Appendix E
Greater Sage-Grouse Mitigation Blueprint

This page intentionally left blank.

Mitigation Blueprint for Greater Sage-Grouse
Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project
May 2013

INTRODUCTION

The following Greater sage-grouse (sage-grouse) conservation strategy framework (Blueprint) was developed to minimize the amount and significance of impacts from the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (Project) to sage-grouse. This Blueprint has been cooperatively developed by project stakeholders (see Appendix A); it has been updated periodically and is intended to be a living document, which will see further revisions. The Blueprint's foundational principles and standards offer a basis from which impacts can be assessed and successful mitigation opportunities can be implemented.

The Blueprint is meant to guide the development of impact assessment and mitigation packages. Through this process approaches that are slightly different than those described in this Blueprint may be determined to be necessary and desirable; however, at no time should such modifications result in significant deviations from the underlying tenets and goals of the ODFW's Greater Oregon Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon (SGCS)[1], ODFW's Oregon Sage-Grouse Mitigation Framework for Sage-grouse Habitats (SGMF)[2], ODFW's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Policy[3], Federal Alternative of Governor C.L. Otter for Greater Sage-Grouse Management in Idaho[4], BLM sage-grouse policies including BLM Instructional Memorandum (IM) 2012-043 Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures and IM 2012-44 National Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Planning Strategy (collectively referred to as BLM IMs), or of the principles, standards, and other considerations described below. The BLM has not yet acted on Governor Otter's Federal Alternative but it does provide policy guidance for Idaho.

Therefore, this Blueprint will provide the basis for a Project-specific sage-grouse habitat mitigation plan (HMP) that when initially prepared, will provide an overview of mitigation opportunities. The HMP will be refined throughout the permitting process.

The goals of this Blueprint are to:

1) Create common understanding and expectations among the Project proponents, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the Bureau of Land

[1] Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 22 April 2011. *Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon: A Plan to Maintain and Enhance Populations and Habitat*.
[2] Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. March 2012. *Implementing Habitat Mitigation for Greater Sage-Grouse Under the Core Area Approach*. Prepared by C.A. Hagen.
[3] Fish and Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Policy. Oregon Administrative Rules 635.415.000-635.415.0025.
[4] Federal Alternative of Governor C.L. Butch Otter for Greater Sage-Grouse Management in Idaho. 5 Sept 2012.

Management (BLM), and other stakeholders about the standards, methods, time-frames and other considerations that will guide the development of a HMP; and

2) Inform the adequacy of the HMP, including any impact assessments and proposed sage-grouse compensatory mitigation actions for the Project.

Sage-grouse Habitat Types

In Oregon, BLM developed its preliminary priority habitat (PPH) and preliminary general habitat (PGH) map based in large part on the ODFW Sage Grouse Core Areas Map. All Core Area habitats are classified as PPH. For PGH, all of the Low Density habitat area is included. Because ODFW's Low Density habitat layer does not include all currently occupied sage-grouse habitat, as modeled by Durtsche et al. (2010), BLM added these areas to its PGH layer.

In Idaho, BLM developed its PPH/PGH map based on sage-grouse breeding density, connectivity, and habitat criteria. In general, the higher quality and/or most heavily used habitats are classified as PPH while other occupied habitats are designated PGH. The State of Idaho has identified sage-grouse habitats in the West Owyhee Conservation Area as Core, Important and General habitat zones. The General habitat zone designation by the State of Idaho and PGH by the BLM are comparable.

For the purposes of this Blueprint, we will refer to Core Habitat, Low Density, and PGH habitat types. Idaho BLM does not use the terms "core" or "low density" in their sage-grouse management designations; however, for the purposes of the Project, the term Core Habitat will be adopted by Idaho BLM to represent PPH while Oregon's low density, a subset of PGH, may be used synonymously with Idaho PGH to collectively refer to PGH habitat in general. Complete definitions of habitat types can be found in Appendix C.

GENERAL MITIGATION PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS, AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Project's design should adhere to the following standard hierarchy for mitigation:

1. *Avoidance*: Measures taken to prevent damage to ecosystem services from the outset of a project (e.g. spatial or temporal placement of infrastructure to prevent the degradation of wildlife habitat). A specific Project example is designing the Project's features and operations to avoid impacts to sage-grouse Core Habitat and, to the extent practicable, Low Density and PGH habitat areas.
2. *Minimization*: Measures taken to reduce the duration, timing, intensity and/or extent of impacts that cannot be completely avoided. A specific Project example includes efforts to minimize Project impacts in sage-grouse habitats by using seasonal timing stipulations for construction.
3. *Rehabilitation / Restoration*: Measures taken to rehabilitate / restore degraded habitats following exposure to impacts that cannot be completely avoided and/or minimized. A specific Project example is restoration of sage-grouse habitats impacted during temporary construction activities.

