

BIG PINEY - LABARGE COORDINATED ACTIVITY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Big Piney-LaBarge Coordinated Activity Plan (CAP) is a detailed, site-specific management plan developed to resolve conflicting resource uses and objectives on public lands, administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), within the CAP area. The

CAP area includes about 135,785 acres of public land surface and 196,841 acres of Federal mineral estate administered by the BLM. The CAP area is within the BLM Pinedale Resource Area and is located between Big Piney, Marbleton and LaBarge, Wyoming (see General Location Map and Map 1).

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, OBJECTIVES, PLANNED ACTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BIG PINEY - LABARGE COORDINATED ACTIVITY PLAN AREA

BIG PINEY - LABARGE WORKING GROUP

Introduction

Instrumental to the successful implementation of this CAP and the orderly and efficient management of the CAP area, will be the use of a seven person working group, the Big Piney-LaBarge Working Group (BPLWG). The BPLWG will be comprised of a constituent representative from the oil and gas industry, service industry, ranching industry, local community, environmental interests, Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), and BLM.

It is expected that the working group representatives will provide a broader-based public perspective and insight that will enhance the Pinedale Area Manager's ability to make more informed management decisions that are compatible and consistent with the multiple use management objectives for the CAP area. Each representative is expected to provide information and expertise that will aid the group in providing more informed recommendations. For example:

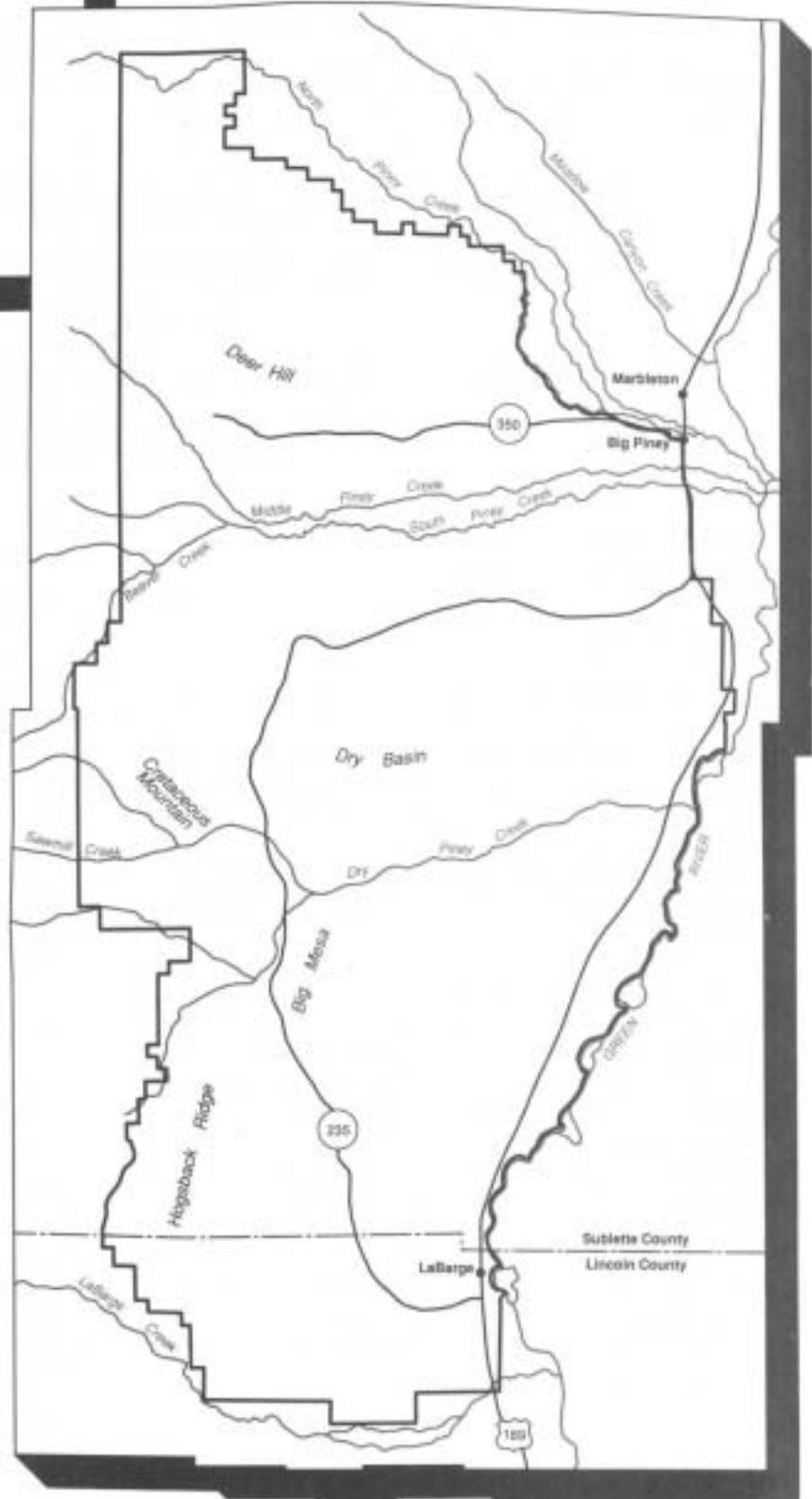
- The representative for the oil and gas industry will provide an understanding of energy mineral exploration, development, operation and abandonment processes and requirements.

- The service industry representative will provide an understanding of the logistical requirements of well field servicing operations, including opportunities for mitigating operational impacts.
- The ranching industry representative will provide an understanding of livestock use and needs for forage and water and of ranching operations.
- The local community representative will provide an understanding of the local businesses, community services and infrastructures, as well as the feelings and concerns of the local citizens.
- The environmental representative will provide an awareness of environmental sensitivity and the need to guard against undue and unnecessary environmental damage.
- The WGFD representative will provide expertise and understanding of wildlife and wildlife habitat needs, state laws and regulatory requirements, and of wildlife population, distribution and harvest statistics.
- The BLM representative will provide expertise and understanding of the BLM multiple use and interdisciplinary land and resource management policies, and Federal laws and regulatory requirements associated with the management of BLM administered public lands and resources.

WYOMING

CAP Area

Rock Springs
District



General Location Map
Big Piney - LaBarge
Coordinated Activity Plan

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Objective

The general objective for involvement of the BPLWG is to attain better long range planning for orderly management of the CAP area. This includes consideration of planning for opportunities for year-round oil and gas drilling activities in harmony with management of environmentally sensitive areas. Specific objectives of the Group will include, but will not be limited to:

- helping to provide more opportunities for stabilizing the local economy given the unpredictability of energy development and the need for wildlife habitat protection;
- establishing better communication, cooperation and trust between the environmental and developmental publics who have shown interest in the area;
- exploring techniques for mitigating habitat loss and disturbance related to energy exploration and development;
- helping to delineate areas of poor habitat conditions with expected high winter animal densities as special habitat management zones, and recommending management strategies for these areas;
- helping to delineate areas of good habitat condition with expected low winter animal densities as potential wintertime development zones, and recommending management strategies for these areas;
- identifying areas where wintering animals are expected to habituate to human presence disturbances and other areas where human activity would be restricted, and recommending management strategies for these areas;
- refining the process for determining where and when exceptions to seasonal and other mitigating restrictions are appropriate;
- providing a forum for discussion and planning for and funding of habitat improvements, wildlife and other resource studies, monitoring, and other matters of concern to the successful management of the CAP area; and
- providing a forum for those with other land and resource use interests in the CAP area to interact with the minerals and wildlife interests, and providing opportunities for these other interests to participate in reviewing and making recommendations for planning and management proposals for the CAP area.

