avoidance of these areas during construction/maintenance operations and would have an insignificant affect on the lynx. The establishment of withdrawals, acquisition of conservation easements, and road closures/rehabilitation would close areas from certain activities that could have a negative affect on the lynx; closing areas creates undisturbed habitat for lynx.

Conservation Measures in place (Section 4) that relate to lands and realty management include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000), as well as the evaluation of effects on key linkage areas in situations of proposed land exchanges, land sales, and special use permits.

Determination

Implementation of lands and realty resource management actions, as provided in the Pinedale RMP (1988b) is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the Conservation Measures in place that will preclude adverse effects to the lynx or its habitat.

Access Management

Management Actions

The objective for access management is to provide suitable public access to BLM-administered public lands.

Effects Analysis

Development of new and expansion of existing access to lands administered by BLM may detrimentally influence lynx behavior or alter suitable denning, travel, or foraging habitats. Potential effects to lynx behavior are likely to be limited in nature and not have lasting negative effects. Alteration of habitats is expected to be limited to upland habitats. The localized nature of potential disturbance to local habitats, related to access, are not expected to result in changes to foraging habitats that will have long-term effects to lynx or their prey.

Determination

Implementation of access management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **discountable effects**. This determination is based on the low likelihood that activities associated with creating or expanding access would occur in lynx habitat or LAUs and would result in adverse effects to the lynx.

Fire Management

Management Actions

The objective of fire management is to protect public safety, life, and property while providing the maximum benefits of both prescribed fire and wildfire to overall resource management. Fire will be considered a vegetative manipulation option to:

- Convert brush to other desired species,
- Rejuvenate desired species,
- Increase forage,
- Increase vegetation nutrient value and palatability,
- Promote wildlife habitat diversity,
- Improve vegetative cover on areas with insufficient protective ground cover, and
- Maintain or improve range, wildlife habitat, and watershed condition.

Fire will also be considered a management option for disposal of timber slash, seedbed preparation, hazard reduction, control of disease or insects, thinning, or species manipulation in support of forest management objectives. In preparing activity plans, consideration will be given to fire applications in meeting resource management objectives. A fire management action plan will be written for the planning area. Specific boundaries and fire management prescriptions will be consistent with or in support of the other identified resource values and management objectives.

Areas will be identified where a prescribed set of conditions will be acceptable in the event of an ignition. Prescribed fires will generally be confined to 200 acres or less in areas where current vegetation stages are desirable. Fire protection on public lands will be managed by taking appropriate suppression actions through the fire management plan. Resource and operational support for presuppression and suppression

planning will be coordinated with the Forest Service, Sublette County Sheriff's Office, Wyoming State Forestry Division, and local fire protection districts.

Wilderness areas will be managed as prescribed fire areas. Fire suppression in wilderness areas requires restraint in suppression methods. In any designated wilderness areas, the fire management objective will be to manage fire in ways that will cause the least degradation to wilderness values.

Prescribed burning will be conducted so as to:

- Not violate ambient air quality standards,
- Avoid visibility impairment,
- Minimize public nuisance, and
- Minimize smoke intrusions into sensitive areas.

Effects Analysis

Fire management actions, particularly actions associated with wildfire suppression and prescribed fire, whether planned or unplanned, have the potential to occur in habitats occupied by lynx. Fire exclusion alters the natural mosaic of successional stages that promote the mixture of denning and foraging habitats on the landscape level. This limits the function of fire in perpetuating the vegetation conditions that are optimal for hares and lynx. Road construction associated with fire suppression can lead to increased access into higher altitude sites by generalist predators such as coyotes, wolves, and bobcats. These species can be predators and competitors with lynx.

Prescribed burning, construction of firelines, use of off-road vehicles, and use of hand tools and heavy equipment all have the potential for disturbing lynx and may negatively affect lynx behavior by causing them to abandon or avoid habitats. In addition, terrestrial habitats, including lynx foraging, denning, and linkage habitats, may be disturbed and altered through these activities. Prescribed fire may also benefit lynx by providing the regeneration of shrubs and other plants favored by snowshoe hares.