4. *Compensatory Mitigation (also referred to as "offset")*: Measures taken to compensate for any remaining adverse impacts that cannot be avoided or minimized in order to achieve no net loss or a net gain of ecosystem services. Compensatory mitigation can include the restoration of degraded habitats, improvement of marginal habitats, creation of new habitats, protection of threatened habitats, or a combination thereof. Offsets can occur in the form of the following types:
    a. "in-kind", involving replacement or substitution of resources that are of the same type and kind as those being impacted;
    b. "out-of-kind" involving replacement or substitution of resources that result in different habitat structure and function that may benefit the species other than those existing at the site prior to disturbance;
    c. "in proximity" means habitat mitigation measures undertaken within or in proximity to areas affected by a development action[5];
    d. "off-site" involving mitigation actions outside the boundary of the project;
    e. "mitigation bank" means habitat that is restored, created, or enhanced for the purpose of selling habitat credits in exchange for anticipated unavoidable future habitat loses due to development actions; and
    f. "in-lieu fee" program.

For the Oregon portion of this Project, sage-grouse habitat impacts likely will occur within several sagebrush habitat types, which require a variety of mitigation actions to achieve "no net loss with a net benefit[6]" for sage-grouse habitat impacts.

The following principles and standards (P&S), as well as the remainder of this Blueprint, focus on the last step of the mitigation hierarchy and will inform the development of sage-grouse compensatory mitigation actions for the Project. The P&S serve as guidance for:

1. Determining the types and amounts of development action impacts and associated mitigation obligations; and
2. Selecting the habitat restoration, enhancement, protection and other management actions necessary to satisfy the project's mitigation obligations.

Project mitigation actions that substantially deviate from these P&S may not be adequate or supportable in terms of issues related to sage-grouse. However, given the BLM's

[5] ODFW's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Policy (635-415-0025). http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/415.pdf.

[6] ODFW's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Policy (635-415-0025) requires that mitigation for impacts to Category 2 habitat "… achieve no net loss of either pre-development habitat quantity or quality. In addition, a net benefit of habitat quantity or quality must be provided."

current national planning effort and continuing research on sage-grouse, other mitigation requirements and/or options may be identified in the draft HMP.

Habitat Delineation and Calculation of Mitigation Acres

Habitat delineation in Oregon will be initially based on mapping conducted by the BLM and ODFW to identify Core and Low density/PGH areas. The initial areas identified by the BLM and ODFW will be reviewed and habitat categories, based on ODFW's categories as described in the ODFW Habitat Mitigation Policy (i.e. OAR 635-415-0025), will be identified for all sage-grouse habitat in Oregon. In Idaho, sage-grouse habitats will be delineated by the BLM and IDFG to identify General/PGH, Important, Core, and PPH areas. Ecological site data will also be used to identify and delineate habitats in Oregon and Idaho.

ODFW's SGMF identifies habitat disturbance weightings that will be used for the purposes of calculating mitigation acres. To assess the likely contribution of mitigation actions towards "no-net-loss" the SGMF recommended that three key elements are considered: additionality, probability of success, and time lag to conservation maturity. Additionality is defined as a mitigation action's new contribution to conservation in addition to existing values. Probability of success is defined as likelihood that a mitigation action will deliver expected conservation benefits. Time lag to conservation maturity is evaluated as the length of time for a mitigation action to deliver conservation at a maturity level (or ecological state) similar to that which was lost at the impact site. Per the guidance of Governor Otter's federal alternative in Idaho, sage-grouse populations and their habitats will also be assessed.

Mitigation Siting

Conservation actions should be located where efforts have the greatest likelihood of producing the required benefits. In Oregon, generally, such locations will include priority sage-grouse areas identified via SGCS planning efforts, areas that supplement or expand existing protected areas or that serve to increase the connectivity between such areas, designated *Conservation Opportunity Areas,* etc. In Idaho, priorities will focus within or near PPH, and in accordance with best science.

