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W · E · L · L · S
RECORD OF DECISION

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Elko District
Elko, Nevada
1985

RECORD OF DECISION
WELLS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1617.1
(NV-017)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NEVADA STATE OFFICE
300 Booth Street
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520

July 16, 1985

JUN 28 1985

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Wells Resource Management Plan (RMP). This ROD is the approval of the Wells RMP and it completes the process which included the production of a draft and final plan and environmental impact statements (EISs). All of the planning records are available for inspection by the public at the Elko, Nevada BLM District Office.

Part I of the document is the ROD which displays the management decisions to be implemented as part of this planning process, a summary of alternatives considered and the rationale for selecting the preferred alternative. The Management Decisions Summary which is Part II of this document displays the decisions on issues in the RMP plus objectives, management policy and standard operating procedures. It reflects changes suggested by the public and those which occurred as a result of internal review processes.

A draft Wilderness Study Report and a preliminary final wilderness EIS have been prepared by my office and are being reviewed prior to being submitted to the Director of the Bureau of Land Management for administrative review in preparation for the Secretary of the Interior's recommendation to the President on wilderness. When the Secretary is ready to transmit his recommendations to the President, he will file the final wilderness EIS which will be made public and which is a separate document from the RMP/EIS. The Wilderness Study Report will serve as the ROD for the wilderness EIS.

My preliminary wilderness recommendations, to date, draw from several elements of the study process, including the Wells Area Draft RMP and associated wilderness technical report which examined four Wilderness Study Areas. The results of public participation will be forwarded to the Director, along with mineral survey reports from the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines on those areas being recommended as suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. When Congress acts on the President's recommendations, both nonsuitable and suitable areas will be announced.

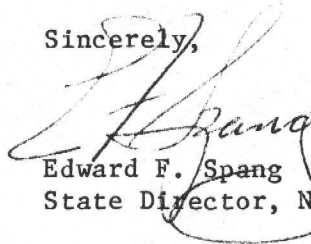
The Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) which will be issued on or about 9/30/85, has been designed to inform interested persons about the implementation of the rangeland management program as set forth in the planning decisions for this Wells Resource Area. The RPS explains the process of establishing initial and subsequent levels of livestock grazing use. It discusses the rangeland improvement program for the resource area in some detail, and describes the rangeland monitoring program upon which grazing decisions will be based. In the RPS you will find, by allotment, initial stocking levels of livestock, wild horses and burros and wildlife.

Additionally, it lists allotment specific management objectives for these categories of grazing animals. There is also more detailed information as to range improvement projects planned or completed. Periodic updates of the RPS will be issued at each decision step as the rangeland management program is implemented.

The next phase of this RMP/EIS process is implementation. Allotment Management Plans (AMPs), Habitat Management Plans (HMPs) for wildlife, and Herd Management Area Plans (HMAPs) for wild horses are currently being developed. Once these plans are completed and approved, work can commence on the ground.

Please be aware that the planning process does not end with the ROD. One of the requirements of BLM Planning is a review process to determine whether the plan is still current and objectives are being met. The Wells RMP shall be reviewed on a minimum of five year intervals for currency and adequacy. As a result of the review process, changes to this plan could occur. Therefore, the Elko District Office should always be consulted if questions arise over the plan.

Sincerely,



Edward F. Spang
State Director, Nevada

RECORD OF DECISION

Wells Resource Management Plan
Wells Resource Area
Elko, Nevada

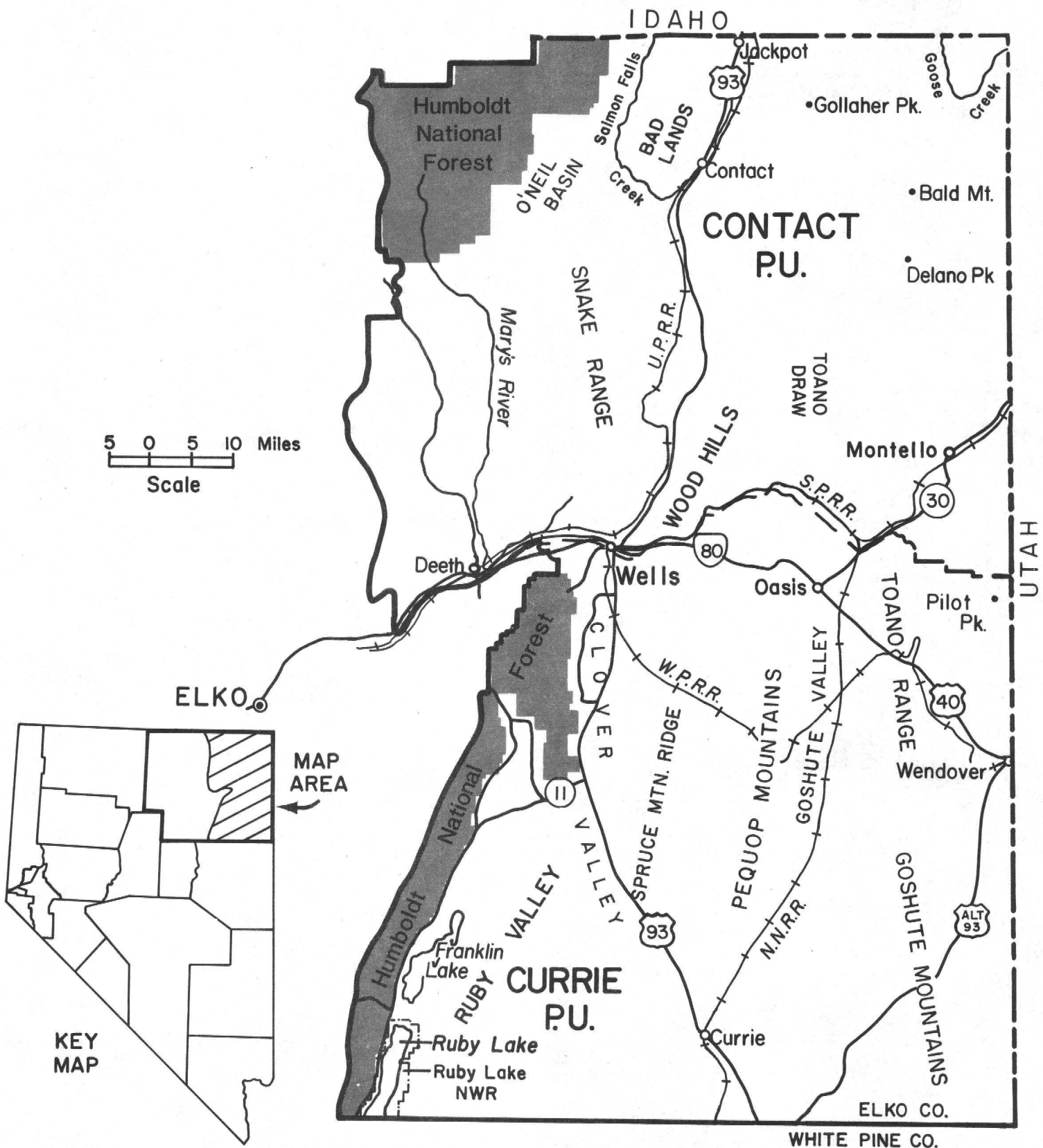
The Proposed Wells Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is approved. The approved plan provides for management of 4.1 million acres of public land within the Wells Resource Area of northeastern Nevada (See Map 1). These decisions are a result of Bureau planning efforts which culminated in the Draft Wells RMP and EIS, the resulting public response and input to the draft document and the Proposed Wells RMP and Final EIS, dated January 6, 1984. Major decisions of the RMP are listed in Part I. Part II, the Management Decision Summary, provides a detailed summary of the decisions and management actions, objectives and implementation strategies for the plan.