The ultimate goal of the BPLWG is to reach consensus in and prepare recommendations for the mitigation of long term wildlife habitat loss and of the effects of long term surface and wildlife disturbance from mineral and other development in the CAP area. To achieve this goal, the review of individual land use authorizations may, initially, require group discussion. Once the group becomes comfortable with its role, it may be inefficient for the group to evaluate individual or short term plans, and a strategy for more efficient group involvement in long term management is expected to evolve. The Group should be able to review issues of importance twice a year, once in the spring (April) and once in the fall (October). If more meetings prove necessary, they will be arranged.

Planned Actions and Requirements

The BPLWG representatives will be nominated from the local area (western Wyoming) by user constituencies, but appointment to the Group will be the responsibility of the BLM Pinedale Resource Area Manager. Determining factors for nomination and appointment to the working group will include the nominees' knowledge of local land use requirements and ability to effectively represent the interests of their constituents.

The working group will be self-governing but responsible to the Pinedale Area Manager on questions he/she wishes them to consider. The working group may also consider questions or issues of their constituents for presentation to the Area Manager. The working group will not usurp or encroach upon the authorities or rights of any Federal or State agency, industry or any other governmental or private interests. The authority and responsibility for decision-making for the public lands and resources in the CAP area remains with the Authorized Officer of the BLM. The Pinedale Area Manager is the BLM decision-maker for the area. The authority and responsibility for wildlife species management remains with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Private property rights will be preserved. Efficient development of energy resources will be accommodated within multiple use management principles.

The working group will meet at least semi-annually and will convene on other occasions, should the need arise.

The working group will be a sounding board for controversy, complaints and suggestions concerning management of the BLM administered public lands and resources in the CAP area, under the principles of environmental integrity, multiple use and sustained yield of resources. The charge of the group will be to:

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- provide input and recommendations to the BLM Pinedale Resource Area Manager and, as appropriate, to the BLM Rock Springs District Multiple Use and Grazing Advisory Boards, concerning the detailed planning and management of the CAP area;
- allow diverse interests an opportunity to discuss and recommend ways to resolve conflicting viewpoints for managing and mitigating effects of oil and gas exploration and development and other activities within crucial wildlife habitat in the CAP area; to review and make recommendations on the plans of industry interests which operate in the area, and those of the WGFD and BLM;
- encourage the continual planning for coordinated resource management in the area; and,
- through their advice and recommendations, help provide for more orderly and appropriate development and conservation of resources, the preservation of wildlife, support of local economies, and better communication and cooperation among all interests.

The BPLWG will be used to help coordinate the resource management of the CAP area. This will include making recommendations on how to accomplish management goals for crucial wildlife habitat; on opportunities for yearlong geophysical exploration, well drilling and completion of wells for those companies who so desire; and on keeping public constituencies aware of the coordinated resource planning for the CAP area.

The working group will review and make recommendations on annual and long range plans from industry, BLM, WGFD and local governments to help coordinate orderly management for both industry needs and wildlife habitat management. The Area Manager will carefully consider the recommendations of the group in making decisions concerning the CAP area. If decisions differ from the working group's recommendations, the Area Manager will provide written explanations for the differences.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT

Objective

The minerals management objective in the Big Piney-LaBarge CAP area is to make the public lands and federal mineral estate, administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), available for orderly and

efficient development of the mineral resources, in harmony with the management goals and objectives of the other land and resource uses in the area.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Oil and Gas

Development of oil and gas reserves within the CAP area will be continued.

A limit will not be placed on the level of additional oil and gas well drilling and development which can be conducted in the CAP area. However, because there are concerns and differing opinions regarding the degree of impact that may occur from an additional 600 to 900 wells that may be developed, should the development level reach 500 wells within the next ten years, an environmental evaluation will be conducted to determine the level of impacts which are occurring.

At any point that monitoring indicates a substantial change in impacts or that levels of impact beyond those analyzed in the environmental assessment (EA) for the CAP are starting to occur, environmental evaluations will be initiated.

All actions and activities associated with drilling, completing, and producing oil and gas wells will be in conformance with conditions of approval (COAs) for applications for permit to drill (APDs) and for field development activities.

Wells with no future potential for development (more than 200 wells over the next 10 years) will be plugged and abandoned. Associated well pads, access roads, pipelines, powerlines and other facilities will be reclaimed. Abandoned wells will be plugged in accordance with BLM approved procedures to protect freshwater aquifers and other subsurface resources. These well locations, and the locations of associated access roads, pipelines, power lines and other facilities, will be recontoured to natural shape and revegetated to stabilize the soil. The ultimate objective of stabilizing these sites is to reestablish adequate vegetative composition, cover and production needed for other land and resource uses in the area such as, wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, watershed and riparian areas, etc. (See Map 2 for the location of existing wells and roads.)

Production wells, roads and other facilities needed to produce the oil and gas reserves will be maintained by the lease or unit operator for the life of the wells or field. (See Map 3 for existing oil and gas units.)

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Geophysical Exploration

Notices of intent for geophysical exploration will be considered on a case-by-case basis for approval by the Area Manager. Long range planning for this activity will be coordinated through the BPLWG on an annual basis.

All use authorizations for geophysical activities will include appropriate mitigation requirements for reducing impacts of surface disturbing activities, as presented in Appendix A, General Standard Operating Procedures for Surface Disturbing Activities.

Requirements, including seasonal limitations and restrictions on the use of explosives and vehicles, will be applied as necessary.

Solid Leasable Minerals

The CAP area will be kept open to consideration of exploration, leasing and development of all solid leasable minerals, such as coal and oil shale.

All exploration and development activities will be conducted in accordance with the procedures in Appendix A.

Locatable Minerals

All federally owned locatable minerals and all public land surface administered by the BLM in the CAP area will be kept open to the filing and location of mining claims.

Surface disturbing activities on mining claims requires a notice submitted to BLM for cumulative surface disturbances of 5 acres or less. A plan of operations is required for surface disturbances of more than 5 acres (43 CFR 3809).

Saleable Minerals

Applications for mineral material sales will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Use authorizations will include appropriate mitigation requirements for surface and other types of disturbances.

WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Objective

The management objectives for wildlife habitat in the CAP area are to:

- maintain and improve crucial deer, antelope, elk and moose winter ranges and birthing areas;
- provide winter and transitional habitat to support and maintain healthy deer, antelope, elk and moose populations;
- mitigate wildlife habitat losses associated with the mineral development and other surface disturbing activities occurring in the area;
- protect breeding, wintering and nesting habitat for sage grouse and raptors;
- maintain, enhance, and restore riparian and fisheries habitat and associated streams; and
- protect threatened and endangered species habitat.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Wildlife Habitat and Seasonal Protection

Crucial Big Game Winter Ranges and Birthing Areas

Deer and Antelope. Where appropriate, standard use restrictions for deer and antelope crucial winter ranges will continue to be applied in future oil and gas leases issued in the CAP area. The season of concern is November 15 to April 30.

The opportunity for year-round geophysical exploration, well drilling and in-field development activities will be provided in the deer and antelope crucial winter range areas (Maps 7 and 8), under a controlled management philosophy, and with the management objectives for the crucial habitat in mind. It is possible that these types of activities can be conducted in crucial winter ranges, during the winter, without causing unacceptable impacts, when consideration is given to such factors as habitat and animal condition, animal densities and historical concentration areas, expected animal responses (including the likelihood of habituation to winter activities), and weather conditions and forecasts. Based on such factors, last-minute proposals for winter-time activities can also be analyzed for their appropriateness.

Studies, including the above biological and physical factors, will be implemented to determine the extent of impact that mineral and other development in the area have on the deer and antelope herds and their crucial winter ranges. Participation in and funding of these studies will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may involve BLM, WGFD, industry, educational institutions or other interested parties.

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Parameters for these biological and physical factors will be considered and developed with involvement of the BPLWG. The objective will be to provide the needed protection on the crucial winter ranges concurrently with accommodating winter exploration and drilling programs for those companies that want them. In formulating their recommendations, the BPLWG will use information derived from studies and monitoring of man's activities on big game animals in the crucial areas, including the ability of the animals to habituate to man's activities during the winter and under various degrees of stress.

Winter surface uses and activities proposed in crucial deer and antelope winter ranges will be reviewed semi-annually by the BPLWG for conformance with this CAP and other long range plans. This includes review of operators' plans for annual and long-range geophysical exploration and field development. The BPLWG will provide recommendations to the Pinedale Area Manager on where those activities should and should not be allowed during crucial winter periods or conditions (usually from November 15 to April 30). Prior to November 15 each year, the Area Manager will consider and approve those winter activities to be conducted during the upcoming winter season.

Whether or not new or pre-existing oil and gas leases include use restriction stipulations for deer and antelope crucial winter ranges, such requirements in these areas will be provided further consideration through involvement of the BPLWG. (See Map 3 for locations of leases that include use restriction stipulations.)

It is important to note that as a result of the BPLWG review, operators should not have to request an exception or modification to seasonal restrictions for approval of APDs or in-field development activities in the deer and antelope crucial winter ranges. These matters will inherently be included in the BPLWG review and recommendations for the Area Manager's consideration and approval. However, this does not preclude an operator from requesting an exception or modification.

The BPLWG will also be involved in reviewing the aerial extent of the deer and antelope crucial winter ranges in the area and in providing input toward refining the crucial winter range boundaries. Deer populations in the CAP area are currently at a high level, in excess of the WGFD population management objective levels. When the deer populations reach the management objective levels in the area, the BPLWG will reevaluate the deer population and crucial winter range relationships and provide any further input and recommendations on winter restrictions in the crucial winter areas to the Area Manager. It is emphasized that the BPLWG will

make "recommendations" on these matters; it will not make decisions for the land and wildlife management agencies.

Elk and Moose. In elk and moose crucial winter ranges (Map 8) and birthing areas, standard use restrictions (e.g., seasonal restrictions from November 15 to April 30 or May 1 to June 30) will continue to be applied as stipulations for geophysical exploration, in oil and gas leases, and in BLM authorizations for other types of disturbance activities issued in the CAP area. Standard use restrictions will also continue to be applied as COAs on APDs and field development activities in these areas.

Where weather or habitat conditions are not critical, the Area Manager may approve an exception to or modification of these restrictions, if requested by the user and if supported by environmental analysis. Appendix B describes the procedures for processing requests for exceptions from seasonal restrictions. The BPLWG may also consider and make recommendations on proposed activities in these crucial winter ranges.

Sage Grouse and Raptors

Standard restrictions for sage grouse and raptor breeding, nesting and wintering habitats will be applied as stipulations for geophysical exploration, in oil and gas leases, and in other use authorizations, where appropriate. The seasons of concern are February 1 to July 31 and November 15 to April 30.

These standard restrictions are further refined for application as COAs to APDs and field development activities and to other use authorizations in the CAP area, as follows:

Sage Grouse. Sage grouse breeding habitat areas (strutting grounds or leks) are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities. That is, surface disturbing activities associated with such actions as well drilling, construction of roads and other types of rights-of-way, etc., will avoid the areas within a 1/4 mile radius of leks, if possible (see Map 8). In cases where it is not possible to avoid these areas, intensive mitigation of the surface disturbing activities will be emphasized.

Also within a 1/4 mile radius of leks, permanent and high profile structures, such as buildings, storage tanks, overhead powerlines, etc., will not be allowed.

During the sage grouse mating season, between March 1 and May 15, surface uses and activities will not be allowed between the hours of midnight and 9:00 AM, within a 1/2 mile radius of active leks (i.e., those leks occupied by mating birds). See Map 8.

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Sage grouse nesting and wintering areas will be managed to maintain and improve nesting cover through shrub management practices.

If an occupied nest that would be adversely affected by surface disturbing activities is identified, surface uses and activities will be delayed in the affected area until nesting is completed (usually by June 30).

Raptors. Raptor nest and buffer surveys will be conducted within a one mile radius or linear distance of proposed surface uses or activities, if they are proposed to be conducted between February 1 and July 31 and:

- Raptor nests and associated buffers will be protected at any time the nests are occupied.
- Any active nests identified will be appropriately protected at all times, using Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) guidelines and other established methods, and in coordination with that agency (An active nest is one which has been used within the past three years, but is not necessarily currently occupied).
- The proposed activities or surface uses will be authorized, if:
 - no active nests are found within the one mile survey area or,
 - active, unoccupied nests are located outside the proposed activity area or,
 - active nests are unoccupied or,
 - other adequate mitigation or protection methods are employed.

General Provisions

Exceptions to the wildlife habitat and seasonal protection limitations in any year may be approved in writing by the Authorized Officer (see Appendix B).

Typically, when an oil and gas drilling operation is allowed to commence, it will be allowed to be completed and the well put into production. However, in an emergency situation (e.g., fire, flood, severe weather), drilling or completion operations may be temporarily halted.

Prior to conducting any surface-disturbing activities on an area known or suspected to be essential habitat for threatened or endangered plant or animal species,

the lessee/permittee/operator will be required to conduct inventories or studies in accordance with BLM and FWS guidelines to verify the presence or absence of such species. In the event a threatened or endangered species is identified, the lessee/permittee/operator will be required to modify operations to comply with protection requirements for the species and its habitat.

The FWS has determined that water depletions from the Colorado River System (Green River), including any recharge sources, could jeopardize any threatened and endangered species in the Colorado River System. Such depletions will require a conservation fee for those species.

