

CHAPTER 2. ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Public Participation

Area media announced the land exchange and a series of public meetings in February 1998. The press release specifically encouraged public involvement in the land exchange process. Three public meetings were held in Buffalo, Gillette, and Sheridan. Sixty people attended the three meetings, and nineteen comments were received. Regional newspapers and radio stations carried stories following the public meetings. Following the public meetings and media coverage, six letters providing comments on the land exchange were received. Many of the comments received related to management of the acquired lands after completing the exchange, the issues identified during the land exchange process were used to define the scope of this management plan. The management related comments identified 24 issues relating to six key issues.

Key Issues and their Management Issues

Increasing recreation levels

- Limit numbers of users - Recreational uses may be heavy at times; may need to consider and possibly dictate numbers and uses.
- Conflicts between uses – recreation impacts on other resources, hunters vs. livestock grazing, etc.
- Sign boundaries – This land must be signed to not have trespass conflicts with bordering landowners.

Enforcement

- Users need to police themselves – Users need to share in the responsibility of management, and police themselves.
- BLM law enforcement presence is limited, formal law enforcement necessary – i.e. volunteer host, cooperative agreement with Campbell County Sheriff, increased presence of BLM ranger.

Open space

- Maintain traditional uses (livestock grazing, hunting, mineral development) – we should strive to maintain open space and traditional uses.
- Recreation vs. agriculture – concerns over changing open space, recreation vs. agriculture.
- Maintain current lessee – current lessee should be able to continue grazing lease.
- Special management area – i.e. Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Motorized vehicles

- Roads – Comments ranged from no roads to a road network is necessary, most comments considered road access necessary but should be limited and that the public should be involved with planning.
- Vehicle types – Vehicles damage the resources, damages often related to vehicle type (i.e. ATV, snowmobile, truck), including no vehicles.
- Access for people with disabilities – Vehicle access for the physically handicapped should be considered.

Best use of the property

- Board to oversee management – Several comments were received that a board or Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) team to develop a management plan and manage the lands was the best course.
- Access – Public access to the lands is necessary but it also needs to be limited and controlled. Concern was also expressed that access would be closed off.
- Multiple uses – Multiple uses must be considered: community, agriculture, recreation, timber, minerals, wildlife, etc.
- Water development – Should plan for water developments and how they will be used.

Education

- Outdoor classroom – Lands should be used as an outdoor classroom for students and private groups.
- Involve students – Should involve the schools and include the students in planning and management.

2.2 Coordinated Resources Management Team

Recognizing the unique character of the area, a Coordinated Resources Management (CRM) team was established to prepare a proposed management plan for the BLM BFO. The team's purpose was, and continues to be, to propose management strategies to maintain quality land stewardship. The CRM team was composed of representatives from the grazing lessees (previous landowners), Campbell County Conservation District, the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Campbell County School District, local business, special interest groups, adjoining landowners, and the BLM. The CRM team was further divided into four Technical Resource Teams (TRT) for education, grazing, recreation, and wildlife. The resource teams included CRM team members and additional individuals with interest or knowledge in the specific resource. BLM specialists acted as advisors, advising on BLM policy and procedures without undue influence on the TRT and CRM teams developing the proposed management plan.

Respect for adjoining landowners was a primary concern of the CRM team. Members of the CRM team desired to propose management only for the exchanged lands. BLM preferring to manage public lands as a natural ecological unit included all contiguous BLM managed lands within the BHMA.

The CRM team developed a goal for managing the area, identified the resources that might be affected by management, developed goals for managing the resources, and identified action items to meet the management goals. The affected resources identified were livestock grazing, minerals, recreation including public education, and wildlife. The overall goal for the Management Area is:

To maintain an enhanced system to provide sustainable viability of the resources for future generations with respect for values, rights, and quality of life of surrounding land owners and other users.

The CRM team's vision is to maintain the relatively pristine character of the land and provide for near-wilderness experiences. Sweeping vistas, pine covered hills, and rugged terrain offer abundant opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, hunting, and solitude. But for all its ruggedness, the BHMA is also fragile; the area contains steep slopes and erosive soils. Unmanaged, the CRM team believes erosion would increase, available forage and wildlife habitat would decrease, and user conflicts would escalate. The team firmly believes the land should be used, that livestock grazing, educational activities, and recreation can coexist. And by retaining the primitive, semi-wilderness, character, the BHMA can compliment the more developed areas in the nearby Thunder Basin National Grasslands and Weston Hills Recreation Area.

Aspects of vegetation management were included in the CRM proposal as they relate to livestock grazing, recreation, and wildlife habitat. BLM resource specialists believe vegetation is an important resource and would be best discussed and analyzed as a stand-alone resource, than within several other resource categories. The CRM proposed actions for vegetation management were taken from the various resource categories and grouped together into a vegetation management resource.

2.3 Alternatives by resource

The individual resources were not combined together into complex interdisciplinary alternatives, but instead within each resource area a range of possible actions (alternatives) will be discussed. The BLM interdisciplinary team preparing this draft management plan believes this method will be less confusing to the readers than complex interdisciplinary alternatives.

Alternative 1 is the no action alternative, required as a baseline measure by the National Environmental Policy Act. Current management would continue as directed by existing planning and management documents such as the Approved Resource Management Plan for Public Lands Administered by the BLM Buffalo Field Office (BLM 2001).

Alternative 2 is the CRM team's proposed management plan, it describes the Burnt Hollow Management Plan as proposed by the CRM team. The proposed management actions are intended to meet the goals and objectives identified by the CRM team.

NEPA directs agencies to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives (CEQ 1986). BLM specialists developed additional alternatives to represent a reasonable range. Some resources may have more alternatives than others as the range of reasonable alternatives was greater. For example the recreation management emphasis could range from non-motorized recreation with primitive or no facilities to motorized recreation with developed recreation facilities, while range management has a narrower range of reasonable alternatives. BLM

specialists prepared the additional alternatives to resolve the key issues identified by the public, CRM team, and BLM specialists.

This draft management plan contains both management concepts and specific projects. The management concepts and some of the proposed projects require further refining prior to implementation. Additional site-specific environmental analyses will be prepared for these project plans prior to implementation in order to comply with the requirements of the NEPA. Where the detail is sufficient, this EA will serve as the NEPA compliance.

When reviewing and commenting on this EA it is important to review the components of each alternative and provide constructive comments. Please identify the resource and alternative component being commented upon. For analysis purposes, the components of each alternative are static; however, the final management plan may, and is expected to, use components from any of the alternatives or that arise from comments on this pre-decisional EA.