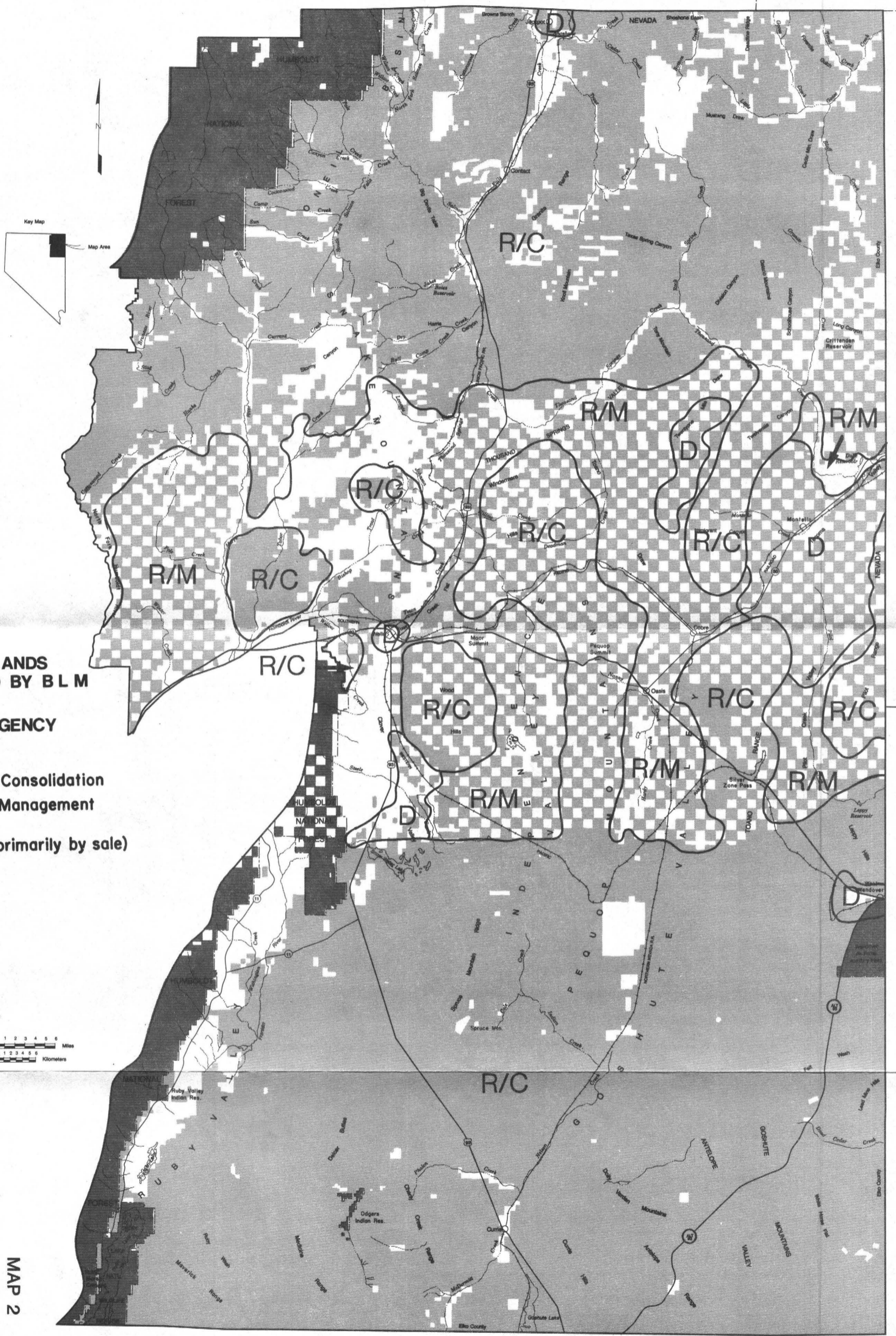
PART I - MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



ISSUE	MANAGEMENT DECISION
1. Land Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dispose of 90,000 acres (Designated D for disposal on Map 2).2. Retain Retention/Consolidation (R/C) lands (see Map 2) which are to be consolidated where possible.3. Retain the Retention/Management (R/M) areas (see Map 2) except those suited for exchange for private lands within the R/C areas and suitable for development under the agricultural land laws.
2. Corridor Designation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Designate/identify 566 miles of transportation and utility corridors. (See Map 3).
3. Public Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acquire legal access for 38 roads (158 miles).
4. Recreation Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Upgrade facilities at Ruby March Campground.2. Develop facilities at Salmon Falls Creek; Tabor Creek and Mary's River.3. Limit off road vehicles (ORV) activity to designated roads and trails on 160 acres in Ruby Marsh Campground; remainder of resource area designated "open" for ORV activity.4. Segregate 160 acres in Ruby Marsh Campground from mineral entry.

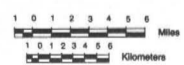
Location Map

Wells Planning Area Elko District, Nevada






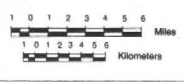


-  PUBLIC LANDS MANAGED BY BLM
-  OTHER AGENCY LANDS
- R/C - Retention / Consolidation
- R/M - Retention / Management
- D - Disposal (primarily by sale)