Wildlife escape devices will be installed and maintained in all water troughs.

Decadent Sagebrush Vegetation Management

About seven percent of the decadent sagebrush-grassland and sagebrush-salt desert shrub vegetation types, within big game crucial winter ranges, will be treated by the year 2000 (Map 10). This involves about 10,865 acres of BLM administered public land in the CAP area. About 1,900 acres are between North and South Piney Creeks, and 8,965 acres are between South Piney and LaBarge Creeks. If these treatments meet the desired objectives, the program will be continued on additional acreage through the year 2010.

In mule deer transitional winter/yearlong range, up to 3,900 acres of decadent sagebrush-grassland vegetation on public lands will be treated by the year 2000. Treatment of additional transitional winter/yearlong range will continue if the desired objectives are met.

Desert shrub communities of Gardener's saltbush and winterfat will be inventoried to identify suitable treatment areas and methods for rejuvenation by 1995.

Mountain Shrub Vegetation Management

About 650 acres of the mountain shrub vegetation association will be treated to rejuvenate, perpetuate, and potentially expand the mountain shrub community.

Important mountain shrub communities (about 3,937 acres of public land in the CAP area) are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities (see Map 6). To the extent possible, these vegetative communities will be maintained and protected from disturbance by such things as road, well pad, pipeline, etc., construction. In cases where it is not possible to avoid these areas, intensive mitigation of the surface disturbing activities will be emphasized.

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If proposed surface disturbing activities cannot be avoided in a mountain shrub type, the WGFD will be consulted to help determine the extent and affect of the proposal. After consultation, the project proponent may be required to submit a site specific reclamation plan, including techniques to reestablish the mountain shrub community at predisturbance levels of density and species diversity, within a certain time frame (usually 10 to 20 years). This may require transplanting of on-site shrubs or planting of containerized shrubs. Authorization of surface disturbing activities in the mountain shrub vegetative type will depend on the adequacy and acceptability of the reclamation plan.

Saltbush, Winterfat, Bud Sage Management

Key mule deer winter vegetation types of saltbush, winterfat, and bud sage will be inventoried to identify suitable treatment areas and methods for rejuvenation.

Saltbush, winterfat, and bud sage vegetative types will be managed for reduced livestock grazing pressure and utilization. Deferred grazing system methods will be used.

Aspen Stand Management

Aspen stands in transitional winter/yearlong range will be inventoried to identify suitable treatment areas and methods for rejuvenation. There are about 1,054 acres of aspen association on public lands in the CAP.

Aquatic Management

Within the CAP area, Pinegrove, Sawmill, Fogarty, and Black Canyon Creeks are currently or potentially capable of sustaining fish. These streams will be managed in accordance with BLM's East Front Aquatic Habitat Management Plan and the WGFD Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Management Plan.

Wetland/riparian zones, and areas within 500 feet of them, are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities. To the extent possible, these areas will be maintained and protected from disturbance by such things as road, pipeline, well pad, etc., construction. In cases where it is not possible to avoid these areas, intensive mitigation of the surface disturbing activities will be emphasized.

Revegetation

Revegetation of disturbed areas will include establishment or reestablishment of preferred big game forage species, including such species as fourwing saltbush, Wyoming big sagebrush, winterfat, and other shrub species adapted to particular sites.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for livestock grazing management in the CAP area are to:

- maintain or improve the composition and productivity of the vegetative resource, the ecological range condition and forage for livestock grazing (may include various types of vegetation treatments and changes in livestock grazing management practices);
- maintain or improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions;
- reduce accelerated erosion in the Big Mesa pasture of the North LaBarge Common Allotment;
- improve success of vegetative reclamation efforts;
- eliminate continuous livestock grazing and provide periodic grazing deferment to all portions of the North LaBarge Common and Calpet Common Grazing Allotments;
- reconcile the discrepancy between the current livestock grazing forage allocation and the forage shown to be available on the 1961-62 range survey;
- establish accurate livestock stocking rates, consistent with proper grazing forage allocations, among the livestock operators in North LaBarge Common Allotment;
- improve livestock distribution; and
- mitigate livestock forage losses associated with the development of energy resources.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Allotment management plans (AMPs) for the livestock grazing allotments involved with the CAP area will not be completed as part of this CAP. The reason is that 22 individual grazing allotments are involved and only portions of most of them are within the CAP area (Map 9). The AMPs to be developed must cover complete grazing allotments and include consideration of the land and resource uses and values in all parts of the allotments (both within and outside the CAP area). The degree of detail, specificity, land area, and time involved

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with developing these AMPs is beyond the scope and intent of the CAP.

Most of the livestock grazing management actions that may occur within the CAP area will be a function of implementing the AMPs as they are developed. However, the range improvements proposed for the CAP area may be implemented prior to completion of AMPs (See Appendix C and discussions below).

Rangeland monitoring studies will be installed on all "I" category allotments, and on "M" and "C" category allotments as needed. Monitoring intensity will be greater on "I" allotments than on "M" or "C" allotments. Within the CAP area, key areas will be monitored in pastures of the North LaBarge Common and Calpet Common Allotments (See Appendix D).

No adjustments in livestock numbers or use will be made on any allotment until sufficient monitoring data is available. Any needed adjustments will be implemented either through agreements with livestock operators (which is the preferred method) or by issuing livestock grazing decisions.

Deer Hills Allotments

Range improvements, such as stockwater reservoirs and check dams, will be implemented to provide better livestock distribution and reduce gully erosion within the Deer Hills Individual and Dan Budd Deer Hills Allotments.

Existing water control structures in the Deer Hills area will be reevaluated for their effectiveness and ability to meet new management objectives in the CAP area. Some damaged structures may be reconstructed and some that are poorly located or unnecessary will be abandoned. Reconstruction and abandonment of damaged reservoirs will be based on needs to correct poor locations of existing reservoirs, needs for silt traps, and needs for adequate livestock water.

Needs for new water control structures for watershed improvement will be identified. New reservoirs or structures will be installed upstream from the reconstructed reservoirs to ensure their success. A small riparian enclosure and some prescribed burning will also be proposed for this area.

Upper North LaBarge Allotment

The Deadline Ridge water pipeline and Spring Creek water pit, located in the Hogsback pasture, will be reconstructed. Water development in this pasture will

improve livestock distribution and help achieve the other grazing objectives for the area.

North LaBarge Common Allotment

Forage Allocation and Recovery

The active licensed grazing use for the North LaBarge Common Allotment is shown in Appendix E. The proposed vegetation monitoring will be used to reevaluate and accurately establish the available forage in this allotment, to determine any need for adjustments in the forage allocations.

The BLM will establish accurate stocking rates and forage allocations among the range users in North LaBarge Common Allotment by using:

- utilization-pattern mapping and a combination of actual use data, climatic data and utilization measurements on key areas;
- annual actual use and utilization data, prorated against the total allocated grazing preference, to establish proper allocation;
- controlling utilization of key plant species to no more than 50 percent of current year's growth;
- intensified grazing management, including a "deferred grazing system".

