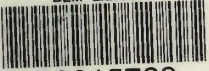


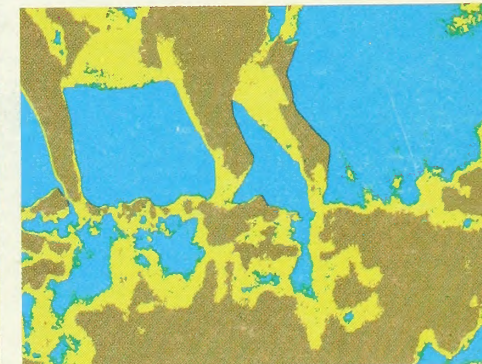
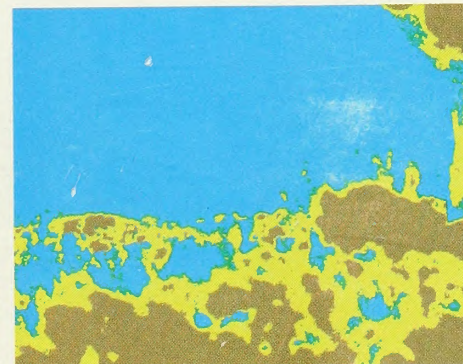
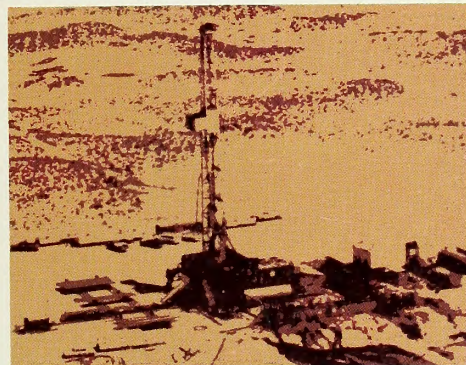
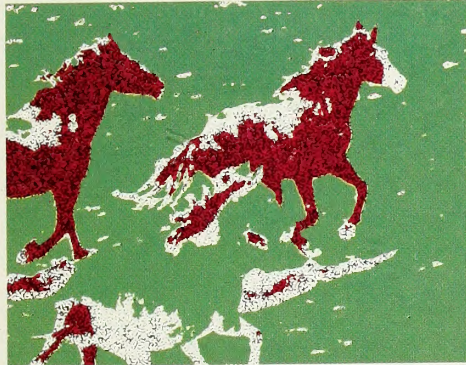
# WYOMING Land Use Decisions

## Salt Wells & Pilot Butte Area Rock Springs District

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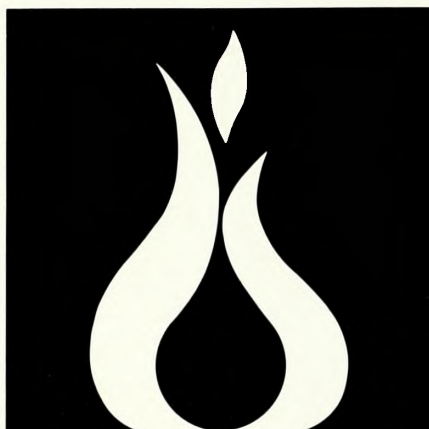


LANDS

MINERALS

FOREST  
PRODUCTS

RANGE  
MANAGEMENT



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WILD,  
FREE-ROAMING  
HORSES