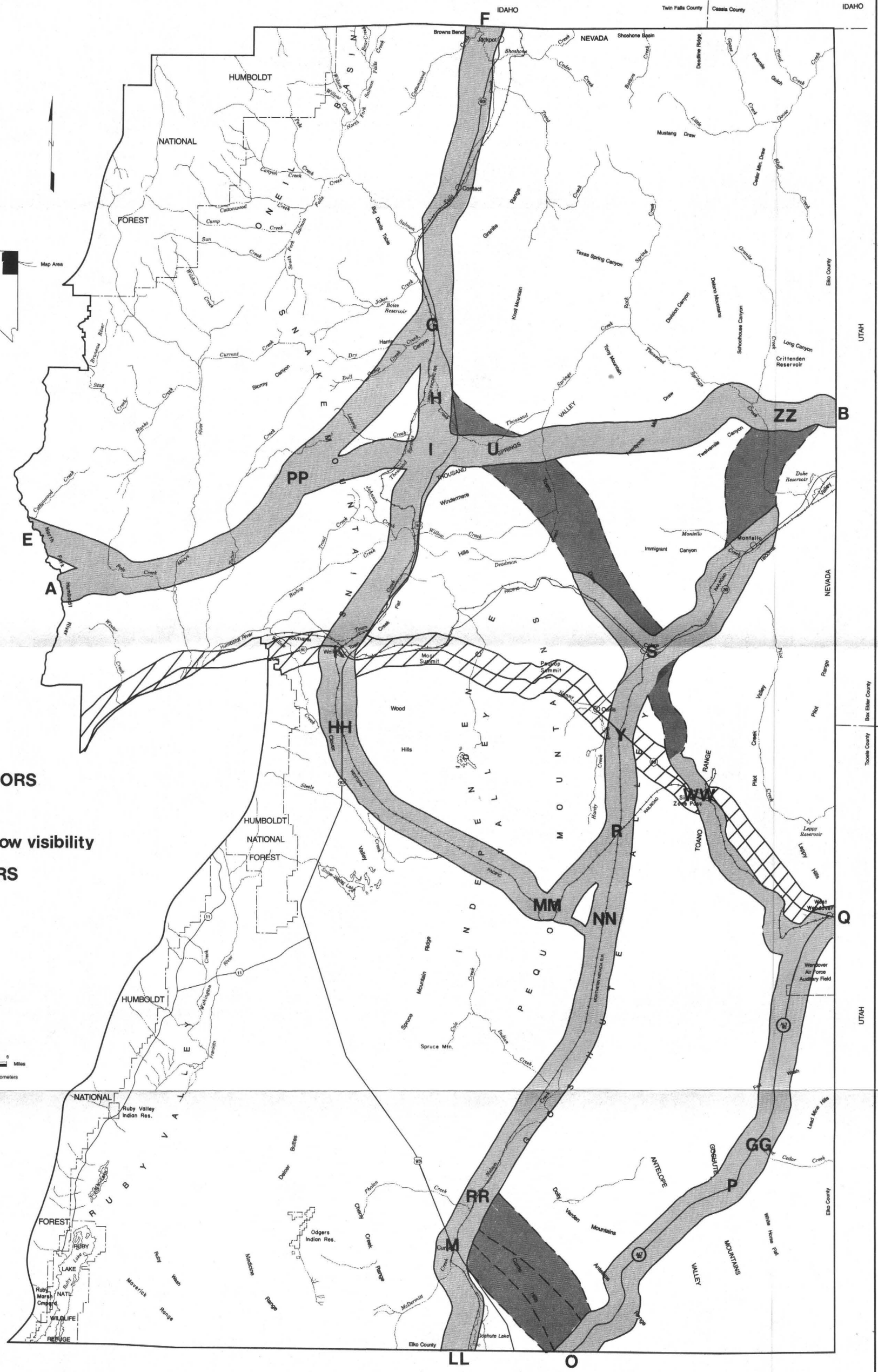
MAP 2
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENTS
 WELLS RECORD OF DECISION

- DESIGNATED CORRIDORS**
-  3 mile width
 -  3 mile width - low visibility
- PLANNING CORRIDORS**
-  5 mile width



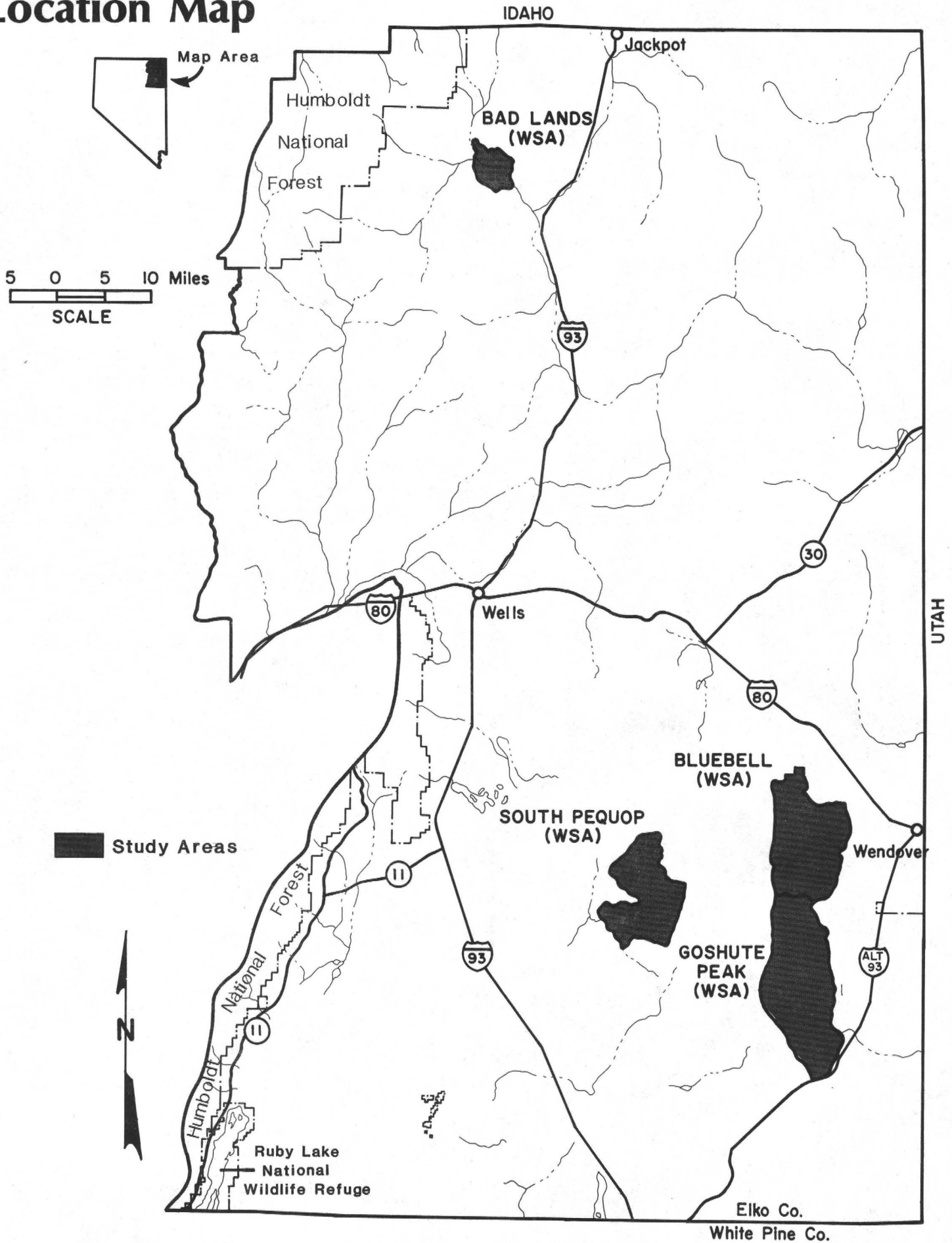
MAP 3
 UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WELLS RECORD OF DECISION
CORRIDORS