Livestock Grazing Distribution

The needed changes in livestock grazing distribution in the North LaBarge Common Allotment will be accomplished through implementation of the proposed grazing system (Appendix E), a salting program, and the proposed range improvements (Appendix C), including needed watering facilities. The success of implementing the grazing system and attaining the anticipated improvement in livestock distribution is dependent on the successful implementation of the proposed range improvements.

The major emphasis of the grazing system will be to rotate the livestock grazing use and deferment of use over the entire allotment so that individual pastures are not grazed during the same time of year, every year. Through controlled timing of pasture usage, this grazing scheme will also intensify grazing use and force livestock into under utilized areas.

As range improvement projects are developed, the grazing system may be modified or refined, based on monitoring data. The goal is to develop an effective and

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efficient grazing system that both benefits the range resources and facilitates the permittees' grazing operations.

Livestock will be removed when utilization of key vegetative species reaches the limit of 50 percent of the current year's growth.

Livestock grazing use will be decreased in the following excessive use areas:

- The northwest corner of Big Mesa pasture in the Dry Piney and Fogarty Creek areas;
- Dry Basin Draw in Cretaceous pasture;
- The entire east side of Trail Ridge pasture; and
- The area near Pinegrove Creek enclosures in Pinegrove pasture.

Livestock grazing use will be expanded into areas of low forage utilization on benches and mesas at higher elevations that could absorb more grazing use, including:

- Much of the east side of Big Mesa pasture where watering facilities are inadequate;
- The western part of Pinegrove pasture on Deadline Ridge; and
- The northern part of Cretaceous pasture.

Salt will be placed in designated locations to help direct livestock distribution. Salt blocks will be placed at least 500 feet away from live water, wetlands, riparian areas, reclaimed areas, or livestock watering facilities.

Big Mesa pasture will be subdivided into four smaller pastures, creating 11 pastures in the allotment (Map 10).

Up to four sections of drift fence and several new and reconstructed water developments will be needed to allow for a deferred grazing system of spring and fall use in a large area of traditional spring grazing.

The four proposed fences (3.65 miles) will be three-wire fences (with a smooth bottom wire), constructed to BLM design standards for wildlife areas, to allow movement of deer, antelope and other big game animals. Critical portions of these fences may need to be constructed as let-down-fence to provide for deer and antelope movement.

Summer Pasture

Cretaceous pasture will be used in a deferred grazing use system with Trail Ridge pasture. One additional water well in Cretaceous pasture will be needed.

Spring/Fall Pasture

East and West Chimney pastures will be used in the spring and fall and in conjunction with Cretaceous and Trail Ridge pastures.

The four pastures to be created from the Big Mesa pasture will be used in a deferred grazing use system with Pine Grove pasture. The use will be alternated between spring and fall, depending on forage conditions and regrowth of salt bush and winterfat.

Calpet Common Allotment

Black Canyon and Calpet pastures will be separated from the North LaBarge Common Allotment and will be combined to form the new Calpet Common Allotment (Map 10). The active licensed grazing use for the Calpet Common Allotment is listed in Appendix E.

The Calpet pasture may be divided (by fencing east to west) to create a north and south pasture, if adequate water can be developed on the south side. Owners of the JF Ranch plan to fence their State land to create a third pasture. A grazing system will be developed for the allotment when the pasture fencing is determined.

O'Neil Individual Allotment

About 640 acres of brush control may be conducted in this allotment to increase livestock forage and to improve watershed condition and wildlife habitat. This will be a cooperative project with participation of the livestock operator, the WGFD and the BLM.

RIPARIAN AREA MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objective for management of riparian areas in the CAP area is to maintain or improve riparian areas for livestock forage production, water quality and availability, and soil stabilization.

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Planned Actions and Requirements

All management actions and authorized uses in riparian areas will comply with Executive Order (E.O.) 11988, *Floodplain Management*, E.O. 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, and the State of Wyoming water quality standards.

Riparian/wetland zones (about 1,620 acres of BLM administered public land in the CAP area) are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities. To the extent possible, these areas will be maintained and protected from disturbance by such things as road, well pad, pipeline, etc., construction. In cases where it is not possible to avoid these areas, intensive mitigation of the surface disturbing activities will be emphasized.

In the North LaBarge Common and Calpet Common Grazing Allotments, management of the following riparian areas will emphasize improving and maintaining vegetation production, water quality, wildlife and fisheries habitat, water availability to livestock, and soil stabilization:

Dry Piney Creek, Fogarty Creek, Dry Basin Draw, the Beaver Creeks, Pinegrove Creek, the Sawmill Creeks, Black Canyon, and Beaver Dam Creek.

Vegetation utilization will be monitored in these riparian areas and will be limited as follows:

- On the Dry Piney Creek, Dry Basin Draw and Beaver Creek riparian areas, utilization will be limited to no more than 40 percent of the current year's growth; and removed
- On the Fogarty Creek, Pinegrove Creek, Sawmill Creek, Black Canyon and Beaver Dam Creek riparian areas, utilization will be limited to no more than 50 percent of the current year's growth; and
- On all riparian zones in the CAP area, utilization targets will be changed from percentages of annual forage growth to stubble heights, when data on these relationships become available (i.e., when it is determined what height of riparian vegetation must remain at the end of the use or growing season to adequately meet the riparian management objectives).

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for groundwater management in the CAP area are to:

- determine the presence and extent of any groundwater contamination in the Big Piney-LaBarge area;
- determine lateral and vertical continuity of various water-bearing zones and possible avenues of contaminant movement;
- identify potential water supplies which could be used in the range, livestock grazing and wildlife management programs.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Drilling, casing and cementing, and plugging of wells will be done in accordance with the procedures and constraints detailed in Appendix F (*Methods of Protection of Ground Water During Drilling and Abandonment Operations*).

A three year groundwater monitoring program in the Big Piney-LaBarge oil and gas production area will be funded and initiated by the BLM. The monitoring procedures to be used are described in Appendix D.

The components of the monitoring program include:

- concentration of the monitoring on the upper aquifers of the Wasatch Formation and aquifers within the Paleozoic carbonate section of the Darby Thrust Plate;
- using existing water wells (Map 3) used by the oil and gas industry and water supply wells for the towns of LaBarge, Big Piney, and Marbleton as the main sampling sources;
- collecting samples for analysis from thirty sample sites twice a year (May and September);
- requiring more extensive analysis in areas where significant contamination is found;

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- holding the parties from whose facilities the contamination originates (if this can be determined) responsible for source detection and cleanup in a manner determined and agreed upon by the responsible parties, the Wyoming DEQ, and the BLM;
- reviewing the monitoring program after 3 years to evaluate findings, discuss problems, and to identify needed future actions and modifications of the monitoring program; and
- sharing and coordinating operation of the program, information collected, and any contamination problems or cleanup, with the operators, the public and the Water Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

SOILS AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for soil and watershed management in the CAP area are to:

- maintain or improve watershed conditions;
- maintain or enhance the quality of surface water;
- protect all perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral drainages from adverse impacts of surface disturbance;
- reduce salinity and sediment loading in all perennial streams;
- maintain or improve the condition of wetlands; and
- maintain soil stability and productivity.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Watershed Conditions

The general standard operating procedures for surface disturbing activities (Appendix A) will continue to be applied to control and reduce sedimentation and salinity problems.