Conservation Measures in place (Section 4) include the assessment of habitat in suitable and unsuitable condition and the ensuing limitations on percentage of disturbance allowable to habitat, as specified in the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000). In addition, post-disturbance assessments are required prior to salvage to evaluate potential for lynx denning and foraging habitat, and the minimization of roads and fire lines as well as the requirement of revegetation after fire suppression activities. These measures will provide protection for lynx and their habitat.

Determination

Implementation of fire management actions, as presented in Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **insignificant effects**. This determination is based on the protection provided by the Conservation Measures listed in Section 4, which follow the LCAS (Ruediger et al. 2000). In the event of a wildfire and immediate suppression is required in an LAU, as many conservation measures as possible will be applied that do not hinder safety or property protection. The USFWS will be contacted and emergency consultation will take place at the earliest possible time if LAUs or lynx habitat are affected/impacted.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Management Actions

The objective for managing the Rock Creek ACEC is protection of the Rock Creek drainage to assure quality aquatic habitat for the sensitive Colorado River cutthroat trout and to provide crucial winter range for a portion of the Piney elk herd. The entire ACEC area and the Deadline-Graphite elk winter range area (approximately 17,100 combined acres) will be deferred from mineral leasing until a mineral and wildlife evaluation is completed. The entire ACEC will be managed as a right of way avoidance or exclusion area, where rights of way will not be allowed unless a supporting environmental analysis indicates that the action meets the objective for the ACEC, minimal impacts would occur, and(or) the action would benefit the Colorado River cutthroat trout or elk habitat.

A No Surface Occupancy (NSO) restriction for leasable minerals and other surface-disturbing activities will be applied in the 4,200-acre Rock Creek drainage (unless activities are for the purpose of benefiting the Colorado River cutthroat trout). Geophysical exploration activities in this area are restricted to portable methods only. The use of explosive charges will be prohibited if analysis determines that unacceptable adverse resource impacts would result. If analysis indicates this level of protection is necessary, the drainage area will be closed to exploration and development of locatable minerals, and a withdrawal from mineral location and surface entry will be pursued. Livestock grazing and related improvements will continue to be allowed, provided no adverse affects occur to the Rock Creek drainage. No forest management activities will be allowed within the drainage. The drainage will be managed as a Class I VRM area and will be closed to ORV use, including over-the-snow vehicles (43 CFR 8340.0-5).

Approximately 1,000 acres of the ACEC (that portion outside the drainage) will be evaluated to identify any locations where surface occupancy can be allowed. Geophysical exploration activities in this area will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be restricted if analysis determines that unacceptable adverse impacts would occur to the water quality, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, or visual values in the area. This portion of the ACEC will be open to exploration and development of locatable minerals. A plan of operations will be required for any locatable minerals activities in the area. This portion of the ACEC will be managed as a Class II VRM area, and ORV use will be limited to existing roads and trails with seasonal restrictions to protect wintering wildlife. The objectives for managing the Beaver Creek ACEC are to assure quality aquatic habitat for the sensitive Colorado River cutthroat trout and to protect elk calving habitat. The area is open for consideration of mineral leasing and related activities. All vehicle use, including geophysical exploration vehicles, will be limited to existing roads and trails. This area will be closed to the use of explosive charges if analysis determines that unacceptable adverse impacts would occur to the water quality, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, or visual values in the area. The Beaver Creek ACEC will be managed to maintain, improve, or restore riparian habitat conditions. The ACEC will be managed as a Class III VRM area.

A detailed activity plan will be prepared to establish guidelines for uses that could affect or jeopardize habitat quality for the Colorado River cutthroat trout and elk calving. Management prescriptions in the activity plan will include identifying specific transportation routes to reduce the potential for spills of toxic materials, and needs for seasonal use or other types of restrictions, in compliance with the decisions stated above.

Surface disturbance within 1,000 feet of the streams and on slopes of 25% or greater will be prohibited. Partial timber cutting will be allowed provided that no adverse impacts will occur to the Colorado River cutthroat trout. Clearcutting or road construction within 1,000 feet of Beaver Creek will not be allowed.