WATERSHED

RECREATION

WILDLIFE

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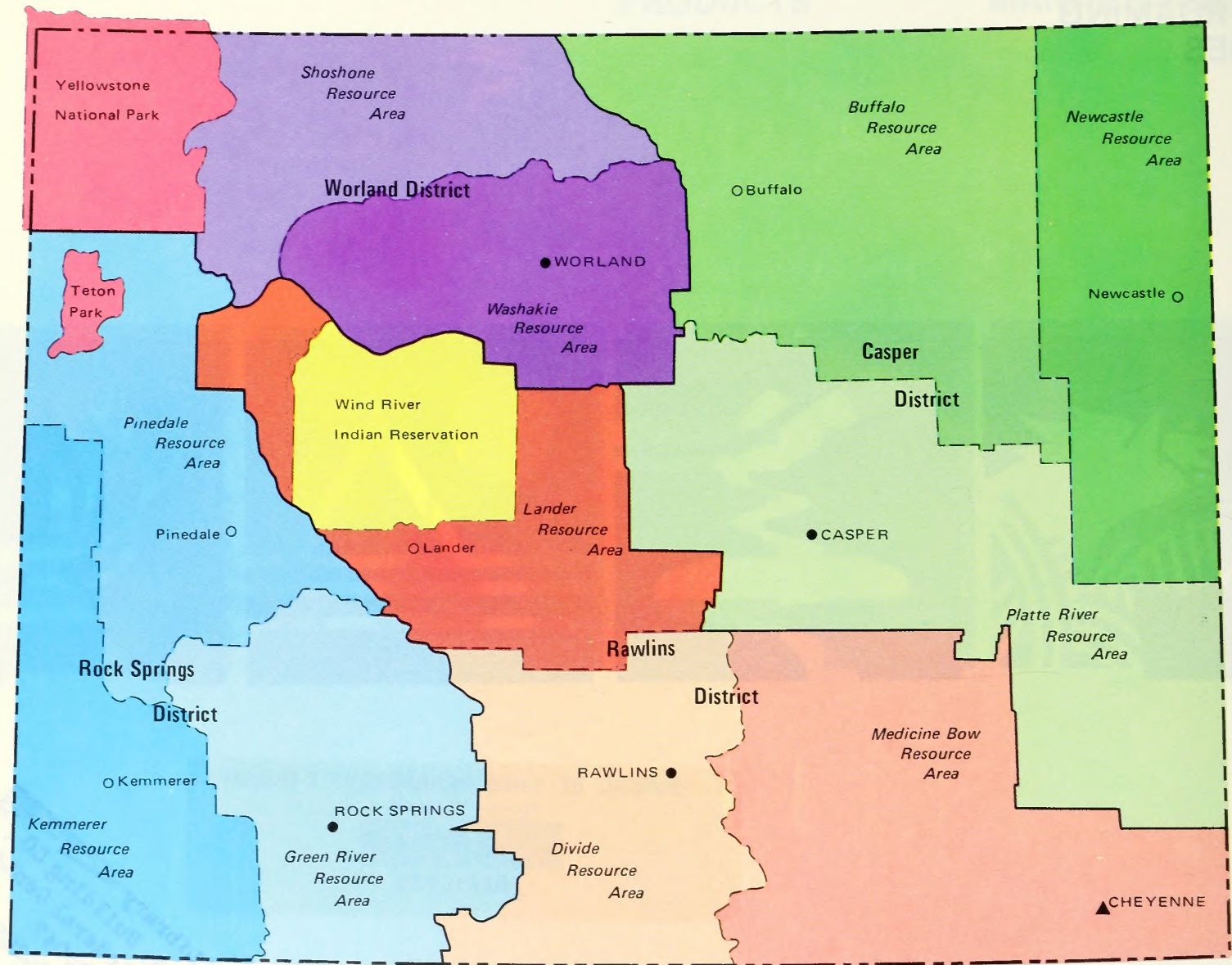


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- - - Resource Area Boundary
- District Office
- Detached Resource Area Headquarters (All Other Based at District Office)
- ▲ Wyoming State Office



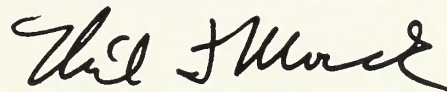
## PURPOSE

This brochure summarizes land use decisions in the management framework plan (MFP) for the Salt Wells-Pilot Butte planning unit.

Because of the large number and complexity of these decisions, it is impossible to present them all. We have, therefore, summarized only the more significant decisions in each resource activity.

Salt Wells-Pilot Butte plan, with related documents, is available at the area office in Kemmerer. You are invited to visit and review it at your convenience. Ken Harrison, Kemmerer resource area manager, as well as my staff and I are available to discuss the decisions and assist you in reviewing the document.

Again, I thank all the persons, organizations, and governmental agencies which contributed so significantly to this project. Your assistance was invaluable in completing resource inventories, developing land use recommendations, and commenting on these recommendations as well as the decisions for management of the public lands.



**Neil F. Morck**  
**District Manager**  
**Rock Springs District**  
**July 28, 1977**





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## OVERVIEW

(See General Location map, page 5.)