Mitigation actions are more likely to be meaningful to conservation of sage-grouse if they are aggregated; larger contiguous parcels are preferred and small isolated sites will rarely suffice. In all cases, the aggregated mitigation areas must be large enough so that they will, either in themselves or in conjunction with adjacent landscape conditions, provide the targeted biological benefits. Mitigation actions that are not readily measured in acres (e.g., fence removal or marking) will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Mitigation should not be located in areas directly impacted by the Project or in areas where the success of the actions or maintenance of the required benefits are likely to be obviated over time by incompatible land-uses.

Actions proposed as mitigation must provide benefits beyond those that would already be achieved under other applicable regulations and/or land-use management plans.

Ecological Uplift

Actions proposed as mitigation should result in an improvement to the baseline condition (or uplift) of the lands on which those actions occur, commensurate with the amount and types of impacts (e.g. occupancy, productivity, connectivity, etc.). Merely maintaining existing conditions on proposed mitigation sites, even if such conditions support species needs, does not result in true offsets to Project impacts, as an overall net loss to the species would remain. For this reason, acquisition and protection of a site as the sole conservation action will typically not result in adequate mitigation; additional restoration and enhancement actions will most often be necessary.

Use of Public Lands for Mitigation

1. Actions proposed as mitigation on public lands should not serve as the primary/dominant means of compensating for the Project's impacts on private lands.
2. To the extent actions on public lands are proposed to mitigate for Project impacts on public or private lands, the actions should enhance the biological values of the public lands beyond those already provided by the existing public land management program and that are expected to be implemented within a reasonable time frame. In other words, the mitigation value assigned to the proposed management actions should be based only on those biological conditions that are supplemental or additive to conditions that would be derived from existing, planned, or anticipated public programs if they are funded.
3. However, universal adherence to the above constraints may not be practicable or advisable when: 1) appropriate mitigation opportunities on private lands are not available; 2) land management policies require that impacts incurred on public lands are also mitigated on public lands; and 3) while some biological conditions associated with proposed mitigation on public lands would otherwise be provided through planned or required public programs, actual attainment of the desired conditions is unlikely because of funding constraints or other obstacles[7].

Mitigation Timeframes

Most mitigation frameworks require that actions proposed as mitigation achieve targeted biological conditions in a timeframe commensurate with both the life of the project and the life of the associated biological impacts. ODFW's Habitat Mitigation Policy states: "Mitigation must be effective throughout the project life or the duration of project impacts, whichever is greater"; and "Mitigation goals and standards must be achieved within a reasonable time frame to benefit the affected species."

[7] For example, in the subsequent HMP the proponent may propose funding actions identified in land management plans that do not have, and are not expected to have, funding within a reasonable time as mitigation options.

With respect to sage-grouse and their habitat, some impacts may persist beyond the operational life of the Project, or there is significant uncertainty as to the persistence of the impacts. Therefore:

1. It should be assumed that most Project impacts to sagebrush habitat are long-term or permanent in nature.
2. The benefits derived from proposed mitigation actions must therefore also be long-term or permanent in nature.

Because most impacts typically begin to occur in the very early stages of a project (i.e. construction and initial operations), the benefits of the Project's proposed mitigation actions must also begin to accrue as early in the life of the Project as possible; implementation of mitigation actions should be heavily "front-loaded" to facilitate this. Any time lags that will exist between the occurrence of impacts and attainment of benefits, either due to the nature or schedule of the mitigation actions, should be compensated for via additional mitigation.

Assurances of Implementation

1. The Project's HMP should include regulatory, financial, and legal mechanisms that assure that each mitigation action's target biological conditions, for a time period commensurate with impacts, for sage-grouse will be attained and maintained as necessary.
2. These "Assurances of Implementation" requirements generally preclude consideration of actions that are voluntary, subject to easily changeable land use/management regimes, or not accompanied by secured finances.
3. The most critical "Assurances of Implementation" issues are related to: retention of habitat conditions achieved through mitigation for a time period commensurate with impacts; and securing funding in amounts sufficient for establishment and long-term management and monitoring of the mitigation actions. Therefore, on non-federal land, assurances of appropriate management should be provided, preferably through acquisition of permanent conservation easements held by a qualified land protection entity or the project proponent.

Mitigation actions should be proposed within land-use designations or classifications that will not allow for other management or uses that would degrade, delay, or otherwise undermine establishment and long-term maintenance of desired sage-grouse conservation attributes. Assurances of appropriate management constraints should be provided. During interim periods in which agency management plan amendment processes are underway, clear policy guidance documents (e.g., Instructional Memorandum) should be in place to provide these assurances.