Exceptions will be granted only if additional site-specific analysis verifies that such actions will not adversely affect crucial Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat. Roads and rights of way will follow existing alignments unless design criteria will preclude adverse impacts to the trout and elk calving habitat. Stream crossings will be limited to lower elevations and gentler slopes. Use of equipment and vehicles, including geophysical exploration activities, will be allowed if consistent with the objectives of the ACEC.

Effects Analysis

The effect being analyzed here is the designation or creation and management of ACECs. The BLM-Birch South Beaver LAU is within the Beaver Creek ACEC and the BLM-LaBarge Creek LAU is within the Rock Creek ACEC. Management actions authorized within these ACECs, but not associated with ACEC management, that could result in detrimental impacts to lynx behavior or their habitats, such as allowed minerals development, will be analyzed under that specific activity. There are no specific impacts to lynx breeding, foraging, or denning habitat from planning actions associated with the establishment of an ACEC and ACEC management is generally more restrictive in nature, protecting lynx and their habitats.

Determination

Implementation of ACEC management actions, as presented in the Pinedale RMP (1988b), is **not likely to adversely affect** the lynx, due to **beneficial effects**, because the act of designation of an ACEC has no disadvantageous impacts on lynx and ACEC management is generally more restrictive in nature, protecting lynx and their habitats.

Summary of Determinations

The following is a summary of the effects determinations developed for each of the Pinedale RMP management actions.

TABLE 7 SUMMARY OF DETERMINATIONS FOR THE PINEDALE RMP	
Resource	Determination
Surface Disturbance Restrictions	Not likely to adversely affect, due to beneficial effects
Air Quality	No effect
Minerals	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Natural History and Paleontological Resources	Not likely to adversely affect, due to discountable effects
Soils and Watershed	Not likely to adversely affect, due to discountable effects
Wildlife Habitat	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Livestock Grazing	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Riparian	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Wild Horse	No effect
Forest	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Wilderness	Not likely to adversely affect, due to beneficial effects
Visual Resources	Not likely to adversely affect, due to beneficial effects
Off-road Vehicle	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Recreation	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Not likely to adversely affect, due to beneficial effects
Cultural Resources	Not likely to adversely affect, due to discountable effects
Lands and Realty	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects

Access	Not likely to adversely affect, due to discountable effects
Fire	Not likely to adversely affect, due to insignificant effects
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Not likely to adversely affect, due to beneficial effects

Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects include future State, tribal, local, or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the Pinedale planning area.

Potential effects that could affect lynx or their habitats in the Pinedale FO include the following:

Subdivision development along rivers (especially along the New Fork and Green Rivers)

Natural gas development south of Pinedale

Sand and gravel operations along river corridors

Certain components of these projects, if completed, could directly or indirectly affect lynx or their habitats. In addition to the cumulative impacts resulting from the BLM activities described previously, implementation of the Pinedale RMP could add further impacts to the lynx that may result from current non-federal actions.

PINEDALE FIELD OFFICE: SNAKE RIVER RMP

The Snake River RMP was initiated in 1999 and completed in April of 2004. The Snake River planning area occupies 1,345 acres within the Pinedale FO, comprised of lands in and along the Snake River in the Jackson, Wyoming area. A biological assessment was prepared and completed on June 16, 2003 and the USFWS responded with a biological opinion completed on January 2, 2004.

Environmental Baseline

See the Pinedale FO portion in section 3.0 – Analysis of Resource Management Plans for a general discussion of the environmental baseline for the lynx. There are no LAUs in the Snake River Planning Area. Grand Teton National Park has 5-6 LAUs in that area that have not yet been finalized, but none of these abut BLM land. Two BLM parcels are located within Grand Teton National Park and will likely be transferred (Andrews 2003). In the January 2004 Biological Opinion on the BA for the Snake River RMP, the USFWS concurred with the Pinedale FO that activities authorized by the BLM will have **No Effect** on the Canada lynx. No further analyses are pursued in this document for the Snake River RMP.