

# Wildlife Taskforce CBNG Monitoring Plan



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# OBJECTIVES

- Wyoming vs. Interstate
- Project Scale
- Basin Scale
- Triggers
- Research



# WYOMING VS. INTERSTATE

- MT ROD included Wildlife Monitoring & Protection Plan – WY did not.
- WY – Evaluated MT plan, base for WY
- Ready for Interstate



# MONITORING SCALES

- Project Level – Individual PODs
  - Responsibility largely transferred to proponents
  - Coordinated but Agency authority
- Basin Level
  - Emphasis of taskforce
  - Coordinated



# PROJECT SCALE

- Objectives
  - Baseline inventory
  - Monitor occupied habitat
- Focus Species
  - ESA listed, proposed, or candidate
  - Sensitive species
  - Other species of concern



# PROJECT SCALE TIMELINE

- Survey times are species dependent
- Autumn
  - Operators submit next year's plans
  - Meeting to review past survey year
- Winter
  - Agency provides survey requirements
  - Meeting to coordinate new survey year



# BASIN SCALE EIS REQUIRED

Task	Freq.	Agencies	Cost	Montana
Sage grouse	3 yrs	WGFD BLM USDAFS	\$30,000	Yes
Invasive weeds	5	BLM USDAFS	?	No
Raptors	5	BLM USDAFS WGFD	50,000	Yes

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# BASIN SCALE EIS REQUIRED

Task	Freq.	Agencies	Cost	Montana
Ute ladies'- tresses	Baseline	BLM USDAFS	\$10,000	No
Habitat change	2 yrs	BLM USDAFS WGFD	7,500	No

# BASIN SCALE ADDITIONAL

Task	Freq.	Agencies	Cost	Montana
Big game	As available	WGFD MTFWP	?	Yes
Migr. birds	5 yrs	BLM USDAFS WGFD	\$30,000	No
Reptiles	5	BLM USDAFS	10,000	No



# BASIN SCALE ADDITIONAL

Task	Freq.	Agencies	Cost	Montana
Sage grouse winter	3 yrs	WGFD BLM USDAFS	\$20,000	No
Small mammal	5 yrs	BLM USDAFS	10,000	No
Infrastr. change	2	BLM USDAFS	10,000	No



# BASIN SCALE TRIGGERS

- 10% change in 10 yrs or 3 consec. yrs.  
(populations or habitat)
- Biological Opinion triggers
  - 2 bald eagle mortalities
  - 1 bald eagle roost site
  - 1.5% (3,360 acres) of occupied mtn. plover habitat



# BASIN SCALE RESEARCH

- Current (Wyoming)
  - Sage grouse (BLM, UMT, UWY, MFWP, WGFD, MSU, others)
  - Prairie dog (USDAFS)
  - Burrowing owl (USDAFS)
  - Mountain plover (USDAFS)
  - Ferruginous hawk (USDAFS, BLM)
  - Bats (USDAFS)
  - Reptiles (USDAFS)



# BASIN SCALE RESEARCH

- Needs (Wyoming)
  - Mountain plover habitat use
  - Social/economic impacts on wildlife habitat
  - Bald eagle foraging habits
  - Raptor habitat use
  - Big game habitat use



# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- **Migratory Breeding Birds**

- Padlock Ranch/ Hanging Woman Creek completed in cooperation with Padlock Ranch, Montana Natural Heritage Program and BLM.
- Baseline Breeding Bird surveys completed in 2002 in cooperation with USGS, Biological Research Division.
- Breeding Bird inventory and trend surveys completed in 2002/03 in cooperation with USFS, Custer National Forest and University of Montana



# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- Sage Grouse:
  - Lek surveys are completed annually by BLM/FWP; project level surveys completed by project proponent.
  - Winter surveys completed by BLM in 2002/03.





# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- Bald Eagles

- Bald eagle nest occupancy and productivity is conducted annually by BLM/FWP and project proponents (nests within project boundary).
- Bald eagle winter populations were surveyed along Tongue River corridor by BLM (Wy. and Mt.) and Fidelity during winters of 2002/03 and 2003/04. Will continue.



# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- Mule Deer:
  - Mule deer (post winter) were surveyed as part of a cooperative effort between BLM, BIA, FWP and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Tribe. It is anticipated this and/or related projects will continue in the future.



# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- Prairie Dogs, Mountain Plover & Burrowing Owl
  - Prairie dog colonies were mapped in 2004 and surveyed for mountain plover and burrowing owl activity. Mountain plover surveys will continue in the future providing activity is documented.
  - A “model” was developed to identify potential mountain plover habitat with specific application to southeast Montana CBNG development areas. This was after it was determined that models developed for northeast Montana and Wyoming had little application in SE Montana. Extensive testing of the model will be conducted during the 2004 field season.



# INVENTORY & MONITOR (MT)

- **Raptors:**

- Raptors were inventoried within the CBNG development area (Big Horn County) in 2004. Productivity monitoring will continue in the future.

- **Reptiles/Amphibians:**

- Reptiles and amphibians will be surveyed within a 3 township study area (along Wyoming state line, from Crow Reservation to Badger Hills) in summer 2004. In addition, spiny softshell turtles will be sampled in Tongue River between Wyoming state line and T.R. Reservoir in 2004.



# RESEARCH

- SAGE GROUSE

- Sage grouse research continues in cooperation with Dr. David Naugle of the University of Montana and many partners. Monitoring-related aspects included in this project include lek attendance, nest success and productivity, habitat selection, disturbance factors, and West Nile Virus interactions.



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