Financing of Mitigation

The amount of financing provided to deliver the entire mitigation action (interim and perpetual actions) should be determined by an appropriate cost-analysis such as a Property Analysis Record (PAR) or equivalent method.

The source(s) of financing adequacy[8] for the interim and perpetual/long-term operation, management, monitoring and documentation associated with the mitigation should be identified and secured. All funds should be held in dedicated accounts and managed based on agreed-to terms to assure that target ecological conditions will be attained and maintained as necessary. When funds are due, management terms will be determined by the state and federal permitting processes and any third-party (e.g., mitigation bank, in-lieu fee) agreement conditions.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS FOR SAGE-GROUSE

The amount of impact and associated mitigation will be measured as described in the SGMF[9]. Non-Low Density PGH sage-grouse habitat in Oregon and PGH in Idaho will be assessed on a case by case basis based on existing habitat condition and possibly habitat potential.

The impact assessments pertinent to the Project include:

1. Determining Project-related road impacts to sage-grouse from new, improved and/or expanded existing roads based on "distance band" and "habitat disturbance" calculations. Road impacts are further weighted based on whether the Project's road use is low, moderate, or high traffic volume; and
2. Determining Project-related transmission line impacts to sage-grouse based on "habitat disturbance" weightings and graduated distance bands that are parallel to the transmission line.

The resulting calculations will identify sage-grouse habitat that is impacted by the Project. Impacts shall be identified by ODFW and BLM habitat categories (e.g., Category 2, PPH, etc.). When distance bands for roads and transmission lines overlap, impacts will not be "double-counted". In other words, only new or expanded existing roads outside of the buffer used to calculate impacts from the transmission line (i.e. 0.6 mile) will be assessed for impacts.

To account for habitat quality, consistency with the SGMF will also require an evaluation of "ecological site data and current vegetation condition". The Project's ecological site data assessment methodology will result in a calculation of the amounts and types of specific habitat attributes adversely affected within the overall Project impact area. This

[8] Adequacy is defined as funding necessary to carryout agreed to offset actions and perpetual/long-term operation, management, monitoring, remedial actions, permitting, planning and reporting.

[9] SGMF incorporates by reference the ODFW Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy and ODFW Sage-Grouse Mitigation Framework.

is necessary to ensure that mitigation results in enhancement actions that achieve net benefits commensurate with the type and amounts of Project impacts. Specific mitigation areas and management actions can then be selected to most effectively achieve enhancements commensurate with Project impacts.

IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF MITIGATION ACTIONS AND LOCATIONS

The final HMP will identify specific mitigation sites and management actions. The Preliminary and Final HMP will demonstrate that mitigation actions are:

1. Available and on a scale that is meaningful to conservation;
2. Reasonably certain to be initiated within the time frames established through the federal and state permitting processes; and
3. Mutually agreed upon by project proponents and agencies.

While the final HMP's suite of sage-grouse mitigation actions is expected to be based on the identification of SAGR mitigation areas and management actions, it may not necessarily include them in their entirety.

Mitigation Areas and Actions

Per the SGMF, the following general guidance details what criteria should be used when identifying a potential sage-grouse mitigation area. In selecting the Mitigation Area(s), preference will be given for sites that contribute positively to the population that is being impacted. Mitigation sites should be prioritized and selected based on the following criteria (in order of preference):

1. Core Areas that occur within a Conservation Opportunity Area (COA) or other landscapes with on-going sage-grouse conservation actions;
2. Core Areas that occur outside of a COA;
3. Low Density/PGH Areas that occur within a COA or other landscapes with ongoing sage-grouse conservation actions; and
4. Low Density Areas/PGH that occur outside of a COA.

Mitigation Areas and actions will result in improved sage-grouse habitat conditions for the life of the Project effects (i.e. for the duration of the time that the transmission line and access roads exist and any additional time to recover the impacted habitat to pre-disturbance habitat quality conditions including use of restored habitats by sage-grouse).

Mitigation Areas that can be geographically consolidated into a contiguous parcel at a landscape level are preferred to isolated parcels; that can be managed for sage-grouse over the long-term; and have a reasonable probability of attaining and maintaining the HMP objectives are preferred.

Mitigation Areas that are proposed on private lands will only be pursued if the landowner is willing to sell or enter into a conservation easement. This Blueprint does not set or dictate the price Idaho Power will pay for conservation easements or land purchases and Idaho Power will not be expected to use eminent domain to acquire property.

Mitigation Areas and actions should address habitat factors that may be limiting sage-grouse use and population growth in the area.