The design, placement, construction and reclamation of surface disturbing activities, such as roads, well locations, range improvements, pipelines and other rights of way will be given paramount consideration to

ensure sedimentation and salinity contributions to stream channels in the area do not exceed EPA standards.

Construction and development activities for such things as roads, well locations, pipelines, and other types of rights of way will not be allowed within 50 to 100 feet of the channel or inner gorge of intermittent drainages, or within 500 feet of surface water or riparian areas. Exceptions will only be allowed in cases where detailed plans (e.g., engineering design, geotechnical analysis, etc.) demonstrate that the surface disturbance impacts on these areas can be mitigated.

Any needs for graveling, redesign, or seasonal closures of oil field roads will be coordinated with the oil field operators.

Livestock watering and salting facilities will be constructed or placed away from riparian and wetland areas to reduce grazing pressure impacts on these areas.

Cumulative Surface Disturbance

On highly erodible soils in the CAP area (Maps 4 and 5 and Appendix G), surface disturbance on slopes of 10 percent or greater will generally be prohibited. Exceptions will only be allowed in cases where detailed plans (e.g., engineering design, geotechnical analysis, etc.) demonstrate that the surface disturbance impacts on these sensitive areas can be mitigated.

If surface disturbance is allowed on highly erodible soils with slopes of 10 percent or greater, the area of "unreclaimed" surface disturbance will be limited to no more than 10 percent of the highly erodible soils within a watershed at any given time.

Implementation of the Tip Top watershed management plan will be continued to attain sufficient vegetative ground cover to check erosion and stabilize soils and gullies.

Baseline Monitoring

The water quality gaging station on Dry Piney Creek (located in Sec. 27, T. 28 N., R. 113 W.) will be monitored from April to September for the next 5 years to establish a temporal representation of water quality in the CAP area.

A sediment sampler will be installed in an undisturbed "control" watershed (about 500 acres located in parts of Sections 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, and 36, T. 28 N., R. 113 W. - See Map 11). The sampler will be monitored to determine the level of sediment load of an undisturbed watershed in the CAP area.

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No surface disturbance will be allowed in the control watershed for the next five years. As a control, the undisturbed surface condition of this watershed is needed for future evaluation of the effectiveness of management and management practices in the CAP area.

The acceptable increase in sediment load level in the CAP area is 10 percent. Should the management practices in the CAP area not be effective in controlling the sediment load at or reducing it to this level, it may be necessary to reduce surface disturbing activities in the CAP area or to employ different management practices or mitigation measures to reduce the sediment load to the acceptable level.

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objective for air quality management in the CAP area is to coordinate air resource and air quality management activities with the Wyoming DEQ and other state agencies, local governments, Indian Tribes and other interested federal agencies (e.g., USFS, FWS).

Planned Actions and Requirements

The BLM Rock Springs District will coordinate the design of a cooperative study plan to assess the status of air quality/visibility in the CAP area. Under technical advisement from the Wyoming DEQ, industry, and other interested parties, the extent and duration of any needed air quality monitoring for the CAP area will be determined.

Requirements to mitigate air quality impacts and to ensure compliance with state air quality standards will be included in BLM use authorizations in the CAP area on a case-by-case basis. This may include restrictions on venting and flaring of natural gas and requirements for dust abatement measures.

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for transportation management in the CAP area are to:

- provide adequate information for BLM and users planning and operations in the area;

- provide transportation coordination in the area with users and county and state governments;
- provide safe and adequate BLM roads in the area;
- protect scenic, cultural, and historic values;
- eliminate the proliferation of roads in the area; and
- ensure that designs, construction, maintenance activities, and recordkeeping for road projects in the area meet BLM and user needs and are performed in an acceptable manner.

These objectives will be accomplished in cooperation with the oil and gas industry, livestock operators, landowners, county and State agencies, and other users.

Planned Actions and Requirements

A transportation plan will be developed for the CAP area.

The BLM will complete an inventory of all existing roads and trails (Map 2) in the CAP area and will establish a minimum road network needed to support oil and gas operations and other uses in the area. Existing roads and trails will also be reviewed by the BPLWG to help identify and recommend opportunities for traffic management in the CAP area. The existing roads and trails and road network will be monitored and evaluated on a continuing basis.

In considering new road construction in the CAP area, minimizing road density will be a primary goal. All new roads on BLM administered public lands in the area will be designed to the appropriate BLM road standards (BLM Manual 9113) necessary for the intended road functions.

A comprehensive route analysis will be conducted on each new road proposal in the CAP area. The analysis will include consideration of such things as:

- road necessity;
- alternate routes;
- conformance of proposed road design with BLM standards;
- surface disturbance that will require special attention (e.g., highly erodable/wet/saturated soils, steep slopes, etc.);

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- need for additional engineering (e.g., slopes greater than 15 percent, road grade greater than 8 percent, bridges or drainage crossings, etc.).

BLM road standards (for drainage, safety, etc.) will also be employed in the course of maintaining, realigning, reconstructing, or closing existing roads on BLM administered public lands in the CAP area. The BLM will work with operators to identify those existing roads that must be upgraded to standards and those that are excess to needs and that must be closed and rehabilitated.

Roads and trails in areas of heavy big game use will be given priority consideration for seasonal travel restrictions. This will help establish zones for minimal human activity to help mitigate the impacts of winter vehicular traffic on big game animals.

Selected roads will be closed to public access, as needed, to protect wintering, breeding, or nesting wildlife from disturbance and stress during these critical periods. Road closures for these purposes will be accomplished with gates and signs stating, "Road Closed To Protect Wildlife." Exceptions will be allowed for essential access to service producing oil and gas wells, range improvements, etc. Exceptions will also be allowed for performance of essential duties of WGFD, BLM, law enforcement and other such personnel.

Areas where roads cross slopes greater than 15 percent in the CAP area have the highest potential for increased or accelerated erosion. These areas will be identified and will be matched with the erosive soils data in the soils technical report (Map 5 and Appendix G) for the CAP area to determine which areas to inspect and monitor. This will be an ongoing process associated with oil and gas field development.

Access to new oil and gas wells or drilling locations will be over existing roads whenever possible. Where new access is needed, erosive soils, steep slopes, and mountain shrub communities will be avoided to the extent possible to minimize impacts on watersheds, water and air quality, and wildlife habitat.

Lease and unit operators will close and reclaim approximately 110 miles of existing roads (see Map 2 for reclaimable roads and Appendix H for calculations). Reclamation of some of these roads started in 1989.

Proposals for new linear utility transmission facilities (e.g., pipelines, powerlines), and other linear right-of-way proposals will be evaluated using the criteria established in Appendix A. Locations where existing utility transmission lines are concentrated will be followed

wherever possible, if they serve to best avoid or reduce environmental impacts, while meeting general objectives for proposals. BLM will continue to monitor and evaluate utility transmission lines and other linear rights-of-way to identify where maintenance and additional mitigation efforts are needed.