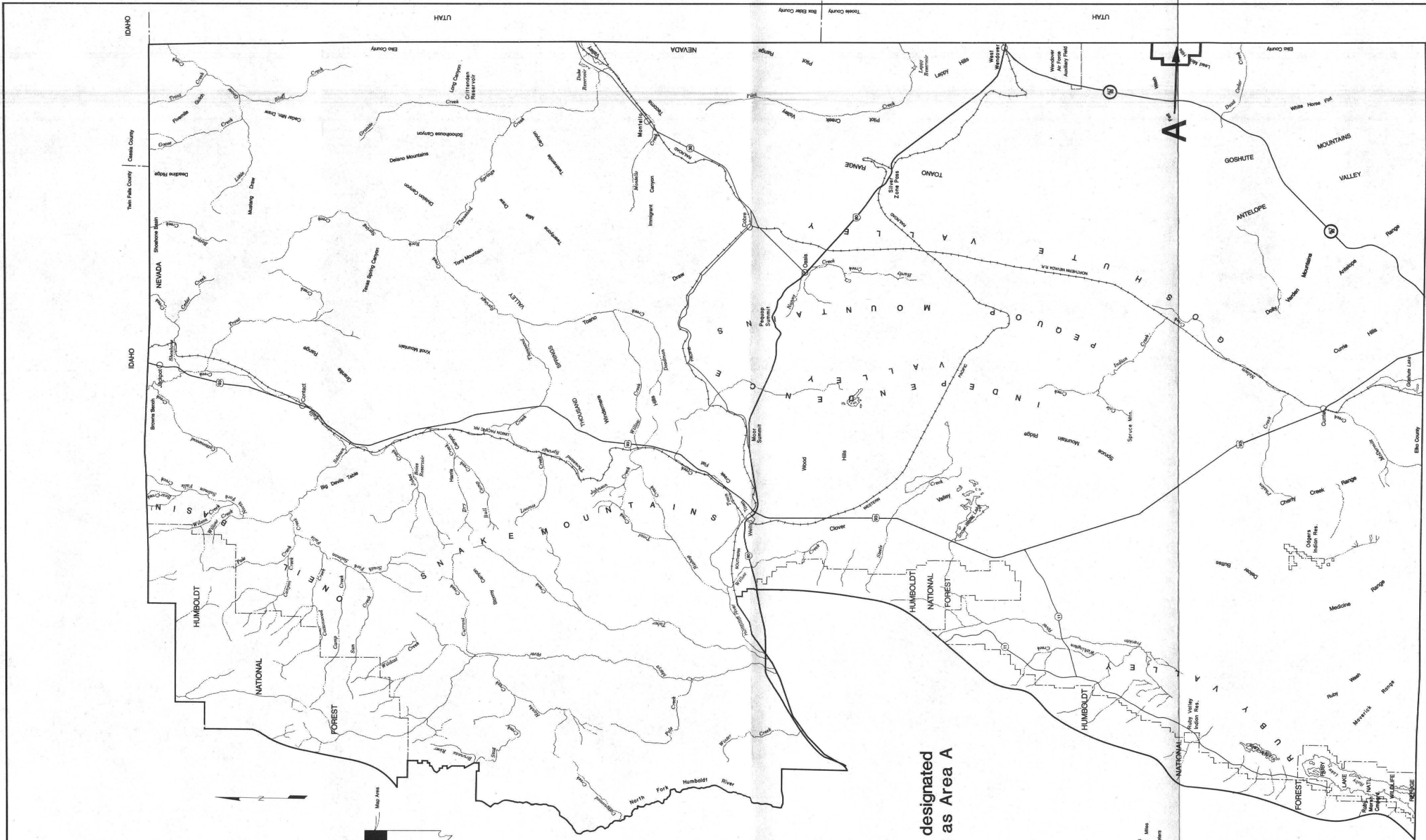
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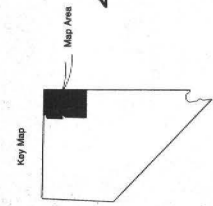
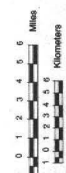
ISSUE	MANAGEMENT DECISION
5. Wilderness Designation	<p>5. Extensively manage remainder of Resource Area for dispersed recreation.</p> <p>1. Recommend portions of four Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) totaling 145,287 acres as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation (See Map 4).</p> <p>2. Recommend portions of the four WSA's totaling 30,664 acres as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.</p>
6. Livestock Grazing Use	<p>1. Develop activity plans on 24 Category I allotments and grazing systems on Category M and C allotments as needed.</p> <p>2. Construct 265 miles of fence; drill 65 wells; construct 5 reservoirs; develop 30 springs; install 80 miles of pipeline.</p> <p>3. Seed 37,500 acres; prescribe burn (without seeding) 27,000 acres; spray (without seeding) 1,500 acres.</p> <p>4. Monitor and adjust grazing management systems and livestock numbers as required.</p>
7. Wild Horse Numbers	<p>1. Monitor wild horse populations and habitat conditions; maintain populations within a range of 550 to 700 animals.</p> <p>2. Construct six water development projects.</p> <p>3. Remove wild horses from private land if required.</p>
8. Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat	<p>1. Modify 650 miles of existing fences within big game habitats.</p> <p>2. Protect, enhance or develop 250 spring sources.</p> <p>3. Designate 6,200 acres as Salt Lake Area of Critical Environmental Concern (See Map 5).</p> <p>4. Manage 3,600 acres to improve deer and elk habitat.</p>

Wilderness Study Areas Location Map





6200 Acres to be designated
as ACEC is shown as Area A



MAP 5
 UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WELLS RECORD OF DECISION
SALT LAKE
AREA OF CRITICAL
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

1985

ISSUE	MANAGEMENT DECISION
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Improve habitat in areas identified as potential reintroduction sites for native species of wildlife. 6. Chain, burn and seed 5,500 acres. 7. Identify 50,000 acres of crucial winter habitat for deer for improvement. 8. Monitor wildlife habitat conditions and adjust livestock seasons of use as necessary. 9. Apply time of year restrictions on leaseable/saleable minerals development to protect crucial winter range for deer and sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats. 10. Maintain all existing wildlife projects.
9. Riparian/Stream Habitat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve 2,518 acres/95.5 miles of deteriorated high and medium priority riparian/stream habitat. 2. Manage nondeteriorated areas to prevent a decline to less than good condition.
10. Woodland Products	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement intensive management of Christmas Tree cutting on the entire 600,000 to 700,000 acres of woodlands. 2. Implement management of fuelwood harvesting to meet the present annual demand of approximately 1,300 cords. 3. Manage salvage cuts where pinyon pine-juniper conversions would occur. 4. Promote sale/harvest of up to 75 percent canopy cover removal of woodland products on 50,000 acres of crucial winter habitat for deer. 5. Open pinyon pine ranges that have good or excellent crops of pine nuts to pine nut collecting. 6. Rejuvenate deteriorating aspen stands.