Mitigation Areas and actions should provide new contribution to conservation and/or habitat quality and/or quantity relative to the existing conservation and/or habitat value, and consider the time lag to the conservation maturity of selected actions (i.e. a shorter time to provide habitat is preferred over a longer-time frame). This is evaluated as the length of time for a mitigation action to deliver conservation at a maturity level (or ecological state) similar to what was lost at the impact site.

Mitigation Areas shall not occur in any location directly impacted by the Project.

Management actions that will be undertaken in the Mitigation Area(s) will be designed to: a) enhance the baseline condition of the habitat within the Mitigation Area commensurate with the types and amounts of adverse effects identified in the impact assessment and ecological evaluation and to attain the "net benefit" standard of the SGMF; b) protect and maintain the habitat and other biological attributes required for mitigation within the Mitigation Area for the life of the Project or the Project's impacts, whichever is greater; and c) enhance broader areas of the Project for sage-grouse.

In selecting management actions, these are examples of allowable mitigation that can be considered:

1. Habitat-related factors that may be limiting population growth of sage-grouse in the area will be given a higher priority;
2. Actions to improve habitat quality (not in order of preference), such as:
    a. Control human access that compromises habitat effectiveness;
    b. Eradicate or reduce existing invasive weeds;
    c. Fence removal, marking, or modification in high risk areas within priority sage-grouse habitat based on proximity to areas where sage-grouse are concentrated and topography;
    d. General improvement of sage-grouse habitat condition through revegetation efforts, particularly in habitats that appear to be limiting for sage-grouse populations:
        i. Conduct sagebrush treatments where needed that specifically benefit sage-grouse in areas with relatively higher shrub cover (>25%). These should not be located in winter habitat and should follow ODFW recommendations (Hagen 2011).

ii. Convert crested wheatgrass seedings back to sagebrush with an understory of native grasses and forbs.

iii. Reestablishment of sagebrush with a native understory in wildfire areas.

e. Implementation of grazing management techniques that could improve sage-grouse habitat conditions on private lands;

f. Juniper removal, preferentially treating Phase 1 and 2 over Phase 3[10];

g. Maintain the habitat and other attributes, through monitoring and adaptive management, required for mitigation after the improvements have been attained and for the duration required to meet success criteria specified in the HMP and/or permit authorizations.

h. Prevent or minimize invasive weed establishment;

i. Provide buffers around existing sage-grouse habitat to minimize or reduce threats.

j. Reduce risk of wildfire through an appropriate combination of fuel break placement in cooperation with the land-managing agency, and invasive species reduction;

k. Re-establish habitat connectivity or improve sage-grouse habitat in areas to maintain habitat connectivity (e.g. restore sagebrush, increase patch size and/or connectivity, etc);

IMPLEMENTATION, MANAGEMENT, AND MONITORING

The draft and final HMP will identify a schedule and sequence for implementing restoration of temporarily and permanently impacted areas and mitigation site actions. The implementation schedule will identify timeframes for securing mitigation lands and for implementing mitigation actions on those sites.

The final HMP will identify the timeframes for each mitigation action to attain the full habitat attributes required to offset the Project's impacts. Specific success criteria should be developed that describe habitat attributes. The desired ecological outcomes will be based on the results of the impact assessment and ecological evaluation, both referenced earlier in this document, and on the overall goal of the SGMF for achieving a "net benefit" with mitigation.

The final HMP will identify an overall management plan for the mitigation actions that details how mitigation areas will be managed and how enhancement actions will be implemented and monitored.

[10]Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. 2007. *Western Juniper Management: A Field Guide*. Prepared by Hugh Barrett, CSR Natural Resources Consulting, Inc

The Proponent will be responsible for monitoring whether mitigation and associated management actions are implemented as stated in the HMP ("implementation monitoring"), and immediately address any inconsistencies. The Proponent will also monitor the response of vegetation to impact site restoration and mitigation site actions, to confirm the targeted ecological outcomes are being achieved ("effectiveness monitoring"). Monitoring will also be used to identify mitigation actions that are not achieving the desired result and remedial actions will be developed and implemented.

The final HMP will include scientifically accepted methods of monitoring vegetation and sage-grouse, and a detailed regime for monitoring and assessing attainment of targeted ecological outcomes.

The Proponent will report the monitoring findings and recommendations as required by the state and federal permitting process. The report will describe all habitat mitigation and management actions carried out during the reporting year, and all remedial management work performed in response to monitoring actions. The report will include an evaluation of mitigation success in meeting ecological targets, and a description of the methods used to perform the evaluation.