Table 2.1. Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Livestock Grazing	Livestock grazing would continue in accordance with current leases.	Deferred grazing schedule and range improvements to manage for sustainable, healthy, and diverse vegetation communities.	No livestock grazing	
Minerals	Mineral development is consistent with the 2001 Approved Resource Management Plan for the BLM Buffalo Field Office.	Manage mineral development in a manner that considers aesthetics and is compatible with other uses and the geological base.	Mineral development would be guided by a Burnt Hollow Mineral Management Plan	
Recreation	Recreation use is consistent with the 2001 Approved Resource Management Plan for the BLM Buffalo Field Office.	Non-motorized. Recreation use is compatible with other resources, considers aesthetics, and respects the unique qualities of the land.	Semi-motorized. Manage recreational opportunities for all users that are compatible with other resources, respects the unique qualities of the land, and provides educational opportunities.	Developed Motorized. Provide developed and motorized recreation opportunities that consider other resources, respect the land, and provide educational opportunities.

Table 2.1 (continued). Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Sign Program	None	Post boundaries. Provide educational pamphlets.	Post boundaries. Provide educational pamphlets.	Post boundaries. Provide educational pamphlets.
Trailheads	None	Two adjacent to WY 59. Windmill Cedar Draw	Three with short access roads. Windmill Cedar Draw School Section	Three with short access roads. Windmill Cedar Draw School Section
Roads and Trails	Existing roads and trails available for motorized use. No seasonal restriction.	Limited motorized vehicle use (emergencies and limited administrative purposes).	Seasonal motorized vehicle use on existing roads.	Existing roads and trails available for motorized use. No seasonal restriction.
Monitoring	As resources are available.	Recreation use monitored.	Recreation use monitored.	Recreation use monitored.
Law Enforcement	Occasional patrols by BLM ranger.	Cooperative agreement with Campbell County Sheriff. Volunteer manager.	Cooperative agreement with Campbell County Sheriff. Volunteer manager.	Cooperative agreement with Campbell County Sheriff. Volunteer manager.
Education	No developed facilities.	Developed facility.	Developed facility.	Developed facility.
Special Recreation Permits	Available.	Available. Commercial permit area relates to livestock allotments.	Available. Commercial permit area relates to livestock allotments.	Available. Commercial permit area relates to livestock allotments.
Firearm Discharge	Wyoming regulations.	Prohibited except for hunting.	Prohibited except for hunting.	Wyoming regulations.

Table 2.1 (continued). Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Special Management Area	Special management area designation not pursued.	Special management area designation not pursued.	ACEC characteristics are maintained.	Special management area designation not pursued.
Developed camping	None.	None.	Developed dispersed sites along Cedar Draw Road.	Traditional developed campground, family sites and a group site. Location to be determined.
OHV Trail	No new OHV trails.	No OHV use except for emergencies and administrative purposes.	No new OHV trails.	Loop trail to be developed with trailhead off Cow Creek County Road.
Vegetation	Vegetation management is consistent with the 2001 RMP and the 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Vegetation communities are maintained within their natural range of composition and structure, management is compatible with other resources and is consistent with the 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Natural processes – no vegetation management would be proposed, natural fires within prescription shall be allowed to burn.	
Forest communities	Management activities consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Forest communities maintained within their natural range of variability, enhance habitat and forage.	Natural processes shall be allowed to proceed without intervention.	

Table 2.1 (continued). Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Shrubland communities	Management activities consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Shrubland communities maintained within their natural range of variability, enhance habitat and forage.	Natural processes shall be allowed to proceed without intervention.	
Riparian Communities	Management activities consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Riparian communities maintained within their natural range of variability, enhance habitat and forage.	Natural processes shall be allowed to proceed without intervention.	
Invasive Weeds	Management activities consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Certified weed free hay required. Management activities designed to prevent infestation. Weed management plan	Same as Alternative 2.	
Wildland Fire	All wildland fires suppressed. Campbell County responsible for initial attack, consult with BLM if the fire escapes initial attack suppression efforts. Few restrictions on suppression tactics or heavy equipment use.	Fire management plan emphasizing fire's ecological role and providing for wildland fire for resource use. BLM management of fires that escape initial attack, and restricted use of heavy equipment.	Fire management plan emphasizing minimal surface disturbance during suppression. Heavy equipment authorized only for protection of human life.	

Table 2.1 (continued). Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Wildlife	Vegetative treatments to improve wildlife habitat quality and forage production consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Manage for diverse and healthy populations of fish and wildlife.	Manage to improve biological diversity, support WGFD objectives, improve forage and habitat quality, and provide habitat for special status species.	
Habitat Management	Consistent with 2002 Vegetation Management EA.	Provide adequate habitat to provide sustainable well distributed populations	Active program to enhance habitat quality and increase biodiversity.	
Hunting	Consistent with WGFD regulations.	Consistent with WGFD regulations. Semi-primitive (non-motorized) experience.	Consistent with WGFD regulations and Burnt Hollow Management Plan.	
Mule Deer	No special emphasis.	Management actions designed to benefit mule deer.	Single species management not emphasized.	
Population Inventory	As resources are available.	Monitoring program to enable adaptive management.	Monitoring program to enable adaptive management.	
Predator Management	Consistent with BLM's Approved RMP.	Consistent with BLM's Approved RMP. Recreational predator hunters may be directed to BHMA.	Consistent with BLM's Approved RMP.	
Range Improvement	Would consider wildlife.	Designed to benefit or be compatible with wildlife.	Designed to benefit or be compatible with wildlife.	

Table 2.1 (continued). Summary of Alternatives for the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.

Resource Issue	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 proposed action	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Species Diversity	Maintenance of diversity provided for by other action items.	Diversity shall be enhanced through other action items.	Diversity shall be enhanced through other action items.	
Waterfowl	No special emphasis	Foraging and nesting habitat enhancements shall be identified. Livestock water developments would be designed to enhance waterfowl habitat.	Potential habitat enhancement locations identified, other locations would be considered. Livestock water developments would be designed to enhance waterfowl habitat.	

2.4 Livestock Grazing

Grazing management as discussed in this document, pertains only to the 60 Bar allotment. For other allotments within the BHMA, compatibility with the Burnt Hollow Management Plan shall be one of the factors analyzed during lease renewal.

As defined in 43 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Subchapter D, Section 4100.0-5 Definitions:

Allotment means an area of land designated and managed for grazing of livestock.

Grazing Lease means a document authorizing use of public lands outside of an established Grazing District. Grazing leases specify all authorized use including livestock grazing, suspended use, and conservation use. Leases specify the total number of AUMs apportioned and the area authorized for grazing use.

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Livestock grazing would continue to be managed under the current grazing lease. The BHMA lies mostly within the 60 Bar Ranch Allotment, 2400 animal unit months (AUM) are authorized with a variable season of use. The grazing permit shall remain with the current lessee in accordance with the current terms and conditions. The allotment is divided by fences and topography into three pastures. Future range improvements would be considered and analyzed in separate environmental analysis documents.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

The proposed goals for livestock grazing are as follows:

1. Manage or create healthy and diverse vegetation communities that are compatible to the area to maintain and improve the forage base for all grazers.
2. Manage to enhance a sustainable ranching operation for present and future generations.

