


Lewistown FO; Montana/Dakotas BLM Planning Strategy



CMR Working Group; February 27, 2014

BLM
Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy

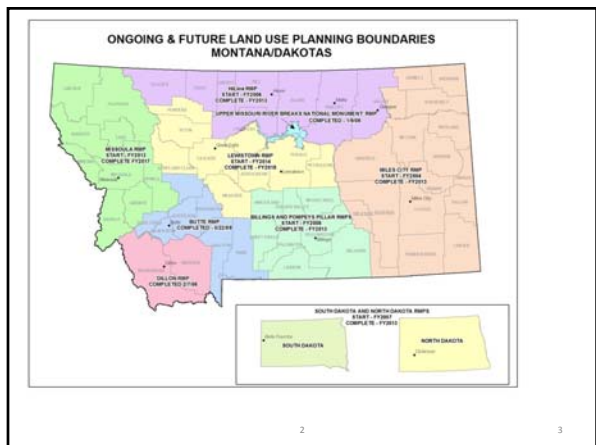


Resource Management Plans





Environmental Impact Statements




- March 2010 “Warranted but Precluded”
- Inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms
- Land use plans were identified as the key regulatory mechanism for Greater Sage-Grouse conservation.

National Strategy Approach

- Issue national policy and direction to guide interim actions and future planning
- Incorporate regulatory mechanisms into RMPs at the sub-regional (state/multi-state) level

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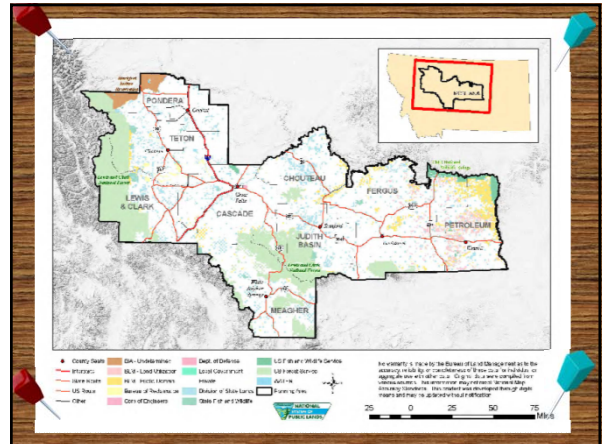
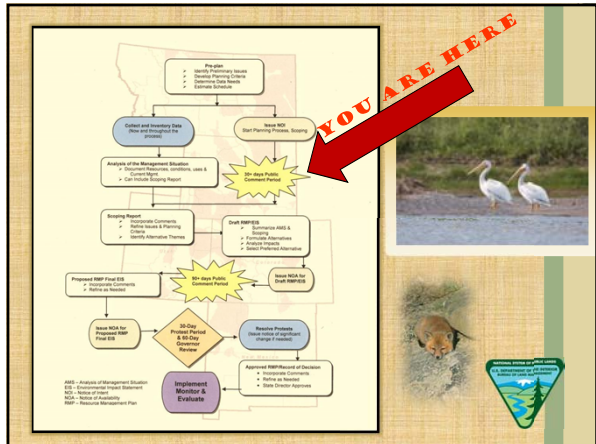
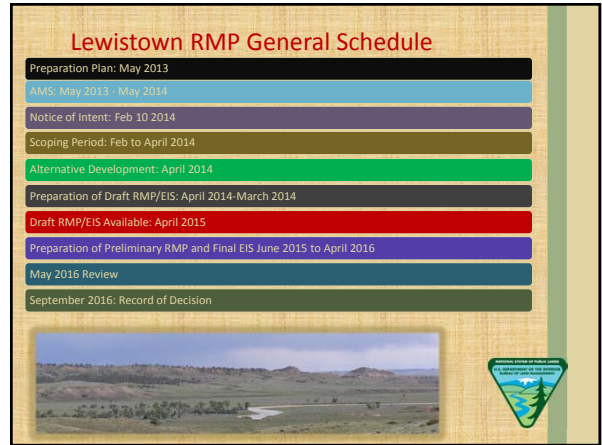
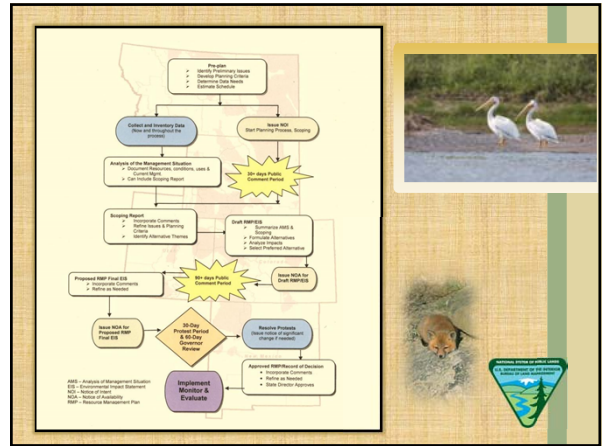
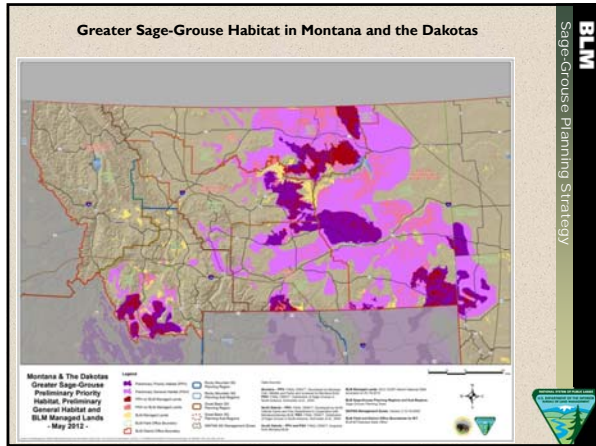
Key Issues and Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse



- Realty/Infrastructure
- Vegetation Management/Grazing
- Recreation
- Oil and Gas Lease Deferrals
- Agricultural Conversion
- Fire and Fuels Management
- Drought/Climate Change

BLM
Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy





Scoping

White Sulphur Springs Winifred Winnett Great Falls Lewistown Choteau

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Resources

Air Quality

The BLM is responsible for considering and incorporating climate and air quality into multiple-use programs, for managing the public lands in a manner which will protect air quality and complying with applicable laws, statutes, regulations, standards or implementation plans.

Soil Resources

- Identify areas of high wind and water erosion potential
- Evaluate effects of surface disturbance on sensitive soils.

Water Resources

Important Water Resource Features

- source water protection areas for public water supplies,
- water quality impaired streams,
- those streams with uses that include sensitive aquatic life (e.g. westslope cutthroat),
- floodplains (i.e. FEMA designated and 100-year floodplains), and
- riparian-wetland areas.

The BLM manages water resources both for resource values (e.g. watershed function, wildlife, fisheries, and riparian systems) and resource uses (e.g. recreation and stock water).

Riparian-Wetland Areas

Important Riparian-Wetland Features

- riparian-wetland areas in important wildlife habitats such as Greater-Sage Grouse habitat or those streams on the Rocky Mountain Front;
- riparian woodland forests such as cottonwood gallery forests;
- riparian-wetland areas that provide habitat for sensitive aquatic life (e.g. westslope cutthroat trout, etc) or buffers around water quality impaired streams;
- floodplains (i.e. FEMA designated and 100-year floodplains); and
- alluvium of modern day channels.

Because of the spatial rarity of riparian-wetland plant communities, the importance for wildlife habitat, fisheries, water quality, and livestock forage is invaluable.

Vegetation



- Identify areas of ecological importance
- Designate priority plant species
- Implementation-level Decisions

Special Status Species



- Identify areas of ecological importance or habitats
- Identify management actions to conserve and recover
- Ensure consistency with other recovery plans

Fish and Wildlife



- Identify management to achieve desired habitat conditions

- Designate priority species and habitat



Cultural Resources

- Identify current restrictions and identify area-wide criteria for recognizing potential conflicts with other resource uses.

- Assign use allocations to existing cultural resources

- Identify measures to proactively manage, protect and use cultural resources



Paleontological Resources

- Identify areas of high likelihood of vertebrate or noteworthy invertebrates.

- Management recommendations to promote scientific, educational and recreational uses

- Mitigate threats to Paleontological Resources



Visual Resources

- VRM classes are designated in an RMP.



Wildland Fire Ecology & Management

- **Fire Management Program Overview**
 - Fuels/Vegetation Management
 - Prescribed fire and mechanical treatments
 - Prevention, Education & Mitigation
 - Wildfire Management (Fire Suppression)
- **Decisions Already in Place**
 - Fire Management Categories
- **Opportunities for Management**

Firefighter and public safety are the highest priority in every fire management activity.


Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

- Currently inventorying wilderness characteristics on BLM land based on:
 - Size
 - Apparent Naturalness
 - Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Recreation



Cave and Karst Resources

- Identify significant caves
- Evaluate protections for cave resources
- Set management prescriptions

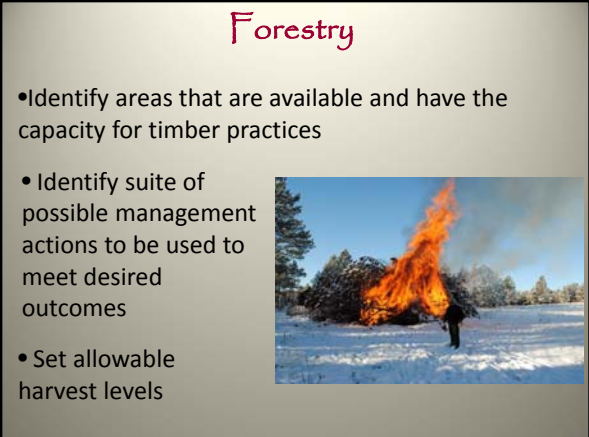


Resource Uses



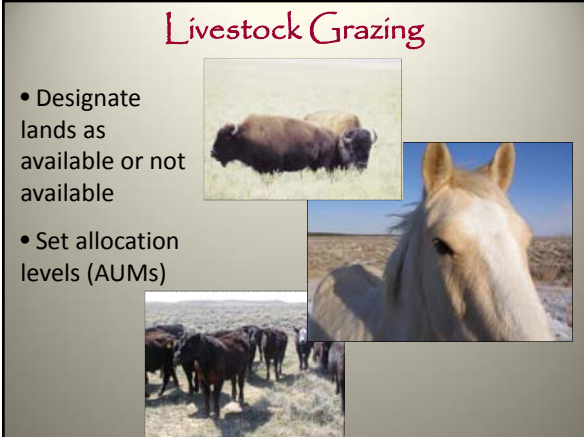
Forestry

- Identify areas that are available and have the capacity for timber practices
- Identify suite of possible management actions to be used to meet desired outcomes
- Set allowable harvest levels



Livestock Grazing

- Designate lands as available or not available
- Set allocation levels (AUMs)



Recreation

- Emphasis on dispersed recreation and hunting
- Trail systems and designated campgrounds are desired
- Special Recreation Permits are predominantly big game outfitters
- Designate SRMAs and ERMAs




Travel and Transportation

- BLM is required to classify OHV use as:
 - Open, Limited, or Closed
 - Delineate travel management areas
- Travel Management Inventory has begun to support planning process and to help:
 - Resolve conflicts between users
 - Decrease unauthorized uses that impact both public and private lands



Lands & Realty


- Identify lands for retention, disposal or acquisition.
- Proposed withdrawal areas
- Existing and potential ROW corridors
- Avoidance or exclusion areas for ROWs
- Terms and Conditions



Fluid Minerals: Oil & Gas

- Identify areas open to leasing
- Open with moderate constraints
- Open to major constraints
- Closed to leasing
- Stipulations and COAs

Tar Sands, Geothermal, Oil Shale



Locatables/Mineral Materials/Non-Energy Leasables

- Areas open or closed
- Any terms, conditions or other considerations

Coal

- Suitable or unsuitable for leasing



Special Designations

- Administrative Designations
 - Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (Square Butte, Acid Pine-Shale Forest)
 - Outstanding Natural Area (ONA)
- Congressional Designations
 - National Trails (Nez Perce National Historic Trail, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, Continental Divide National Scenic Trail)



Anticipated Planning Issues

- Vegetation Management
- Fluid Minerals
- Noxious weeds and Invasive species
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Special Status species
- Forest management
- Recreation and Visitor services
- Travel management and access
- Fire management
- Land tenure adjustments
- Mineral and energy development
- Special designations

Management Concerns and Planning Criteria

- **Management Concerns**

Management Concerns are topics or points of dispute that involve a resource management activity or land use. While some management concerns overlap planning issues, a management concern is generally more important to an individual or a few individuals, as opposed to a planning issue, which has more widespread point of conflict. (MOU agreements, National Trails data

- **Planning Criteria**

Planning Criteria guide the development of the RMP, ensure that it is tailored to the identified issues, and help to avoid unnecessary data collection and analysis. Planning criteria are based on applicable laws and regulations, agency guidance, the result of consultation and coordination with the public, other federal, state and local agencies, and Native American tribes.