Appendix A: Blueprint Contributors

Bureau of Land Management: Tim Carrigan, Michelle Caviness, Glenn Frederick, Paul Makela, Holly Orr, John Rademacher, Renee Straub, Melissa Yzquierdo

Idaho Fish & Game: Rick Ward

Idaho Power Company: Stacey Baczkowski

Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife: Greg Jackle, Autumn Larkins, Nick Myatt, Nigel Siedel

US Fish & Wildlife Service: Suzanne Anderson, Jeff Everett, Gary Miller, Jeri Wood, Doug Young

Appendix B: References

- IM 2011-61 Solar and Wind Energy Applications – Pre-Application and Screening (includes ROW direction)
- IM 2010-71 Gunnison and Greater Sage-grouse Management Considerations for Energy Development
- IM 2008-204 BLM Policy for Offsite Mitigation
- Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon: A plan to Maintain and Enhance Populations and Habitat (ODFW 2011 GRSG Plan)
- Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan and ROD

- Bureau of Land Management Wildlife Manual, 6840-Special Status Species Management
- A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures (produced by the Sage-grouse National Technical Team, December 21, 2011)
- ODFW Habitat Mitigation Framework for Sage-Grouse Habitats: Implementing Habitat Mitigation for Greater Sage-Grouse Under the Core Area Approach, March 20, 2012.
- Ecology and Conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse: A Landscape Species and Its Habitats In: Studies in Avian Biology, No. 38 (2011)
- 50 CFR Part 17, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; 12-Month Findings for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) as Threatened or Endangered.
- Bureau of Land Management National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy (November 2004) and BLM Guidance for the Management of Sagebrush Plan Communities for Sage-Grouse Conservation (November 2004).
- Owyhee Field Office RMP (Current)
- Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee 2006)
-
- Federal Alternative of Governor C.L. Butch Otter for Greater Sage-Grouse Management in Idaho (September 5, 2012)
- Memorandum of Understanding between State of Idaho and BLM, US Forest Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services, and Natural Resources Conservation Service dated July 6, 2006
- Idaho BLM Information Bulletin 2010-039 (Seasonal Wildlife Restrictions and Procedures for Processing Requests for Exceptions on Public Lands in Idaho)
- IM ID-2009-006 (expired 9/30/2011): Policy Statement on the Implementation of the Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho.

Appendix C: Definitions

Additionality: a mitigation action's new contribution to conservation in addition to existing values.

Core Area – Oregon: All sagebrush types or other habitats that support greater sage grouse that are encompassed by areas: (a) of very high, high, and moderate lek density strata; (b) where low lek density strata overlap local connectivity corridors; or (c) where winter habitat-use polygons overlap with either low lek density strata, connectivity corridors, or occupied habitat. (ODFW 4/2011, page 82).

Core Habitat Zone (CHZ) – Idaho: The CHZ represents strongholds for sage-grouse populations in Idaho and supports the largest populations, as well as the highest breeding densities of sage-grouse in Idaho. These areas include approximately sixty-five percent (65%) of the known active leks and are occupied by approximately seventy-three percent

(73%) of male sage-grouse counted at leks throughout Idaho's Sage-Grouse Management Area (SGMA).

General Habitat Zone (GHZ) – Idaho: The GHZ generally includes few active leks, and fragmented or marginal habitat.

Important Habitat Zone (IHZ) – Idaho: The IHZ includes approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the known active leks and are occupied by an estimated twenty-two percent (22%) of sage-grouse males. This management zone generally captures high-quality habitat and populations necessary for providing a management buffer for the CHZ, connecting patches of the CHZ, and supporting important populations and habitat independent of the CHZ.

Low Density Area – Oregon: All sagebrush types or other habitats that support greater sage grouse that are encompassed by areas where: (a) low density strata overlapped with seasonal connectivity corridors; (b) local corridors occurred outside of all lek density strata; (c) low lek density strata occur outside of connectivity corridors; and (d) seasonal connectivity corridors occur outside of all lek density strata (ODFW 4/2011, page 83).

Preliminary General Habitat (PGH): comprises areas of occupied seasonal or year-round habitat outside of priority habitat. These areas have been identified by the BLM in coordination with respective state wildlife agencies.

Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH): comprises areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable Greater Sage-Grouse populations. These areas would include breeding, late brood-rearing, and winter concentration areas. These areas have been identified by the BLM in coordination with respective state wildlife agencies.

This page intentionally left blank.