III. Rationale for RMP Decisions.

The RMP includes, to a greater degree than does any of the individual alternatives proposed, a balanced approach to land management of approximately 4.1 million acres in the Resource Area. This plan makes provision for protecting fragile and unique resources while not overly restricting the ability of other resources to provide economic goods and services. The plan is a realistic and practical combination of features from the Resources Production, Midrange, Resource Protection and Preferred Alternatives that were analyzed in the DEIS. Boundaries of those portions of WSAs being recommended as preliminarily suitable have been adjusted due to mineral potential since the Proposed Wells RMP/FEIS was made available to the public on January 6, 1984. This has resulted in a net change in preliminarily suitable acres shown in this document of -14,594 acres. This plan chooses the best management action for each issue within the Resource Area. This plan provides a framework for the future management of the public lands and resources in the Wells Resource Area that is consistent with existing legislation, regulations and the policy of management of public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield. This plan proposes to do this in "a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmosphere, water resources and archaeological values" (FLPMA, Sec. 102 (a) (7) and (8)). In this sense, the proposed plan is the environmentally preferred plan.

IV. Summary of Alternatives.

The five alternatives presented in the Wells RMP are briefly summarized below. A sixth alternative, No livestock Grazing, was considered initially and then eliminated by BLM staff because it was impractical for general application to the Resource Area.

No Action Alternative:

This alternative represents a continuation of present resource management uses and levels. The resource area would continue to be managed without a long range plan and actions would be determined on a case-by-case basis as circumstances and/or public demand dictated.

Resource Production Alternative:

This alternative is designed to emphasize the management of those resources contributing to the commercial well-being of the resource area (lands, corridors, livestock grazing, woodland products, and minerals).

Midrange Alternative:

This alternative is designed to provide a wide variety of goods and services to the public within the sustained use capabilities of the Wells RA.

Resource Protection Alternative:

This alternative is oriented toward preservation of natural values, with emphasis on protecting wildlife and riparian habitats, wild horses and their habitats, and wilderness values.

Preferred Alternative:

This alternative emphasizes a balanced approach to land management in the resource area. Fragile and unique resources would be protected while not overly restricting the ability of other resources to provide economic goods and services. It is a combination of Resource Production, Midrange and Resource Protection Alternatives.

V. Mitigation Measures.

All mitigating measures identified in the proposed plan and environmental impact statement will be taken to mitigate adverse impacts. Those measures will be strictly enforced during implementation. Monitoring and evaluation will be implemented to tell how effective these measures are in minimizing environmental impacts. Therefore, additional measures to protect the environment may be taken during and following monitoring.

VI. Record of Decision.

This document meets the requirement for a Record of Decision as provided in 40 CFR 1505.2.

Date

7/16/85



Edward F. Spang
State Director, Nevada

PART II - MANAGEMENT DECISIONS SUMMARY

I. RESOURCE DECISIONS

LANDS

Objective: To allow disposals, land tenure adjustments, and land use authorizations based on long range goals. These goals are to identify lands to be disposed or retained and administered for multiple use. These identifications are based on land manageability and quality of resource values.

Management Action: Dispose of 90,000 acres, including community expansion lands, primarily through public sale.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Disposal: Lands to be disposed under Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) or special legislation will be advertised prior to sale, and sales brochures will be issued with specific identification and legal descriptions of the parcels.
2. Local Plans, Zoning: Managers will remain abreast of State and local plans as they affect Bureau lands for disposal. Appropriate coordination with the local governments will occur as specific disposals are processed.
3. Access: Access needs to remaining Federal lands will be considered when any disposal action takes place.
4. Grazing Lands: No permit or lease will be cancelled without a two year prior notification or a signed waiver.

Implementation

Generally any lands disposal actions will occur in the following order of priority:

1. R&PP disposals to local governments for orderly community expansion.
2. Public sales for orderly community expansion.
3. Private exchanges in areas where the Bureau would acquire lands having high public values (generally R/C areas, while disposing of R/M or D areas). In general no consolidation will take place within an R/M area.
4. Desert Land Applications for agricultural development.
5. Public sales of unmanageable parcels to meet specific needs.
6. Other land sales including trespass resolution cases.

CORRIDORS

Objective: To determine designated corridors and identified planning corridors in coordination with other multiple use objectives, including visual quality.

Management Action:

1. Designate and/or identify 566 miles of transportation and utility corridors including some routes for the proposed White Pine and Thousand Springs Power Projects.
2. Locate new facilities in corridor routes on existing rights-of-ways whenever possible.
3. Locate new facilities in identified planning corridors.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Preapplication negotiations will stress importance of siting within corridors.
2. Utility Corridor Evaluations: Once specific right-of-way applications are received, site-specific evaluations will be made.

Implementation

Priorities would be assigned in the same chronological order as shown above for "short and long-term management actions."

ACCESS

Objective: To acquire legal access for routes which would enhance opportunities to use public land resources.

Management Action: Acquire legal access for 38 roads (158 miles) considered as high priority for effective management of all resources.

Standard Operating Procedures

Prepare an Easement Justification Report for each acquisition.

Implementation

Priorities for access acquisition will be as follows:

1. Legal access will be acquired for 38 roads (158 miles) as work schedules permit and as respective private land owners indicate a willingness to allow such easement acquisitions, unless condemnation is warranted by circumstances.
2. Other easements may be acquired as the need becomes apparent and private owners indicate a willingness to grant such easements.

RECREATION

Objective: To provide a wide range of recreation opportunities.

Management Actions:

1. Upgrade facilities at the Ruby Marsh Campground Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).
2. Designate Salmon Falls Creek as a SRMA and manage Tabor Creek and Mary's River as Recreation Areas of Management Concern (RAMCs). Develop new facilities at these locations.
3. Designate the resource area "open" for ORV use except for 160 acres in the Ruby Marsh Campground SRMA, where use would be "limited" to designated roads and trails to enhance the use of developed recreation facilities and maintain the natural resources surrounding the campground.
4. Segregate 160 acres at the Ruby Marsh Campground SRMA from mineral entry.
5. Continue to extensively manage the remainder of the Wells RA for dispersed recreation.

Implementation

Management actions to be taken will be implemented in the order listed above under "Short-Term Management Actions".

WILDERNESS

Objective: To manage as wilderness those portions of the WSAs which are manageable as a wilderness area and for which wilderness is considered the best use of the lands.

A draft Wilderness Study Report (WSR) and a preliminary Final Wilderness EIS (PFEIS) have been prepared by the Nevada State Director and are being reviewed prior to being submitted to the Director of the Bureau of Land Management for administrative review in preparation for Secretary of the Interior's recommendation to the President on wilderness. When the Secretary is ready to transmit his recommendations to the President, he will file the final wilderness EIS which will be made public and which is a separate document from the RMP-EIS. The WSR will serve as the ROD for the final wilderness EIS.

The preliminary wilderness recommendations draw from several elements of the study process, including the Wells Area Draft Resource Management Plan and associated wilderness technical report which examined four Wilderness Study Areas. The results of public participation will be forwarded to the Director, along with mineral survey reports from the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines on those areas being recommended as preliminarily suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. When Congress acts on the President's recommendations, both nonsuitable and suitable areas will be announced.