The 60 Bar Allotment shall be managed to ensure the CRM team's goals are met. Other allotments containing public lands within the BHMA shall continue to operate under their current leases. At lease renewal, compatibility with the Burnt Hollow management plan shall be one of the factors analyzed.

Action items to accomplish the goals are as follows:

1. Implement a deferred grazing management schedule. Grazing will rotate between each pasture throughout the year. Which ever pasture was grazed early in the growing season one year, will be grazed either in the summer or fall/winter the next two years. All pastures will be given some rest during the growing season April – June. A typical grazing schedule would be as follows:

	Late Winter / Early Spring	Spring/Summer	Fall / Early winter
First year	Big Pasture	Cow Creek Meadows	Burnt Hollow
Second year	Cow Creek Meadows	Burnt Hollow	Big Pasture
Third Year	Burnt Hollow	Big Pasture	Cow Creek Meadows

As additional pastures are developed the season of use and length of use in each pasture can be modified to give each pasture more rest during the peak growing season.

2. Livestock use in the Cow Creek Meadows pasture will be closely monitored.
3. Improvement of water developments would include, but are not limited to; repair reservoir spillways at Lower Cedar Draw Reservoir, Bob Reservoir, and L Draw Reservoir; refurbish springs with new tank, pipe, and fabric at Lower Cedar Draw and Upper Cedar Draw. Convert the windmill in section 33 (Township 53 North Range 71 West) to solar power, water would also be made available for recreational stock.
4. Fence Cedar Draw from remainder of Big Pasture to enhance pasture rotation, while allowing for livestock and wildlife use;
5. Gap fence to create a new pasture (the Flats) in the northwest corner of the Big Pasture;
6. Control channel erosion in Cow Creek, Cedar Draw, and Provant Creek drainages. This would include construction of several small reservoirs within tributaries to reduce water velocity and volume within the main channel during storm events;
7. Reduce juniper cover by prescribed fire or other fuel reduction program;
8. The grazing permit shall remain with the current lessee in accordance with the current term.

Alternative 3 (No grazing)

This alternative would not allow livestock grazing within the BHMA, it conflicts with the Approved Resource Management Plan (BLM 2001) and the key issues. The livestock grazing management objective as stated in the RMP is to “maintain or improve forage and range condition to provide a sustainable resource base for livestock grazing on the public lands while improving wildlife habitat and watershed.” Issues raised by the public were to maintain traditional uses, such as livestock grazing, and for the current lessee to be able to maintain the lease. Under this alternative, BLM and/or the adjoining landowner would need to construct approximately 6 miles of fence to prevent livestock use of the public lands. The BLM would spend approximately about one work month per year to inspect the allotment and enforce the grazing closure.

2.5 Minerals

Alternative 1 (No Action)

BLM's management objective, as stated in the 2001 Approved Resource Management Plan (BLM 2001), is to maintain or enhance opportunities for mineral exploration and development while maintaining other resource values. Mineral development proposals shall be evaluated when received, other resource values shall be considered and maintained.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

Mineral development will be managed in a manner that considers aesthetics and is compatible with other uses and the geological base. Mineral development proposals shall be evaluated when received; aesthetics and other resource values shall be considered and maintained.

Alternative 3 (Mineral Management Plan)

A minerals management plan will be developed to ensure all resource values (aesthetics, recreation, wildlife, etc.) and management direction identified within the Burnt Hollow Management Plan are protected. This alternative would not obstruct mineral development, but would direct development and protect other resources. Development proposals shall conform to the Burnt Hollow Minerals Management Plan.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration

Mineral Development Prohibited: Development of the federal mineral estate within the BHMA would be prohibited; state and private mineral development could continue. The Approved Resources Management Plan for the Public Lands Administered by the BLM Buffalo Field Office (BLM 2001) has previously made the decision to continue to lease and allow development of federal oil and gas; there are several active federal mineral leases within the BHMA. The BLM's authority to preclude development is limited, an oil and gas lease grants the lessee the "right and privilege to drill for, mine, extract, remove, and dispose of oil and gas deposits" in the leased lands (BLM 2003).

2.6 Recreation & Education

Alternative 1 (No Action)

The BHMA would be available for recreation use, no facilities would be developed, and the prohibition on motor vehicles would be allowed to expire in November 2003. Motor vehicles would be limited to existing roads and vehicle routes. The BLM would not implement the proposed Burnt Hollow Management Plan; issues identified by the public, CRM, and BLM resource specialists would remain unresolved.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action- Non motorized)

Recreation would be managed as proposed by the CRM team. Recreation goals are as follows:

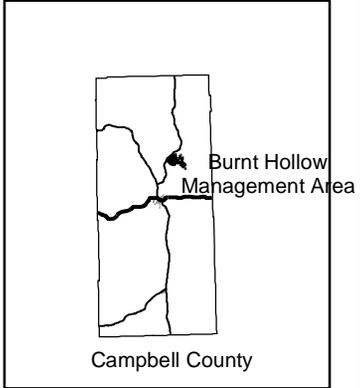
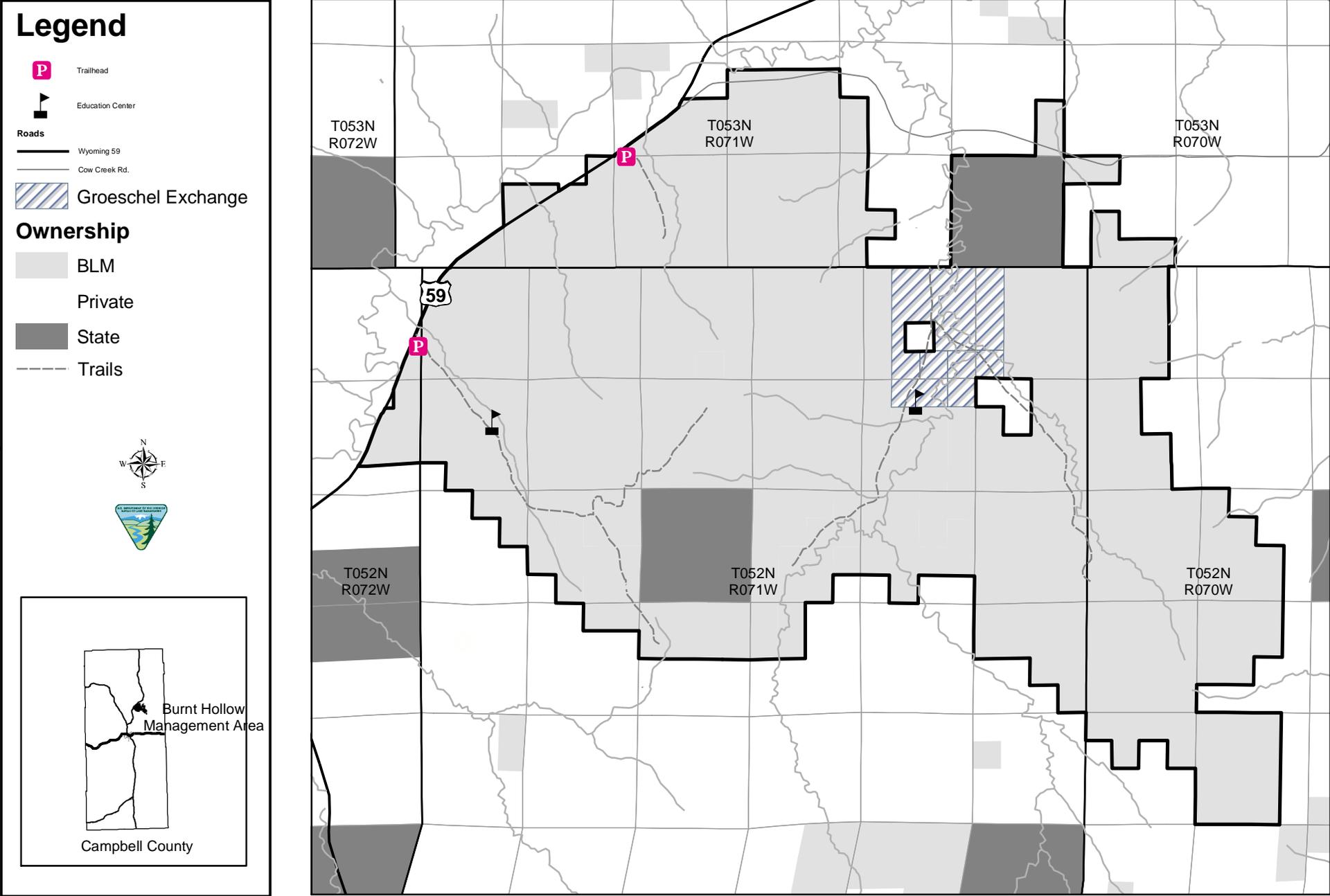
1. Create and manage recreational opportunities that are compatible with other

- resources, consider aesthetics, and respect the unique qualities of the land.
2. Protect the resources, land, and adjacent landowners.
 3. Develop educational opportunities for all users.

The following action items have been identified to accomplish the goals:

1. Sign Program: A sign program shall be implemented to inform and educate the public. The southern boundary would be posted from Wyoming Highway 59 possibly extending to the jeep trail along the ridge top east of North Draw (T 52N, R 71 W, S 21). Boundaries near the Cow Creek County Road and other accessible areas would be posted.
 - A sign program may be able to modify human behavior through an indirect approach (Manning).
 - Create informative “Burnt Hollow” pamphlets which include maps, history of the area, wildlife, BLM’s responsibility, possible recreation activities etc. To reduce littering, the pamphlets may only be available offsite.
 - Information signs shall be provided at all trailheads. Information that may be included is BHMA specific regulations and information, map, etc.
2. Trailheads: Two trailhead parking areas shall be developed off Wyoming Highway 59 (Figure 2.1). Trailhead facilities would include garbage receptacles, information boards, and visitor registration boxes. Temporary or permanent restroom facilities consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) shall be provided. Trailheads shall provide adequate space for parking and movement of ten full-size pickup trucks and three full-size pickup trucks with horse trailers. The trailheads will be fenced to deter off-road travel; locked vehicle gates will be installed on the existing roads, and narrow gates for horse users shall be installed. Locations identified for the trailheads are just inside the boundary fence adjacent to existing roads at Cedar Draw (T 52N, R 72 W, S 1 SE) and the Windmill Road (T 53N, R 71 W, S 28 SW). Development preference is the Windmill trailhead followed by Cedar Draw. A survey drop box will be available to collect users’ satisfaction levels and recommendations for recreation management.
3. Roads and Trails: Existing roads and trails shall be available for non-motorized use including, but not limited to, hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking (Figure 2.1). No new roads would be constructed. Vehicle access for management purposes shall be limited to existing roads, shall be kept to a minimum, and shall not be authorized during wet conditions or when resource damage is likely. Vehicle access would be authorized for medical emergencies.
4. Monitoring: Recreation resource (pre-existing roads, game trails, fire lines, etc.) use shall be monitored. Specific sites receiving heavy use may be

Figure 2.1 Recreation Facilities Proposed in Alternative 2 of the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.



identified for improvement while unused resources may be reclaimed. Facilities and other improvements, including signs, shall be monitored and maintained as necessary.

5. Law Enforcement Program: A law enforcement program would be implemented to supplement patrols by the BLM ranger. The program would entail pursuing a cooperative agreement with the Campbell County Sheriff to patrol developed sites. Sheriff deputies would be able to enforce state and local violations, but would not be able to enforce Federal resource violations. The increased presence of law enforcement officers should deter violations of all types.

A volunteer host or group would be sought to oversee management of the BHMA. Volunteers would have no law enforcement authority. Their presence should deter resource damage and violations, volunteers would educate users on resource concerns, and report violations to the BLM ranger.

6. Education Facility: An education facility would be constructed and available for organized use. A location has not been selected, possible locations include Cedar Draw or Cow Creek, access is the limiting factor. An all weather access road, suitable for school buses, would be required. A Cow Creek location is preferred by the CRM, however, access is not currently available. An existing road provides access to Cedar Draw and a suitable site could be located.

Partnerships shall be pursued to manage the education program and facility. One potential partner is the Wyoming Chapter of the National Audubon Society. The Audubon Society is interested in developing an environmental education facility in the Gillette area. The timing for establishing a partnership with the Audubon Society is appropriate.

If a partnership is not established, some of the desired features for an education program and facility include the following:

- Small cabin (14 ft. x 14 ft.) for classroom and storage, meeting ADA standards.
- Teepee for classroom
- Graveled parking area sufficient for school busses to turn around.
- Pack-in Pack-out garbage program.
- Restroom facilities consistent with ADA standards.
- An interpretive nature trail, suitable for wheel chairs, approximately one-half mile in length.
- A site coordinator to maintain the facilities and schedule classes.

7. Special Recreation Permits: Special recreation permits for the Burnt Hollow Management Area would be available. BLM guidelines for permit issuance would be followed; effects of issuing a special recreation permit on other

resources would be evaluated. Commercial outfitting permit areas would correspond to livestock allotments, this is the predominant pattern for current outfitting permits in the area. No overnight facilities would be permitted.