This brochure represents a revision of the Management Framework Plans (MFPs) for the Salt Wells and Pilot Butte Units. It is an update of several previous plans which were prepared prior to 1973. The revision was needed to provide more detail for the environmental statement on coal leasing.

This plan will serve as a guide for the surface management of the public lands as well as the federal mineral estate, some of which lies under privately owned surface lands.

The plan includes a narrative and graphic display of the land use decisions supported by rationale for each program including lands, minerals, range, forestry, watershed, recreation and wildlife.

The MFP is a working document and a guide for day-to-day management actions. The planning decisions allocate resources and land uses, thereby defining and resolving use conflicts. Program objectives and land use allocations in the MFP provide a framework for developing program activity plans for the management of wildlife habitat, grazing, wild horses, minerals and recreation.



**Workshops in December gave the public an opportunity to make recommendations for the planning unit.**

Final planning decisions are subject to revision at any time in response to changing conditions or demands. Significant revisions will involve public input and review.

Public participation is an integral part of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planning process. This process requires that all interested groups and individuals be given an opportunity to express their views and desires, raise specific issues and explore alternatives.

Public involvement for the current Salt Wells-Pilot Butte MFP update began in the summer of 1976 with individual contacts throughout the area to gather information and to acquire recommendations concerning future land use. Future planning was discussed with a variety of special interest groups in the planning units during November 1976.

A series of articles appeared in the *Rock Springs Rocket-Miner* in late November highlighting the planning effort and the proposed decisions. News releases were provided to all regional media. A brochure was distributed at interest group meetings and mailed to a variety of interested citizens.

News articles appeared in all of the newspapers in the district as well as on radio and television newscasts. On November 30, the proposed land use decisions, with a summary of public comment, were presented to the Multiple Use Advisory Board for its review. In November and December 1976 meetings were held with the Sweetwater County Commissioners, planning commissioners and planners to review the planning procedure.

An open house and workshop was held in Rock Springs on December 8, 1976. The meeting was attended by a cross-section of the public and industry. Approximately 70 people commented on the major issues through the workshop and written comments.



Recommendations were received on land uses, coal leasing, oil and gas development, range management, watershed protection, off-road vehicle use, historic trails, wildlife habitat, wild horse management, forest products, natural areas and cultural resources. The workshop was well publicized in the news media.

On April 28, 1977, a public meeting and hearing was held in Rock Springs. This meeting gave the public an opportunity to review and comment on proposed decisions in the Salt Wells-Pilot Butte Planning Units.