Preliminary Management Actions Recommended to Date:

1. Recommend portions of the four WSAs totalling 145,287 acres as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation.
2. Recommend portions of the four WSAs totalling 30,664 acres as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. These lands contain: low wilderness values; resource conflicts and present manageability problems. Resource conflicts include rights-of-ways woodcutting, range improvements, and high and good mineral potential for metallics and nonmetallics (as described in the Final Geology, Energy and Minerals (GEM) assessments for the WSAs).

<u>WSA</u>	<u>Suitable Acres</u>	<u>Nonsuitable Acres</u>
Bluebell	41,324	14,341
Goshute Peak	61,004	8,766
South Pequop	34,544	6,546
Bad Lands	8,415	1,011
	<u>145,287</u>	<u>30,664</u>

Wilderness recommendations made in the proposed RMP are preliminary and subject to review by higher authorities. At the conclusion of the RMP process, the preliminary wilderness recommendations contained in the Preliminary Final Wilderness EIS and Wilderness Study Report (WSR) are forwarded to the Director of the Bureau for administrative review. The Director requests mineral surveys from the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines on each area recommended as preliminarily suitable. The Director forwards recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior as to which areas should be designated as wilderness. The Secretary then analyzes the Director's recommendations against information obtained from the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines, prepares a Final Wilderness EIS for issuance to the public and forwards his recommendations to the President. Congress will make the final determination on wilderness designations. (These designations were not subject to protest as were other RMP proposals.)

Standard Operating Procedures

WSA Protection: While the review is ongoing and Congress is acting on wilderness recommendations, all wilderness study areas, regardless of their recommendations, shall not be impaired. Unnecessary or undue degradation will not be allowed, although some provisions may be made for existing mining and grazing uses, subject to the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review, as amended, and the 3802 regulations.

Implementation

1. Public Announcement: When the Secretary of the Interior files the Final Wilderness EIS, recommendations for suitable/nonsuitable areas will be made public.
2. Nonsuitable areas: Lands released by Congress shall be managed similarly to other lands covered by the RMP.

3. Suitable Areas: A Wilderness Management Plan will be prepared, with public participation, on each new wilderness area designated by Congress. Existing management plans will be reviewed and amended, if needed, to comply with wilderness management guidelines.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Program Objectives:

Public rangelands are managed to: enhance the productivity of the rangelands by preventing overgrazing and soil deterioration; stabilize the livestock industry dependent on public range; provide for inventory and categorization based on conditions and trends; and provide for orderly use, improvement and development.

Objective: To provide for livestock grazing consistent with other resource uses resulting in an increase in 4912 AUMs from three to five year average licensed use of 288,934 AUMs to a level of 293,846. Range improvements will be provided primarily in I Category allotments.

Short-Term Management Actions:

1. Seed 37,500 acres, excluding areas identified for disposal under the various land laws, to provide for spring forage and allow natural recovery of the native range. Prescribe burn (without seeding) 27,000 acres and spray (without seeding) 1,500 acres where understory is adequate to provide natural revegetation.
2. Construct 265 miles of fence, drill 65 wells, construct 5 reservoirs, develop 30 springs, and install 80 miles of pipeline to improve livestock distribution and utilization of vegetation.
3. Develop activity plans and grazing systems on Category I allotments and grazing systems as needed on Category M and C allotments to allow for natural recovery of range conditions while considering multiple use values.

Long-Term Management Action: Monitor and adjust grazing management systems and livestock numbers as required. Livestock use will continue to occur in all allotments and the integrity of wild horse herd areas will be maintained with the total horse population at levels of 550-700 animals. Authorized livestock grazing levels is expected to remain at or near present levels. Once sufficient monitoring information is obtained, livestock stocking rates may be adjusted accordingly to what the range will support.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Authorize livestock grazing use, which has averaged 288,934 AUMs over the past 3 to 5 years. This past average use level is expected to continue, however, increases to the average license use level would be approved up to the active preference level (379,279).

The livestock grazing use level will be consistent with other resource users. Adjustments in preference would be based upon monitoring and implemented via agreements and or decisions.

2. Deferment of livestock use will be in effect for a minimum of two growing seasons following brush control projects so vegetation may be re-established.
3. Excess wild horses will be removed from public lands and made available for adoption to individuals and organizations in accordance with the Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, as amended.
4. Proposed seedings for livestock management will be composed primarily of crested wheatgrass although other species, including grasses, forbs and shrubs, may be included on a case-by-case basis.
5. Fence construction must comply with BLM Manual 1737. Lay-down fences will be constructed in wildlife and wild horse areas if necessary and feasible. Fences in wild horse areas will contrast with surroundings so as to be visible to horses and will have at least one gate installed per mile and at every corner.

Implementation

Allotment Management Plans or grazing systems will be developed in the following order of priority:

1. Those allotments in the "I" category for which no grazing system presently exists.
2. Those allotments in the "I" category with existing grazing systems which need to be rewritten.
3. Those allotments in the "M" category for which no grazing system exists.
4. Those allotments in the "M" category with existing grazing systems which need to be rewritten.
5. Allotments in the "C" category for which no grazing system exists.
6. Allotments in the "M" category with existing grazing systems which need to be rewritten.

WILD HORSES

Objective: Continue management of the six existing wild horse herds consistent with other resource uses.

Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Continue to monitor wild horse populations and habitat conditions.
2. Conduct wild horse gatherings as necessary and maintain populations within a range from 550 to 700 animals. The Toano Herd would be maintained at 20 animals.
3. Construct six water development projects (catchment type) with storage tanks and troughs.
4. Remove wild horses from private lands if required.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Gatherings: Environmental assessments will be prepared prior to any gatherings, and those assessments will be made available to interested and affected groups and individuals. Wild horses and burros that stray from public lands to private lands will be removed upon request of the landowner.
2. Projects: Fences in wild horse areas and ranges are to be visible to the animals. Helicopter round-ups will not occur during foaling season.

Implementation

1. Herd Management Area Plans will be developed in the following sequence for the six existing horse herds:
 - a. Maverick-Medicine
 - b. Goshute
 - c. Antelope
 - d. Cherry Creek
 - e. Spruce-Pequop
 - f. Toano
2. Censuses will be conducted periodically and horse numbers will be maintained at levels of 550-700 animals by gathering excess animals.
3. Water developments will be installed as money becomes available.

TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE HABITAT

Objective (General): To conserve and/or enhance wildlife habitat to the maximum extent possible while eliminating all of the fencing hazards in crucial big game habitat, most of the fencing hazards in noncrucial big game habitat, and all of the high and medium priority terrestrial riparian habitat conflicts in coordination with other resource uses.