8. Firearm Prohibition: Firearm discharge would be prohibited except for hunting. Prohibited activities shall include, but are not limited to, target shooting, paint balls, trap, and skeet.
9. Special Management Area: The BHMA would not be evaluated for special management consideration such as Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

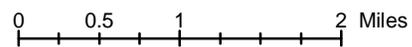
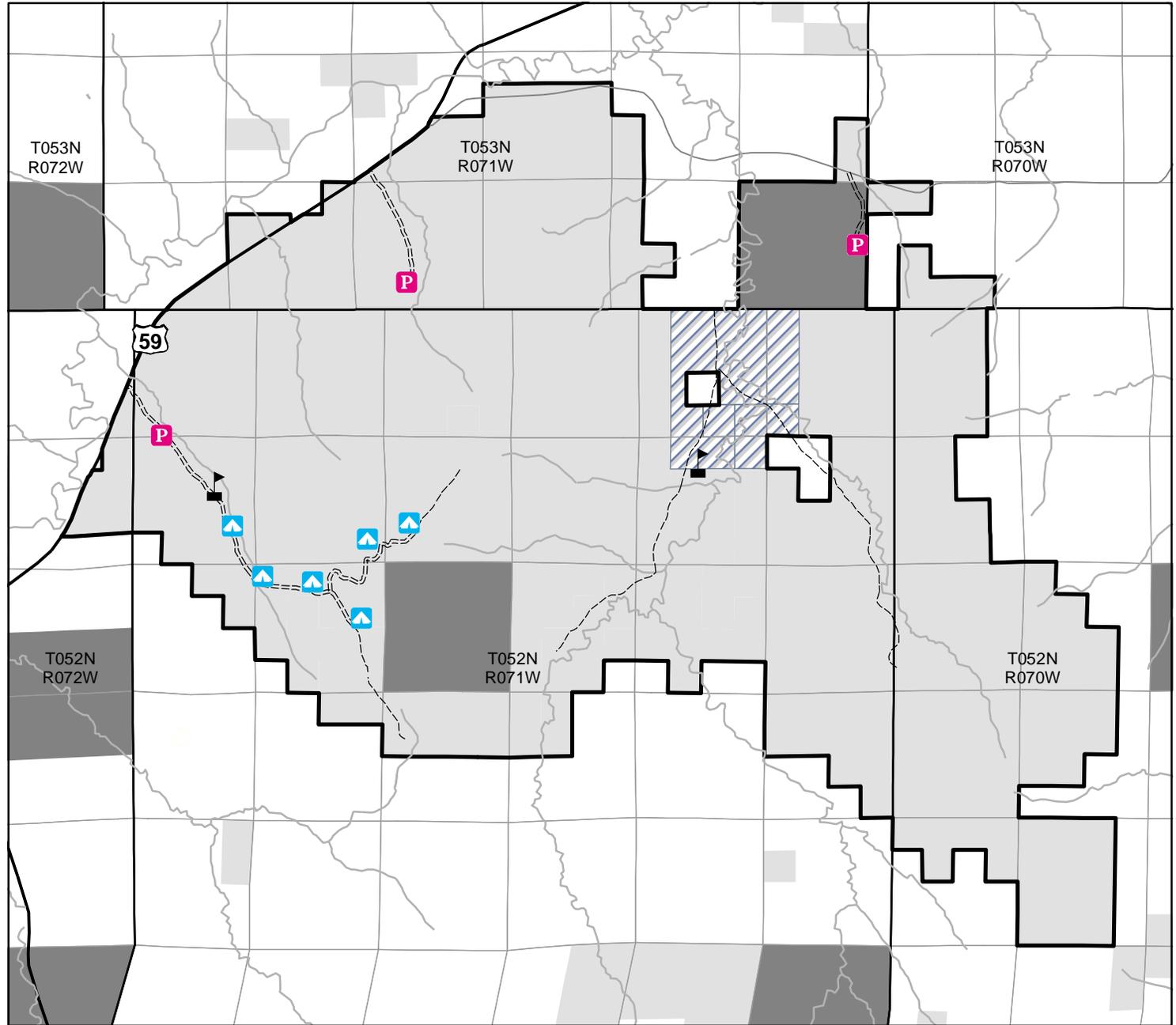
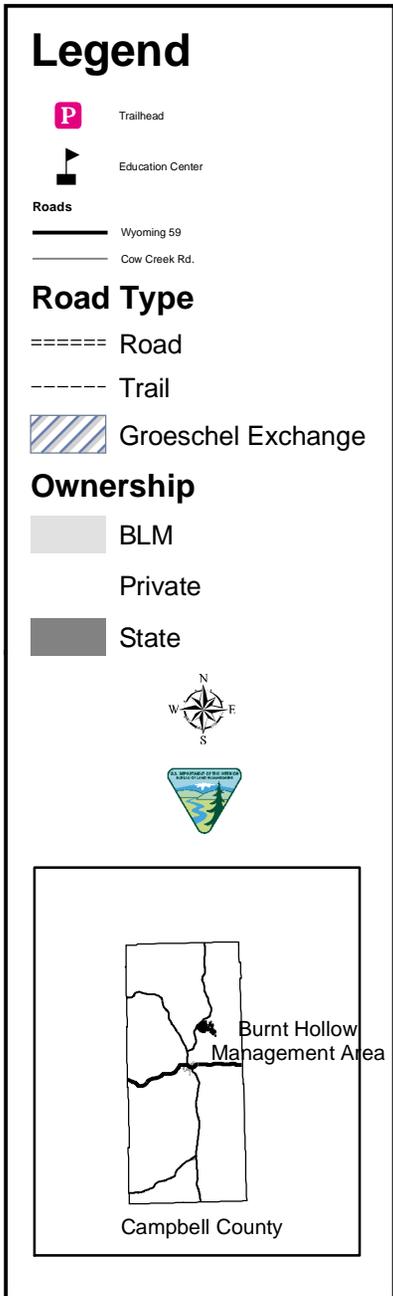
Alternative 3 (Semi-motorized)

The goal for this alternative is to create and manage recreational opportunities for all users that are compatible with other resources, respects the unique qualities of the land, and provides educational opportunities.