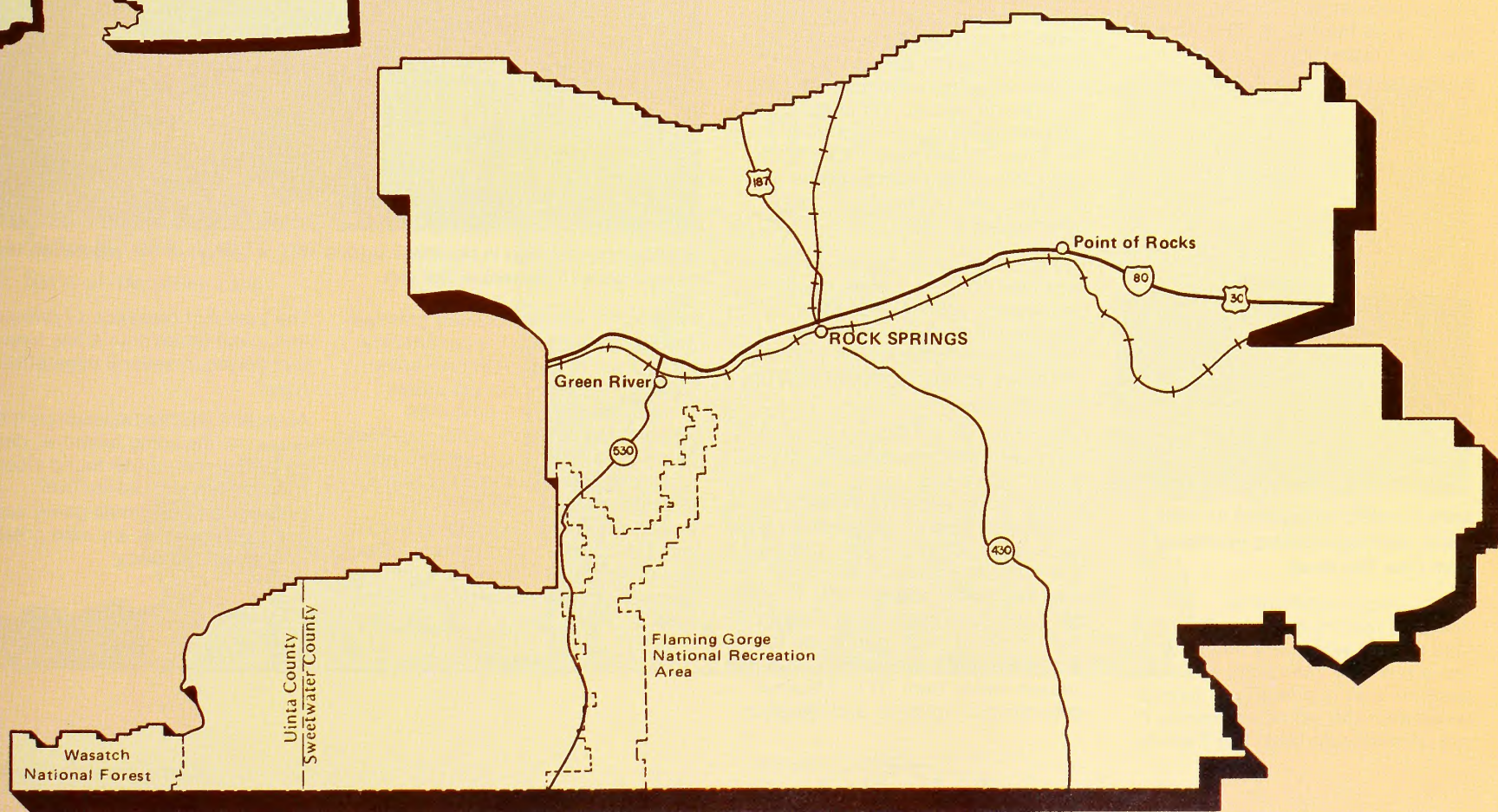
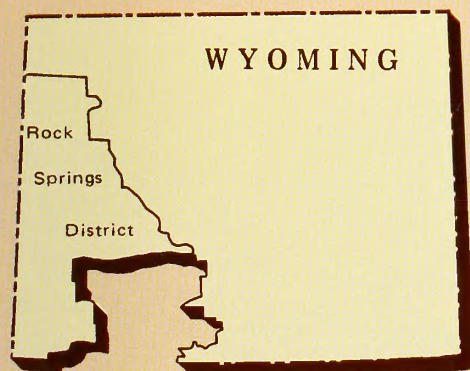
The meeting and hearing were attended by approximately 50 persons with six making formal statements. Of the six statements, five were directed to the wild horse management decision. The other statement covered several decisions, including coal leasing and wild horse management. Several written comments were received similar to those presented at the meeting and hearing.

One major concern was the creation of a wild horse management unit in the Adobe Town area. Other comments pertained to the issuance of further coal leases and disposal of lands. All of these comments have been considered and the decisions and rationale reassessed. The final decisions are presented in this brochure.

**Neil F. Morck  
District Manager**



## GENERAL LOCATION





## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

(See Land Status map, page 7.)

The Salt Wells-Pilot Butte Planning Units cover the major portion of the western two-thirds of Sweetwater County. The northern boundary is the railroad grant line in the vicinity of Steamboat Mountain, with the Colorado-Utah state line forming the southern boundary. The area extends from Table Rock on the east to the Green River and the Wasatch National Forest on the west. There are approximately 1.8 million acres of public lands making up 56% of the total land ownership.



**Early travelers compassed on Pilot Butte, seen here looking southwest from Blue Rim Road.**

The northern two-thirds is characterized by a checkerboard land pattern with every other section being privately controlled, while the southern part is primarily in federal ownership with scattered parcels of private and state land. The Flaming

Gorge National Recreation Area, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, is also located within the planning unit boundary.

More specific land ownership information is shown in Table 1 of the lands section.