SURFACE DISTURBANCE MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objective for management of surface disturbing activities in the CAP area is to protect sensitive resources and areas from adverse affects of surface disturbance and from disruptive human presence and activities. This includes, but is not limited to, protection of:

- streams from increased sedimentation and water quality degradation;
- wildlife from disruption during mating, nesting, calving, fawning, or wintering;
- threatened/endangered species and their habitats, and crucial wildlife habitat from disturbance or destruction;
- wetland/riparian habitat from degradation and loss;
- recreation sites and developments from disruption or removal;
- historic trails from physical and visual adverse impacts;
- watersheds from loss of soil material and vegetation cover causing increased erosion; and
- cultural sites from unmitigated adverse impacts.

Planned Actions and Requirements

It is recognized that, in most cases, surface disturbing and disruptive activities in environmentally sensitive areas can be accomplished economically and without unacceptable adverse environmental impact, with some advance planning and proper design. Therefore, the surface disturbance restriction is refined for use in the CAP area as follows:

- Any proposed activity or surface use that would involve surface disturbance or disrupt

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tive activities on BLM administered public lands in the CAP area (e.g., geophysical exploration or construction activities, such as roads, well pads, pumping or storage facilities, pipelines, etc.) must be accompanied by appropriate engineering design, geotechnical analysis, mitigation planning, etc. (Note that the term "disruptive" pertains primarily to human presence and related activities that may cause displacement of or excessive stress to wildlife during critical life-cycle periods.) This information must be of sufficient detail to demonstrate that the environmental aspects of concern will be adequately protected or that affects to them will be adequately mitigated. The following areas or situations may require more detailed or complex designs, plans or analyses:

- slopes in excess of 25 percent;
- within 500 feet of surface water and/or riparian areas;
- within one-quarter mile or the visual horizon (whichever is closer) of historic trails;
- construction with frozen material or during periods when the soil material is saturated or when watershed damage is likely to occur; and
- when the ground is frozen below the depth of usable topsoil to a maximum topsoil depth of one foot, and culverts and/or gravel cannot be installed to BLM standards.

Where proposed surface disturbing or disruptive activities may affect sensitive resources or areas, documented consideration of reasonable alternatives for avoiding the sensitive resources or areas will be required.

The following sensitive resources and areas are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities and, where appropriate, for disruptive activities:

- steep slopes or erodible soils (Maps 4 and 5);
- important wildlife habitat such as mountain shrubs (Map 6);
- streams, ponds, wetlands, or riparian areas (Map 6);
- crucial wildlife habitat (Maps 7 and 8);
- class II VRM areas (Map 11);

- historic trails (Map 11);
- intermittent/ephemeral drainages;
- recreation sites and developments; and
- cultural sites.

To the extent possible, these sensitive resources and areas will be avoided by surface disturbing activities associated with such actions as well drilling, construction of roads and other types of rights-of-way, etc. In cases where it is not possible to avoid these areas, intensive mitigation of the surface disturbing activities will be emphasized.

All surface disturbing activities will be subject to appropriate application of the General Standard Operating Procedures (Appendix A).

All removal and storage of construction spoil material will be according to approved engineering designs. Care will be taken to avoid mixing spoil and topsoil.

Erosion will be controlled on topsoil stockpiles through appropriate construction design and with seeding and/or mulching if necessary.

All management actions and authorized uses in riparian areas will comply with Executive Order (E.O.) 11988, *Floodplain Management*, E.O. 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, and the State of Wyoming water quality standards.

Where streams, riparian or wetland areas cannot be avoided:

- surface disturbance activities will be scheduled to occur during the driest period possible to minimize damage and to coincide with clearing operations;
- banks will be stabilized to limit erosion during the clearing operations;
- techniques that minimize damage to stream banks and channels will be used;
- channel stabilization evaluations will be completed during on-site inspections; and
- if sensitive riparian vegetation may be affected, site specific construction, stabilization, and reclamation criteria must be submitted to and approved by BLM before a use authorization will be issued.

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It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to comply with the construction practices and mitigating measures established by 33 CFR 323.4, which set forth the parameters of the "nationwide permit" required by Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. If the proposed action exceeds the parameters of the nationwide permit, the applicant shall obtain an "individual permit" from the appropriate office of the Corps of Engineers and provide BLM a copy of that permit prior to commencing actual construction. Failure to comply with this requirement shall be cause for revocation of an authorization.

VISUAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Objective

The visual resources management (VRM) objective in the CAP area is to maintain the general integrity of visual resources while allowing for modifications and changes needed to meet other resource objectives.

Planned Actions and Requirements

A program will be initiated to improve the visual quality of oil and gas fields in the CAP area. This will primarily involve coordinating and working with the companies to paint existing facilities to blend with the natural surroundings.

Projects of all types will generally be required to conform with the VRM objectives (Map 11). On a case-by-case basis, projects will be evaluated for their site specific and general impact to the visual quality of an area and mitigation measures will be developed to reduce or eliminate those impacts.

The BLM will conduct a detailed review of the existing VRM classifications in the CAP area to update, correct, refine and map the visual management classification areas. This will be done to identify areas with high visual quality values that need special management emphasis.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE USE MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for off-road vehicle (ORV) use in the CAP area are to:

- allow off-road vehicular travel where it is in conformance with the Pinedale RMP and where it is compatible with other resource management objectives in the area; and
- provide adequate protection from impacts of off-road vehicular use to sensitive resources and areas.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Off-road use of motorized vehicles in the entire CAP area is limited to existing roads and trails, except for over-the-snow vehicles.

This ORV designation is intended to prevent indiscriminate vehicular travel across roadless, undisturbed, steep or erosive terrain. It is not intended to prevent authorized actions, such as geophysical exploration, or the performance of necessary tasks, such as picking up game kills or maintaining range improvements.

Authorized actions, such as geophysical exploration, are subject to restrictions and mitigations that eliminate or reduce surface damage to acceptable levels. Typical mitigation measures that will be applied to geophysical exploration activities in the limited ORV use areas include:

- constructing barricades at seismic line intersections with roads to prevent future vehicle travel along the "seis" lines;
- prohibiting vehicular travel when the soil is saturated or during periods when significant watershed damage (e.g., erosion from rutting, formation of rills/gullies, etc.) is likely to occur.

COORDINATED ACTIVITY PLAN

During severe winter, high stress periods, when disruption of the wintering deer and antelope can have serious consequences, the deer and antelope crucial winter ranges in the CAP area will be closed to all unauthorized vehicular travel from November 15 through April 30, on an as-needed basis. This seasonal limitation will be implemented in consultation with the WGFD.

Vehicular use in the CAP area will be monitored periodically to determine actual vehicular use and public demands or needs for vehicular travel in the area. Monitoring will also include identifying needs for specific road closures and reclamation.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Objective

The recreation management objective for the CAP area is to accommodate existing recreational uses and to prevent or mitigate environmental impacts to recreational values in the area.