Action items the BLM interdisciplinary team identified to meet the alternative's goal are as follows:

1. Sign Program: Same as Alternative 2.
2. Trailheads: Three trailhead parking areas shall be established (Figure 2.2). Trailhead facilities would include garbage receptacles, information boards, and visitor registration boxes. Temporary or permanent restroom facilities consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act shall be provided. Existing livestock water sources shall be modified to provide separate water sources for recreation stock animals. Trailheads shall provide adequate space for parking and movement of ten full-size pickup trucks and three full-size pickup trucks with horse trailers. The trailheads will be signed to deter off-road travel; locked vehicle gates will be installed on the existing roads, and narrow gates for horse users shall be installed. Locations identified for the trailheads are as follows:
 - a. Cedar Draw: Approximately ½ mile in from WY 59 near existing windmill (T 52N R 71W S 7)
 - b. Windmill: Approximately ½ mile in from WY 59 near existing windmill (T 53N R 71W S 33).
 - c. School Section: Approximately 2/3 mile in from Cow Creek Rd. (T 53N R 71W S 36). This trailhead would not have a stock water source developed. An easement from the State of Wyoming would be necessary.
3. Roads and Trails: Existing roads shall be available for motorized use (Figure 2.2). Seasonal closures for resource protection shall be applied, roads shall be available for motorized use from June 1 through August 31. The Cedar Draw Road and Windmill Roads will be upgraded and surfaced to provide all

Figure 2.2 Recreation Facilities Proposed in Alternative 3 of the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.



Projection: UTM
Datum: NAD83
Zone: 13

weather access to developed facilities. An all weather road would be designed and constructed to the School Section trailhead, if approved by the State of Wyoming. Roads proposed and developed to manage other resources (minerals, fire suppression, etc.) shall be kept to a minimum, and will be evaluated for motorized recreation use.

4. Monitoring: Recreation resource (roads, campsites, trails, fire lines, trailheads etc.) use shall be monitored. Specific sites receiving heavy use may be identified for improvement while unused resources may be reclaimed. Facilities and other improvements, including signs, shall be monitored and maintained as necessary. A survey would be developed requesting user comments on current and proposed management.
5. Law Enforcement Program: Same as Alternative 2.
6. Education Facility: Same as Alternative 2.
7. Special Recreation Permits: Same as Alternative 2.
8. Firearm Prohibition: Same as Alternative 2.
9. Special Management Area: The BHMA shall be managed to preserve it's Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) characteristics. Area of Critical Environmental Concern designation is used where special management is needed to protect important historical, cultural, scenic, and natural values. The ACEC designation can also be used to identify areas that are hazardous to human life and property. The BLM is directed to evaluate newly acquired lands, the BHMA was evaluated for ACEC suitability (BLM 2003). The evaluation recommended the BHMA for ACEC designation based on the relevance criteria for scenic value, important geologic features, and fragile watershed, and based on the importance criteria for local significant qualities; national priority concerns, and public concerns for management. This management plan shall ensure management actions protect the ACEC relevance and importance criteria; ACEC designation shall be analyzed during the next resource management plan revision.
10. Developed Camping: Developed campsites, approximately 10, shall be located along the Cedar Draw Rd. Campsites would include a fire place, picnic table, hardened parking area, and an outhouse. One or two water pumps would be developed for human use. The Cedar Draw Road would be upgraded and surfaced to provide all weather access. The Cedar Draw Road would be gated at the trailhead and closed seasonally to reduce wildlife disturbance, the road would be open for motorized use from June 1 to August 31.

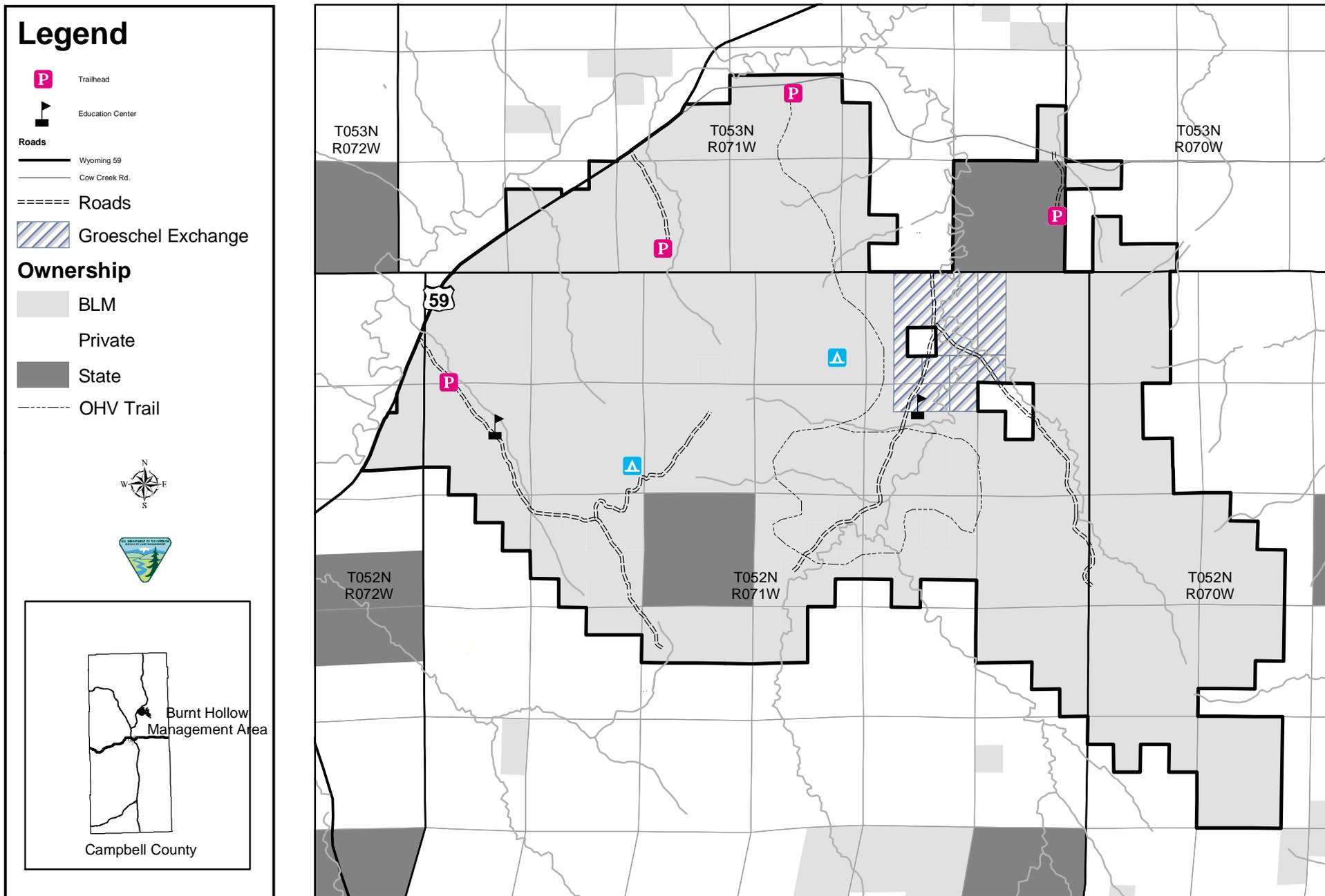
Alternative 4 (Developed Motorized)

The goal for this alternative is to provide developed and motorized recreational opportunities that consider other resources, respect the land, and provide educational opportunities.