The topography varies from rugged broken ridgetops to rolling foothills and semimountainous terrain in the southern half to rolling hills, occasional buttes and desert flatland in the northern part. The elevation north of Interstate 80 averages about 6,700 feet, with some scattered buttes being higher than 8,000 feet. The elevation south of the highway ranges from a low of 6,300 feet along the Green River to more than 9,700 feet on Pine Mountain near the Colorado line, averaging approximately 7,500 feet.

Precipitation at the higher elevations averages 10 to 16 inches, depending on location, while at less than 7,500 feet the range is 7 to 10 inches. Precipitation is less in the north and increases as one proceeds south to the state line.

Temperatures are subject to extreme variations, both seasonally and day-to-night. Cool year-round temperatures are the rule and vary from below zero in the winter to an occasional 90° plus in the summer. The prevailing winds are from the west-southwest and average 13 miles per hour throughout the year, with highs of 25-40 mph, during the fall, winter and early spring. The frost-free season varies from 70 to 120 days, depending on location and elevation.



**Sagebrush-grassland in the Black Buttes area is typical of the vegetation that covers some 70 percent of the unit.**

Sagebrush, with associated grasses and forbs, makes up approximately 70 percent of the vegetative cover. Saltbush-greasewood and desert shrubs comprise the next most prevalent vegetation. Juniper is found along the higher ridgetops and also makes up a sizeable portion of the vegetation. Aspen, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine and subalpine fir are woodland types found at the higher mountain elevations and are limited generally to the southern part of the area.

The potential presence of threatened and endangered plants has been recognized in several vegetative types.

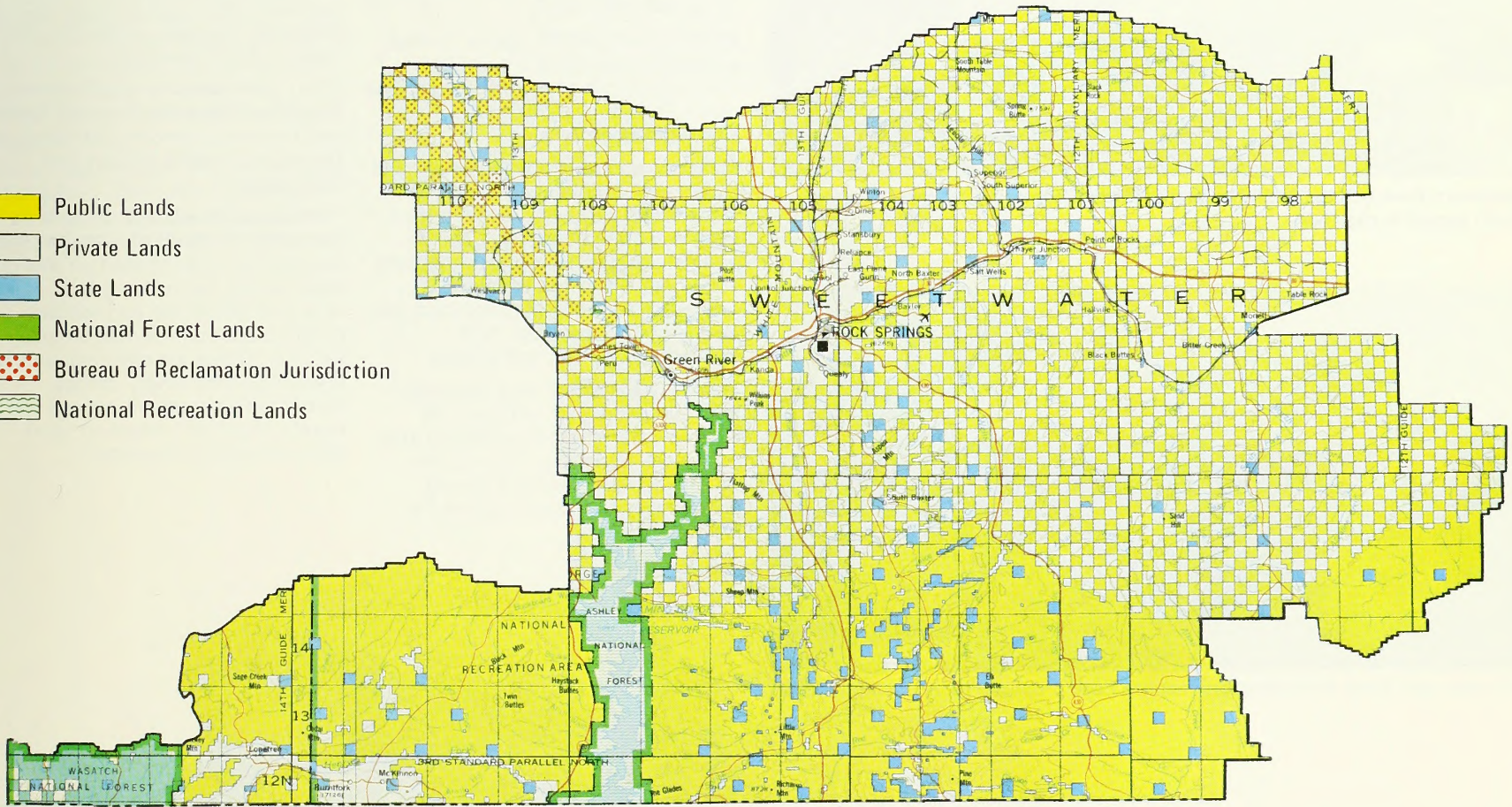
Abundant wildlife populations inhabit the units, including antelope, deer, elk and some moose found along the Henrys Fork and Green River. Numerous birds, small game and non-game species are also present throughout the units.



