

**GREATER SAGE-GROUSE MANAGEMENT-  
MONTANA PRB  
AS “PROPOSED” IN THE  
SUPPLEMENTAL EIS**

POWDER RIVER IWG MEETING  
JULY 10-11, 2008  
BUFFALO, WYOMING

## The overall goal of the SEIS specific to sage-grouse is:

- Maintaining connectivity of habitats
- Manage habitat to maintain healthy sage-grouse populations to serve as source populations

## To meet this goal

- BLM would implement adaptive management based on available science and monitoring information, and
- BMPs and alternative development scenarios would be required as COAs.

**Management will be based on whether the habitat is considered to be a part of**

- Crucial Habitat Areas (polygons), or
- Non-crucial Habitat Areas

# CRUCIAL HABITAT AREAS

## Management Direction

- Maintain sage-grouse habitats so population trends follow the general magnitude of the control leks,
- Changes in management would occur if male attendance on leks within two miles of CBNG development declines by 25% over 5 years,
- Changes in management may also be made if lesser declines occur in a period of less than 5 years.

## Crucial Habitat area mgmt direction (continued)

- Management actions could include not authorizing or limiting the number of federal wells, roads and infrastructure or restricting the timing of operations,
- Increased development could occur if populations increase or remain stable
- Threshold could be refined prior to POD approval, and
- Level of development would be based on science, professional judgment and/or monitoring data to determine acceptable levels of development

# NON-CRUCIAL HABITAT AREAS Management Direction

- Maintain connectivity by reducing fragmentation
- Minimization of disturbance to seasonal habitats
- BMPs used to minimize surface disturbance and possibly incorporated into COAs

## **In order to meet the objectives for sage-grouse habitat management**

- Industry would be required in their POD submittal to demonstrate/identify what specific actions they would undertake to conserve sage-grouse



# Expectations may include

- Avoid loss of sagebrush, especially within linear routes
- Avoid construction of perching structures
- Keep noise levels to less than 10 decibels above background noise at active leks
- Bury powerlines where feasible
- Produced water will be managed to minimize potential for outbreaks of West Nile virus
- Avoidance of seasonal habitats

**BLM management may be modified if monitoring data indicates a change in wildlife populations on or adjacent to POD areas. For example:**

- Authorizations not given
- Pace of development in crucial habitats could be altered
- Reductions in the number of vehicle trips allowed
- Restricting access to non-mineral related vehicle use
- Modifying reclamation requirements

\*\*If sage-grouse populations remain constant or increase when compared to populations associated with control leks, additional development could be authorized,

- If new crucial habitat areas are identified, they will be managed as defined in this document

# Challenges/Concerns

- Identification of leks to use as controls
- A lag effect of 4-5 years between development and sage-grouse response
- Managing for “connectivity”
- If development is shifted or pushed to other areas, what is the impact to other crucial habitats, for example crucial big game winter ranges

# Where From Here?

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- Waiting on comments from the WO
- Final should be printed and distributed in August/September, 2008
- Record of Decision in February, 2009