Action items the BLM interdisciplinary team identified to provide motorized and developed recreation opportunities while providing for other resource concerns are as follows:

1. Sign Program: Same as Alternative 2.
2. Trailheads: Same as Alternative 3.
3. Roads and Trails: Existing roads would be available for motorized use (Figure 2.3). No seasonal vehicle closure would be enacted, signs recommending no motor vehicle travel during wet conditions would be posted. The Cedar Draw Road and Windmill Roads would be upgraded and surfaced to provide all weather access to developed facilities. An all weather road would be designed and constructed to the School Section trailhead, if approved by the State of Wyoming. Additional trails would be considered including specialized trails, such as trails designed for mountain bicycling and other specific uses. A highline trail could be sited along the ridges north of Cedar Draw. Roads proposed and developed to manage other resources (minerals, fire suppression, etc.) would be available for motorized recreation use.
4. Monitoring: Recreation resource (roads, campsites, trails, fire lines, trailheads etc.) use shall be monitored. Specific sites receiving heavy use may be identified for improvement while unused resources may be reclaimed. Facilities including signs would be monitored and maintained as necessary. A survey would be developed requesting user comments on current and proposed management.
5. Law Enforcement Program: Same as Alternative 2.
6. Education Facility: Same as Alternative 2.
7. Special Recreation Permits: Same as Alternative 2.
8. Firearm Prohibition: Firearm discharge shall not be prohibited. Firearms would be managed in accordance with State of Wyoming regulations.
9. Special Management Area: Designation of the BHMA as an ACEC would not be pursued.
10. Developed Camping: A developed campground shall be designed and constructed, a site has not been determined. The campground would most likely be sited west of Cow Creek or along the Cedar Draw Road. An all

Figure 2.3 Recreation Facilities Proposed in Alternative 4 of the Burnt Hollow Management Plan.



weather access road would be necessary to a campground near Cow Creek. This would be a traditional campground with six to ten family sites located in close proximity along a loop road. In addition a site would be constructed for groups of 50 or more people. Campsites would include a fire place, picnic table, and hardened parking area. An outhouse and garbage facilities would be available within the campground. Potable water would be provided if feasible. A camp host would manage the campground and the Burnt Hollow Management Area.

11. OHV Trail: An OHV trail would be identified and constructed west of Cow Creek into the center of the management area. A trailhead/unloading area would be constructed off the Cow Creek Road (T 53N R 71 W S 27). Trailhead facilities would be the same as in alternative 3, except stock water would not be developed at the OHV trailhead. No seasonal vehicle closure would be enacted, signs recommending no motor vehicle travel during wet conditions would be provided.

2.7 Vegetation Management

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Vegetation management would be consistent with the Approved Resource Management Plan for Public Lands Administered by the BLM Buffalo Field Office (BLM 2001). Management shall maintain or improve the diversity of plant communities to support timber production, livestock needs, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and acceptable visual resources; and reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

An EA (WY 070-02-EA-239) was prepared in 2002 to address wildland fuel buildup, forest and rangeland health, watershed restoration, and salvage commercial fire-killed saw timber in the BHMA vicinity (BLM 2002). Vegetation management projects can be implemented in accordance with this EA. The vegetation management EA provides for commercial harvest of available wood products, existing roads and trails are to be used for transportation, no new roads shall be constructed.

1. Forest communities: Forest management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239).
2. Shrubland Communities: Shrubland management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239).
3. Riparian Communities: Riparian management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239).
4. Invasive Weeds: Invasive weed management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239).

5. Wildland Fire: Wildland fire management would be accomplished in accordance with current agreements. Campbell County would provide initial attack on wildland fires, BLM would be contacted for guidance. All wildland fires would be suppressed.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

The CRM team did not identify vegetation as a stand-alone resource, but included vegetation management actions with other resources such as livestock grazing and wildlife. Vegetation management as it relates to other resources shall also be discussed in this EA under the other resources. Action items and issues identified by the CRM team that relate purely to the vegetation resources are included here. The goal for this alternative is to manage the vegetation in a manner that considers and is compatible with other uses particularly forage production and wildlife habitat.

1. Forest communities: Forest management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239). Management activities would be designed to maintain the historic range of vegetation composition and structure by reducing ponderosa pine cover, which should also enhance wildlife habitat and forage production.
2. Shrubland Communities: Shrubland management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239). Management activities would be designed to maintain the historic range of vegetation composition and structure by reducing juniper cover, and increasing age class and species diversity of sagebrush and other shrubs. Active shrubland management shall also enhance wildlife habitat and forage production.
3. Riparian Communities: Riparian management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239). Management activities would be designed to maintain the historic range of vegetation composition and structure by reducing juniper cover, and promoting recovery of the riparian community (alder, cottonwoods, sedges, willows, etc). Exclosures may be constructed to reduce grazing pressure and provide for vegetation monitoring. Riparian restoration would provide additional wildlife habitat and forage for livestock and wildlife.
4. Invasive Weeds: Invasive weed management actions could be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239). Recreation stock users would be required to use certified weed-free hay. All management actions would be designed to minimize weed infestations.
5. Wildland Fire: A wildland fire management plan would be developed emphasizing fire's ecological role while providing for other resources. Many

vegetation communities such as ponderosa pine forest and sagebrush shrublands are adapted to fire, fire is essential for the health and maintenance of these communities. Fire suppression activities would be guided by the fire management plan, which would provide for wildland fire for resource use. Fire suppression activities shall emphasize a “light on the land” approach to minimize resource damage, for example the fire management plan may restrict bulldozers and heavy equipment to existing roads, and regulate construction of fire suppression roads. Structures, other developments, and adjacent private lands shall receive protection. Fuel reduction activities and other projects would be implemented to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

Alternative 3 (Environmental Protection Emphasis)

Management activities would emphasize a “hands off” approach to vegetation management actions, wildland fire suppression, and prescribed burning.

1. Forest communities: The only forest management action implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239) would be slash pile burning. Management activities would emphasize a “hands off” approach to forest husbandry actions, wildland fire suppression, and prescribed burning.
2. Shrubland Communities: BLM would not implement any of the shrubland management actions addressed under the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239). BLM would manage any naturally occurring wildland fires in shrubland communities under the “hands off” approach described for forest communities.
3. Riparian Communities: The only riparian management actions that would be implemented in accordance with the vegetation management EA (WY 070-02-EA-239) would be culvert removal and establishment of low water road crossings and the Cedar Draw Fuel Reduction Project. The fuel reduction contract has been issued and the project scheduled for completion in the spring/summer of 2003. Riparian management would emphasize increasing vegetation density and cover by reducing livestock grazing in riparian zones and possibly use of prescribed fire. Exclosures may be constructed to reduce grazing pressure and provide for vegetation monitoring. Riparian restoration would provide additional wildlife habitat and forage production.
4. Invasive Weeds: Invasive weed management actions would be the same as described in the proposed action alternative.
5. Wildland Fire: BLM would develop a wildland fire management plan emphasizing fire’s ecological role. Naturally occurring wildland fires would be allowed to burn under conditions defined in a site specific Wildland Fire Use for Resource Benefit (WFURB) plan. The WFURB plan would

emphasize use of natural fuel breaks or topographic features to contain fires within the unit. Suppression efforts would emphasize use of hand crews and engines operating from designated roads and trails. Heavy equipment use would only be authorized when the fire posed an immediate threat to human life.