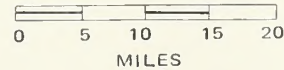
# LAND STATUS



- Public Lands
- Private Lands
- State Lands
- National Forest Lands
- Bureau of Reclamation Jurisdiction
- National Recreation Lands



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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**Downtown Rock Springs. With the energy-mineral boom, the community is now fourth largest in the state.**



**This area near Black Butte (background) has been proposed for coal strip mining.**

The environment has not been significantly disturbed except in and around the widely scattered communities, ranches, oil and gas fields, transportation routes and industrial areas. Much of the area is remote and essentially untouched except for trails, roads and various types of utility lines.

Open space, wildlife, sparse human population and historical values characterize life style of the area. The major population centers are Green River and Rock Springs.

Mineral exploration, development and production are major uses on public lands and contribute greatly to the local and state economy. Coal, oil and natural gas, trona (sodium), sand and gravel are being developed. Those not currently in production, but having potential are oil shale, uranium, potassium and pumice.

There are extensive coal reserves, both strippable and underground, located within the checkerboard area from Rock Springs to Bitter Creek. Oil and gas development occurs primarily in the eastern part of the area.

Trona is being mined along the western boundary northwest of Green River. Sand and gravel, important as building material, is being produced along the Green River and other strategically located drainage bottoms. Increased exploitation will increase the production of these minerals, which will enhance the economy. However, problems will arise in public services.

Other activities and values having a significant influence on public lands and the local economy are livestock, recreation, wildlife habitat and watershed.

The population density of the area is far below the national average. The life style has been based on this open space. Increased growth will alter this way of life and will also produce additional stress on local facilities. Since the planning units are primarily public lands, various resource management actions will have a significant effect on local socio-economic structures.



## Major Issues and Problems

The western way of life is inherent in the thinking and approach to life in the area, which is experiencing rapid population growth and industrial expansion, from energy-mineral development.

The major issues and problems are the result of present and potential land and resource use conflicts, unavoidable environmental impacts of resource development and socio-economic effects of resource development on local communities and life-styles.

A list of major issues and problems is shown below. The issue or problem will be described in the management decisions sections for each resource program.

<b>ISSUE/PROBLEMS</b>	<b>RESOURCE PROGRAM</b>
<b>Land Uses</b>	<b>Lands</b>
<b>Coal Leasing and Development Oil and Gas Leasing and Development Trona Leasing and Development</b>	<b>Minerals</b>
<b>Forest Products</b>	<b>Forest Products</b>
<b>Range Management</b>	<b>Range Management</b>
<b>Wild Horse Management</b>	<b>Wild Free-Roaming Horses</b>
<b>Water Quality</b>	<b>Watershed</b>
<b>Wildlife Habitat</b>	<b>Wildlife</b>
<b>Special Management Areas Off-Road Vehicles Cultural Resource Protection</b>	<b>Recreation</b>

# LANDS

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Lands map, page 13.)

### Program Description

The lands program supports other resource programs of the Bureau and those of state or other federal agencies. Lands with unusual values can be designated for specific programs. Examples would be the withdrawal of lands for oil shale, recreation development, preservation of primitive areas and temporary withdrawals pending legislation or classification.