Objective (Reasonable Numbers):

Attempt to reach reasonable numbers of big game species as determined in conjunction with the Nevada Department of Wildlife by maintaining and/or improving habitat conditions. Attempt to meet each species' respective AUM demand of 3,405 AUMs for antelope, 1,065 AUMs for elk, 1,050 AUMs for bighorn sheep and 60,895 AUMs for mule deer. Management objectives and monitoring efforts will focus on crucial/seasonal/yearlong use areas by their respective seasons of use. Reasonable numbers would be sought through adherence to the objective listed above and reintroductions of bighorn sheep and elk into suitable habitat. Habitat enhancement to allow for reintroduction of desirable wildlife species in conjunction with the Nevada Department of Wildlife is an objective to be attained through implementation of the preferred management alternative.

Objectives (Species Reintroductions):

1. Designation and management of the 6200 acre Salt Lake ACEC in the Spruce/Goshutes RCA would ensure that any proposed action in the area would comply with established criteria developed so as to protect the viability of this area to support peregrine falcon. Recent evaluations of the historic use areas indicate that the possibility of this area to be reoccupied is good. The possibility also exists

that it would be technically feasible to artificially reintroduce the species. These reasons make it imperative that every land management action within the 6,200 acres be very carefully evaluated.

2. The peregrine falcon habitat in the Mary's River and Pilot/Crittenden RCAs would be maintained. Even though no ACEC designations are proposed in these areas, the fact that the habitat would be monitored and adjustments made as necessary should maintain the habitat in the short and long term.
3. The habitat of sharp-tailed grouse in the O'Neil/Salmon Falls and Goose Creek RCAs would be improved over the long-term as native range condition is improved. These are significant beneficial impacts in these RCAs.
4. Wilderness designation of all or part of the Bad Lands WSA would improve the possibility for bighorn sheep reintroduction. The designation, would mean that only certain types of human disturbances and impacts would be allowed. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) feels that with this added protection the possibility of a bighorn sheep release would be greatly enhanced over other areas without protection. The potential for reintroduction of bighorn sheep in the O'Neil Basin within the O'Neil/Salmon Falls RCA would also be slightly enhanced. The possibility of bighorn sheep on Pilot Peak would also be improved by blocking up land, especially above 6,000 feet elevation. These are all significant short and long-term beneficial impacts to bighorn sheep reintroduction.

Short-Term Management Actions:

1. Modify 475 miles of existing fences within crucial and 175 miles within noncrucial big game habitats that do not meet Bureau specifications.
2. Protect, enhance and/or develop 250 spring sources for their wildlife values.
3. Designate and manage 6,200 acres as the Salt Lake ACEC to protect and enhance peregrine falcon habitat.

Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Maintain all existing wildlife projects.
2. Continue to monitor the interaction between wildlife habitat condition and other resource uses and consider adjustments in livestock seasons of use to improve or maintain essential and crucial wildlife habitats.
3. Improve habitat in areas identified as potential reintroduction sites for native species of wildlife as previously identified by NDOW. Prior to improvement of bighorn sheep habitat in the Spruce/Goshutes and Pilot/Crittenden RCAs, further study of conflicts between bighorn and domestic sheep will be undertaken in cooperation with NDOW.
4. Manage 2,600 acres of nonaquatic riparian aspen and 1,000 acres of mountain mahogany habitats.

5. Chain or burn, and seed 5,500 acres to improve crucial big game habitat.
6. Identify, in coordination with woodland products management, about 50,000 acres of crucial deer winter habitat for improvement.
7. Apply time of year restrictions on leaseable and/or saleable mineral development to protect crucial deer winter range and sage grouse strutting and nesting habitats.
8. Wildlife habitat management plans will follow the development of Allotment Management Plans as closely as possible. HMPs for wildlife will be developed in the following order:
 - a. O'Neil/Salmon Falls
 - b. Cherry Creek
 - c. Spruce/Goshute
 - d. Mary's River
 - e. Pilot/Crittenden
 - f. Goose Creek
 - g. Ruby/Wood Hills
 - h. Metropolis

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Threatened or endangered plant or animal species clearance is required before implementation of any project. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is necessary if a threatened or endangered species or their habitat may be impacted. If it is determined that adverse impacts will occur, either special design, relocation, or abandonment of the project will follow.
2. According to sections 201 and 202 of the FLPMA, ACEC will receive priority designation and protection during the land use planning process.
3. Alteration of sagebrush areas either through application of herbicides, prescribed burning, or by mechanical means will be in accordance with procedures specified in the Western States' Sage Grouse Guidelines, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Nevada Department of Wildlife and Bureau of Land Management, as amended, and as future studies might dictate.
4. Deferment of livestock use will be in effect for a minimum of two growing seasons following brush control projects so vegetation may be re-established.
5. Crested wheatgrass seedings will generally not be located in crucial big game habitats.
6. Water for wildlife is to be made available in allotments, rested pastures, and in areas used by wild horses whenever feasible.
7. Generally, spring developments will be fenced to prevent trampling of adjacent vegetation and to provide escape areas for small wildlife. Water at these spring developments will be maintained at the source.
8. Livestock water improvement sites will have wildlife escape devices (bird ramps) in watering troughs. Provisions may be made for lateral watering sites off pipelines, and the overflow piped away from the last trough so as to provide water at ground level for wildlife.

9. Fence construction must comply with BLM Manual 1737. Lay-down fences will be constructed in wildlife and wild horse areas, if necessary and feasible. Fences in wild horse areas will contrast enough with surroundings so as to be visible to horses and will have at least one gate installed per mile and at every corner.
10. Time-of-day and/or time-of-year restrictions will be placed on construction activities associated with transmission and utility facilities and leasable and salable mineral exploration and/or development that are in the immediate vicinity or would cross crucial sage grouse, crucial deer and pronghorn antelope winter habitats, antelope kidding areas, or raptor nesting areas.
11. Active raptor nests adjacent to areas proposed for vegetation manipulation will be protected. On-the-ground work will be confined to the period preceding nesting activity or after the young have fledged (left the nest). Areas containing suitable nesting habitat will be inventoried for active raptor nests prior to initiation of any project.
12. Vegetation manipulation that would alter the potential natural plant composition will not be allowed in riparian areas. For the purpose of riparian management, crested wheatgrass is not considered a native species.
13. Emphasis will be placed on the management of browse on crucial mule deer winter range.
14. Monitoring will be accomplished as identified in AMPs or HMPs, with the emphasis on big game species. Activity plans will be developed in the order listed in the "RMP Decision and Management Actions" section listed above.

RIPARIAN/STREAM HABITAT

Program Objectives: The Bureau seeks to improve stream habitat for fish, resulting in benefits not only to the fisheries, but to other resources such as watershed, wildlife, livestock, erosion, flood control, water quality and recreation.

Objective: To improve high and medium priority riparian/stream habitat to at least a good condition and prevent undue degradation of all riparian/stream habitat due to other uses.

Short-Term Management Action: Improve 1,007 acres/38.2 miles of deteriorated high and medium priority riparian/stream habitat using techniques which would result in a minimum improvement of 30 percent of its habitat condition within the short-term.

Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Improve an additional 1,511 acres/57.3 miles of deteriorated high and medium priority riparian/stream habitat using techniques with results described above.
2. Manage areas in good or better habitat condition so that further declines in habitat quality do not occur.