2.8 Wildlife

Alternative 1 (No Action)

The BHMA would continue to be available for wildlife related recreation such as hunting and wildlife viewing. A vegetation management EA (WY-070-02-EA-239) provides for vegetative treatments to improve wildlife habitat quality and increase forage production. Non vegetation management habitat enhancement projects would not be proposed.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

The CRM team's goal for the wildlife resource is to manage for diverse and healthy populations of fish and wildlife.

To accomplish the CRM team's wildlife goal the following action items have been identified:

1. Habitat Management: Provide adequate habitat through active management to provide sustainable well distributed populations. A vegetation management EA (WY-070-02-EA-239) provides for vegetative treatments to improve wildlife habitat quality and increase forage production. Some possible treatment methods include chemical, fire, and mechanical.
2. Hunting: Provide for a semi-primitive hunting experience, the BHMA would be closed to motor vehicles during all big-game hunting seasons. (Vehicle access was discussed in Recreation's proposed action.)
3. Mule deer: Habitat enhancements would be designed for the benefit of mule deer. Management regulations proposed by the WGFD that would benefit mule deer would be supported by the BLM.
4. Population inventory: Population and habitat inventories will be conducted to document baseline conditions and monitor management effects. An effective monitoring program shall enable an adaptive management approach to wildlife and habitat management.
5. Predator management: No animal damage control is allowed on BLM administered public lands unless a need for control, economically significant predation on livestock, is determined. USDA Wildlife Services is the only agency approved to control predators on public lands. The animal damage control process and approved control methods were analyzed in the "Environmental Assessment for Predator Damage Management in Eastern Wyoming" (BLM

2001, APHIS 1998).

Recreational predator hunting is permissible in accordance with WGFD regulations. Hunters inquiring about areas to hunt predators shall be directed to the Burnt Hollow Management Area.

6. Range Improvements: Water developments for livestock will be designed with waterfowl and other wildlife in mind – including fencing, graveled water gaps, conversion of abandoned oil wells, or stock tanks. Fences and other range improvements shall also be designed for wildlife compatibility.
7. Species diversity: Species diversity shall be enhanced by developing water sources (action items 6 & 8) and active habitat management (action items 1, 6, & 8).
8. Waterfowl: Habitat enhancements would be designed to provide waterfowl nesting and foraging habitats.

Alternative 3

The goals for wildlife management under this alternative are to:

1. Improve biological diversity of plant and animal species;
2. Support WGFD population objectives to the extent consistent with BLM objectives;
3. Improve forage production and wildlife habitat quality; and
4. Provide habitat for special status species.

To accomplish the wildlife management goals of alternative 3 the following action items would be implemented:

1. Habitat Management: An active habitat management program shall be implemented to enhance wildlife habitat quality and increase biodiversity in accordance with the wildlife management goals. A vegetation management EA (WY-070-02-EA-239) provides for vegetative treatments to improve wildlife habitat quality and increase forage production. Some possible treatment methods include chemical, fire, and mechanical.

Forest community treatments shall be designed to maintain the historic range of vegetation composition and structure. For example, reducing ponderosa pine density should provide an open canopy with enhanced understory structure and diversity.

Shrubland community treatments shall be designed and implemented to provide a mosaic of diverse sagebrush age classes, within the historic range of composition and structure. No more than 20% of the sagebrush shall be treated within a 30-year period in accordance with sage grouse management guidelines (Connelly et al. 2000, WGFD 2002). Juniper cover within sagebrush communities shall be

reduced. Treatments would be designed to break up mat vegetation and increase grass and forb production.

Riparian communities are amongst the most biologically diverse and productive communities. Management activities shall be designed to restore the non-functioning riparian communities including Cedar Draw, Cow Creek, Hells Canyon Draw, and Provant Creek. Treatments may include reducing juniper cover, and promoting recovery of the riparian community (cottonwoods, sedges, willows, etc). Exclosures may be constructed to reduce grazing pressure and provide for vegetation monitoring.

2. Hunting: Hunting opportunities shall be provided in accordance with WGFD regulations and the recreation resource direction of this Burnt Hollow Management Plan.
3. Mule deer: Single species management shall not be emphasized. Habitat enhancements that increase biological or habitat diversity and are beneficial to mule deer would be supported.
4. Population inventory: Population and habitat inventories shall be conducted, as resources allow, documenting baseline conditions and monitoring management effects. An effective monitoring program shall enable an adaptive management approach to wildlife and habitat management.
5. Predator management: No animal damage control is allowed on BLM administered public lands unless a need for control, economically significant predation on livestock, is determined. USDA Wildlife Services is the only agency approved to control predators on public lands. The animal damage control process and approved control methods were analyzed in the “Environmental Assessment for Predator Damage Management in Eastern Wyoming” (BLM 2001, APHIS 1998).

Recreational predator hunting is permissible in accordance with WGFD regulations.

6. Range Improvements: Improvements for livestock management shall be designed where possible to benefit and minimally be compatible with wildlife; for example, fences would be designed to allow for wildlife passage.
7. Species diversity: Implementation of the other wildlife action items shall provide for species diversity.
8. Waterfowl: Wetland enhancements shall be designed to provide waterfowl nesting and foraging habitats. Potential waterfowl habitat enhancement locations have been identified by Ducks Unlimited. Water developments for livestock shall be designed to enhance waterfowl habitat.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

Elimination of Predators: Members of the Wildlife Technical Resource Team suggested predators be eliminated from the BHMA. Predator elimination conflicts with BLM's Approved Resource Management Plan and the agreement with USDA Wildlife Services, which state a need for control must be determined (BLM 2001, APHIS 1998). Predator elimination also conflicts with the CRM team's goal and BLM's wildlife management objective to increase biodiversity.

Elimination of Select Species: Members of the Wildlife TRT recommended populations of certain species such as elk, mountain lions, and white-tailed deer be eliminated, or at least minimized, within the BHMA. Extirpation of native wildlife species conflicts with the CRM team's goal and the BLM's RMP wildlife management objective to increase biodiversity (BLM 2001). The identified species are game animals for which the WGFD has the overall management authority and has implemented regulations to effectively manage these species.