Planned Actions and Requirements

The BLM administered public lands within the CAP will be managed to provide public recreational opportunities, to the extent they are compatible with other resource management objectives and consistent with public safety requirements.

CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for management of cultural and paleontological resources in the CAP area are to:

- identify and protect cultural and paleontological resources;
- minimize conflicts between these resources and other resource uses;
- provide for appropriate mitigation of unavoidable adverse effects on cultural and paleontological resources; and

- provide for the scientific and educational use of cultural and paleontological resources.

Planned Actions and Requirements

The cultural resources management process described in Appendix I will be followed.

The provisions of the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails Management Plan will be followed for any actions affecting the Lander Road.

Paleontological and historical sites will be protected through the use of surface and subsurface protection stipulations and discretionary management authority.

Agreements which allow for orderly development of the oil and gas resources, while protecting National Register-eligible historic properties, will be pursued and implemented for the CAP area. Such (programmatic) agreements will take into account the needs of the cultural resource database and the levels of development proposed in the area. They will provide for avoiding redundant reviews and management actions and for the mitigation of adverse effects to any National Register-eligible historic properties affected by development activities. The BLM, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, project proponents, and other interested parties would be the participants in such agreements.

LANDS AND REALTY MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for lands and realty management in the CAP area are to support the goals and objectives of the other resource programs for managing the BLM administered public lands and to respond to public demand for land use authorizations.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Proposals for the disposal of public land will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Appendix J lists lands identified as suitable for consideration for disposal, exchange, and acquisition for community and industrial expansion.

Land exchange will be the preferred method for disposal or acquisition of public lands by BLM.

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Prior to taking any disposal action, an environmental analysis will be conducted on the proposal and the involved lands will be evaluated for compliance with the disposal criteria in Appendix J and for consistency with the Pinedale RMP.

Consideration will be given to obtaining legal public access to 440 acres of public surface surrounding the Sixty-Seven Reservoir. This action would enhance public recreation opportunities and BLM's ability to improve management of the riparian habitat at the site.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objective for forest management in the CAP area is to enhance health, productivity and biological diversity, and to improve wildlife habitat on the BLM administered forested lands in the CAP area, consistent with the forest management objectives in the Pinedale RMP and the 20-year Timber Harvest Schedule/Forest Management Plan for the Pinedale Resource Area.

Planned Actions and Requirements

About 70 acres of the 316 acre multi-aged Douglas-fir stand on the west side of Hogsback Ridge will be selectively harvested. About 22 percent of the total stand will be cut to improve stand conditions, by removing trees that are dead, infested, and susceptible to infestation by various diseases and insects, including the Douglas-fir beetle. This harvest constitutes approximately 7 percent of the 953 acres allocated to harvesting within the Deadline-Pinegrove Forest Management Unit (FMU), through the year 2008 (refer to the Pinedale RMP).

The harvest may be accomplished through various means available including, commercial timber or fire-wood sales, or individual fire wood permits.

The trees that are not cut within the harvest area will be left to provide a seed source for establishing new trees and to provide hiding cover and other habitat requirements for wildlife.

Prior to conducting the harvest, a site-specific environmental analysis and environmental assessment (EA) will be completed to incorporate the necessary restrictions and mitigation requirements for the project (in conformance with the Pinedale RMP).

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Objective

The objectives for fire management in the CAP area are to:

- protect public safety, life, and property; and
- provide the maximum benefits of prescribed fire to general resource management.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Fire management in the CAP area will be conducted in accordance with the fire management plan for the Rock Springs District.

Within the CAP area, priority safety consideration will be given to oil and gas operators; isolated residents; the communities of Big Piney, Marbleton, and LaBarge; and the satellite camps of Rainbow, Western, Calpet, and Dry Piney in times of wildfire. Prescribed burning projects will also be appropriately coordinated with these entities and with county and state fire organizations.

Prescribed fire will be a management option for vegetation manipulation (e.g., brush control, slash disposal, seedbed preparation, disease or insect control, vegetative species control, etc.) and other applicable resource management objectives.

Prescribed fire for vegetation manipulation will require an individual Prescribed Fire Management Plan, establishing a prescribed set of conditions, for each given treatment area. This will include provisions for avoiding smoke violations of air quality standards.

RECLAMATION/RECLAMATION MONITORING

Objective

The reclamation objective in the Cap area is to achieve soil stability and reduced runoff and erosion on disturbed lands in the area. This includes reestablishment of native vegetative ground cover, restoration and improvement of habitat and range conditions for wildlife, livestock grazing and watershed stability, and restoration of visual quality to meet established visual resource management objectives on all areas of surface disturbance.

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Planned Actions and Requirements

Improving the reclamation of disturbed lands in the area will be emphasized. Use of any measures to improve the success of reclamation efforts will be considered.

The BLM will consult with experts in the reclamation of sites which are similar to those in the CAP area to determine how revegetation and other reclamation practices for disturbed lands can be improved. Various vegetative seed mixtures and reclamation procedures, such as recontouring, planting or transplanting, will likely require some testing and monitoring to determine which practices are providing the best success and which may be adopted for improving reclamation results.

Reclamation procedures are described in Appendix A. These may be refined as the result of technical reviews for reclamation improvement.

BLM will require reclamation plans for proposals involving surface disturbance. Oil and gas exploration and development proposals will comply with 43 CFR 3164, Onshore Oil and Gas Order No. 1, Part III G, 4(b)(10); other related rights-of-way will comply with 43 CFR 2802.4(h) or 2882.3(m).

Well abandonment, and related reclamation will comply with the standard reclamation procedures described in Appendix A or as refined by technical reclamation reviews. See Map 2 for road and well locations and Appendix H for reclamation opportunity calculations.

All reclamation will be monitored (including the review of some past reclamation efforts) to track its effectiveness in, and to identify needed adjustments to, reaching the following revegetation and reclamation goals:

- immediate site stabilization to limit wind and water erosion;

- control of noxious weeds in cooperation with County weed and pest control programs;
- reestablishment of vegetation, consistent with site objectives for livestock, wildlife and watershed needs, with vigorous stands of self sustaining, desirable plant species; and
- reduction of visual contrast and enhancement of aesthetic values.

Reclamation monitoring will be a joint effort between the BLM and lessees/operators/permittees in the CAP area. Monitoring procedures for reclamation, water quality, wildlife, and rangeland vegetation are described in Appendix D.

MULTIPLE USE/RESOURCE MONITORING

Objective

The objectives for multiple use/resource monitoring in the CAP area are tracking and ensuring the effectiveness of all resource management in the area toward: (1) attaining the construction, operation, maintenance, and reclamation objectives associated with surface disturbing activities; (2) attaining the vegetative resource management objectives for the various resource and land uses in the area; and (3) conforming with the decisions of the Pinedale RMP.

Planned Actions and Requirements

Monitoring will be conducted and guided by procedures discussed in Appendix D and as required by 40 CFR 1500-1508, 43 CFR 1600 and 43 CFR 4120.