3. Closely manage new road construction and mining activities within riparian zones to minimize or eliminate impacts.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Streambank, Shoreline Condition: Important fisheries which include water bodies inhabited by important, threatened, endangered, or sensitive aquatic or riparian species will receive special management considerations according to the classifications in Manual 6740, Appendix I. We will manage for Class I (Excellent) and Class II (Good) habitat quality.
2. Wetland, Riparian Management: As a part of wetland-riparian management, consider all measures to minimize damage and to preserve and restore the area in accordance with the 6740 Manual, and in adherence with Executive Orders No. 11990 and No. 11988.

Implementation

Management priorities will be based upon criteria provided in the Standard Operating Procedures. The Mary's River Resource Conflict Area will receive top priority in development of an aquatic/riparian habitat management plan.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Objectives: Preserve the integrity of the proposed Salt Lake ACEC for peregrine falcon reintroduction by designation as an ACEC.

Management Actions:

The 6200 acre Salt Lake ACEC in the Spruce/Goshutes RCA would ensure that any proposed action in the area would comply with established criteria developed so as to protect the viability of this area to support peregrine falcon. Recent evaluations of the historic use areas indicate that the possibility of reoccupying this area is good. The possibility also exists that it would be technically feasible to artificially reintroduce the species. These reasons make it imperative that every land management action within the 6,200 acres be very carefully evaluated. Only through ACEC designation would this be possible. Therefore, ACEC designation is a significant short and long-term beneficial impact to peregrine falcon reintroduction in the Spruce/Goshutes RCA.

Implementation:

Implementation would occur in conjunction with the Spruce/Goshute Habitat Management Plan.

THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES

Program Objectives: The Bureau will manage habitat so as to protect animal and plant species which are of particular concern to both the Federal and State governments.

Standard Operating Procedures For Federally-designated threatened or endangered plant or animal species or their habitat, the District must consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service whenever a project may affect

their habitat. Clearance and consultation is to be conducted, with specific designs, relocation or project abandonment being possible. The Nevada Department of Wildlife will be consulted when sensitive species are involved.

Implementation

1. Designation of the Salt Lake ACEC would improve chances of a successful peregrine falcon reintroduction.
2. Action taken to improve riparian habitat conditions as provided in the Stream/Habitat section with emphasis on the Mary's River RCA will improve habitat conditions for the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

WOODLAND PRODUCTS

Program Objectives: Lands with woodland products are managed under the principle of sustained yield, maintaining an allowable harvest to provide a permanent source of wood products for future generations. Fair market value is to be received from the sale of all wood products.

Short and Long-Term Management Actions:

1. Implement intensive management of Christmas tree cutting on the entire 600,000 to 700,000 acres of woodlands present in the Wells Resource Area.
2. Using the sustained yield concept, implement management of fuelwood harvesting to meet the present annual demand of approximately 1,300 cords. Open additional live and dead fuelwood and post harvesting areas to meet both increasing general public and commercial demands.
3. Manage salvage cuts for both the general public and commercial users on areas where pinyon pine-juniper conversions for wildlife or livestock management enhancement would occur.
4. In coordination with terrestrial wildlife management, promote the sale and harvest of up to 75 percent canopy cover removal of woodland products on about 50,000 acres of crucial deer winter habitat.
5. Open pinyon pine ranges that have a good or better crops of pinenuts to pinenut collecting.
6. Implement techniques such as fire management and harvesting practices to rejuvenate deteriorating aspen stands.

Standard Operating Procedures

Fee Use: Fees collected from the sale of wood products will be used to maintain roads in the primary Christmas tree and firewood cutting areas within the resource area.

Implementation

As new areas are opened to woodland product harvesting, specific harvest plans will be drawn up and disseminated to interested parties. Stipulations and harvest techniques to be employed will be incorporated into each plan.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

Program Objectives: The public lands will be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's needs for domestic sources of minerals.

RMP Decision and Management Actions

1. An area encompassing 160 acres at Ruby Marsh Campground would be segregated from mineral entry.
2. Wilderness designations could adversely affect mineral development as follows: 22,305 acres having good mineral potential would be recommended as suitable in the Spruce/Goshutes RCA, and 400 acres having good mineral potential would be recommended as suitable in O'Neil/Salmon Falls RCA.
3. Time of year restrictions would be imposed on 170,800 acres in the O'Neil/Salmon Falls RCA, 42,200 acres in the Goose Creek RCA, and 56,300 acres in the Ruby/Wood Hills RCA, all to protect sage grouse breeding activities.

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Compliance with wilderness directives on proposed projects will be in accordance with Section 603(a) of the FLPMA, which provides that until Congress acts on WSAs the following policy shall prevail: Existing multiple-use activities, including grazing, will continue, but new or expanded existing uses will be allowed only if the impacts would not impair the area's suitability for designation as wilderness. Proposed uses and projects will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis to assure compliance with the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review. After designation, proposed projects would be in compliance with the wilderness management plan developed for the area and in accordance with the Wilderness Management Policy.
2. Time-of-day and/or time-of-year restrictions will be placed on construction activities associated with transmission and utility facilities and leasable and saleable mineral exploration and/or development that are in the immediate vicinity or would cross crucial sage grouse, crucial deer and pronghorn antelope winter habitats, antelope kidding areas, or raptor nesting areas.
3. The district Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Environmental Assessment will be amended to protect high use recreation areas and crucial wildlife habitat.

Implementation: Any minerals actions to be taken will have priorities indicated and cover specifics covered through applicable activity plans.

II. AMENDMENTS

The RMP may be amended when there is a need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan. Amendments may be made through such processes as environmental assessments or environmental impact statements (depending on

the level of intensity of the change) and must meet all prescribed requirements for public involvement, coordination and consistency.

III. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW DECISIONS

If there is a management decision to eliminate one or more major uses for two or more years on 100,000 acres or more, that shall have been reported to Congress prior to the issuance of the RMP. Such elimination of use shall be documented in the RMP.

IV. PLAN MONITORING

This plan shall be reviewed on a minimum of five year intervals to determine whether it is still current and whether objectives are being met.

V. PROTEST CHANGES

In 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.5-2 there are provisions for "any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan" to protest the approval or amendment. Any changes which occur to the plan as a result of public input/protests will be incorporated as revised pages into this Record of Decision/Summary. Any revised pages to this document will be dated when they are issued.

VI. RANGELAND PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Rangeland Program Summary will describe the rangeland monitoring program upon which grazing decisions will be based. Updates of the summary will explain and update monitoring efforts and results. This affects Livestock Grazing, Wild Horses and Burros and Wildlife programs. This document will be issued subsequent to the Record of Decision.

VII. SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Activity planning is the appropriate place for discussion of support such as cadastral surveying and engineering design. Support varies from year-to-year with budget and manpower funding changes. Management may change the priority for and method of implementation from year-to-year, so a land use plan is not appropriate for detailed discussion of these operational decisions.

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