The Bureau provides land needed for community expansion and other public purposes. This can also include private development where such ownership will best serve the interest of the public.

The lands program activities include planning, classification, appraisal, sales, record maintenance, administration of leases, rights-of-way and land use permits.

### Resource Description

Land ownership and withdrawals in the Salt Wells-Pilot Butte planning units are summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

The south half of the area is predominantly solid blocked public lands.

The northern half of the area is characterized by a checkerboard land ownership pattern. This pattern resulted from early railroad grants made by the federal government to the Union Pacific Railroad Company to encourage construction of a transcontinental railroad system and settlement of the West.

**LAND OWNERSHIP**  
(as of August 1976)

**TABLE 1**

Ownership	Acres (000's)		
	Salt Wells	Pilot Butte	Total
Bureau of Land Management	1,420	438	1,858
Bureau of Reclamation		65	65
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service		8	8
U.S. Forest Service	104		104
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>1,524</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>2,035</b>
State of Wyoming	73	20	93
Private	629	585	1,214
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,226</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>3,342</b>

**LAND WITHDRAWALS**  
(as of August 1976)

**TABLE 2**

Type of Withdrawal	Administering Agency	Acres (000's)		
		Salt Wells	Pilot Butte	Total
Public Water Reserve	BLM	21	7	28
Coal		437		437
Oil Shale	GS	786	500	1,286
Reclamation Projects	BR	116	85	201
Seedskaadee Wildlife Refuge	FWS		5	5
Power	FPC	36		36
Flaming Gorge				
National Recreation Area	FS	104		104
Stock Driveway	BLM	4	10	14
<b>TOTALS*</b>		<b>1,504</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>2,111</b>

\* There is a duplication of acreage due to overlapping withdrawals.





The Union Pacific "opened" this part of the west and yet services Rock Springs.

The checkerboard ownership necessitates close coordination of land management policies and actions between private landowners and BLM. Principal non-federal landowners include Upland Industries, Rock Springs Grazing Association and the State of Wyoming.

Major cities within the area include Rock Springs and Green River. Both originated as railroad towns and the current energy boom of southwest Wyoming has contributed to their prosperity. Both communities are expected to nearly double their populations by 1990.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area contained within the planning area covers more than 104,000 acres and is administered by the U.S. Forest Service. Flaming Gorge draws visitors nationwide and from around the world. The visitors drawn to the area impact adjacent public lands through camping, sightseeing and access.

Two major transportation networks traverse the planning area: Interstate Highway 80 and the Union Pacific Railroad. Amtrak also uses the railway. The Rock Springs airport is located in the area and is served by Frontier Airlines.

Sweetwater County has adopted zoning ordinances and is in the process of completing land use planning. Land use surveys have been completed and will be available for public distribution by December 1977. The land use plan for Sweetwater County is scheduled for completion in 1977.

Uinta County is without zoning ordinances or a land use plan. The county does have a subdivision ordinance which requires a prospective subdivider to secure a planning certificate from the Board of County Commissioners.

## Related Major Issues and Problems

### Land Uses

Growing communities need land for residential, commercial, industrial and public purposes. Approximately 10,500 acres of public land are being reserved for lease or transfer to local government or private ownership, as land is needed and determined to be suitable. An additional 2,560 acres near existing communities are also suitable for these purposes if the need is identified.

Tracts along the Green River and other perennial streams have been identified for agricultural purposes, although the potential is limited by climate.

To minimize the spread of utility routes into areas now largely free of them, it is proposed to confine major future installations to corridors which presently contain such facilities.

Land disposal may have impacts on water quality, visual resources, community services (health, police, roads, etc.), historic sites and trails, wildlife habitat and undiscovered cultural resources.

## Multiple Use Objective

Provide public lands to meet land needs for community expansion, industrial development, public purposes and agriculture while considering other resource values and uses.

## Multiple Use Decisions

### 1. Residential, Commercial and Industrial

**Provide lands for transfer to non-federal ownership as needed for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Lands subject to possible transfer near Green River, Rock Springs and Interstate 80 interchanges total approximately 7,400 acres. Any transfer of land must be consistent with and approved by local governmental planning and zoning authorities.**

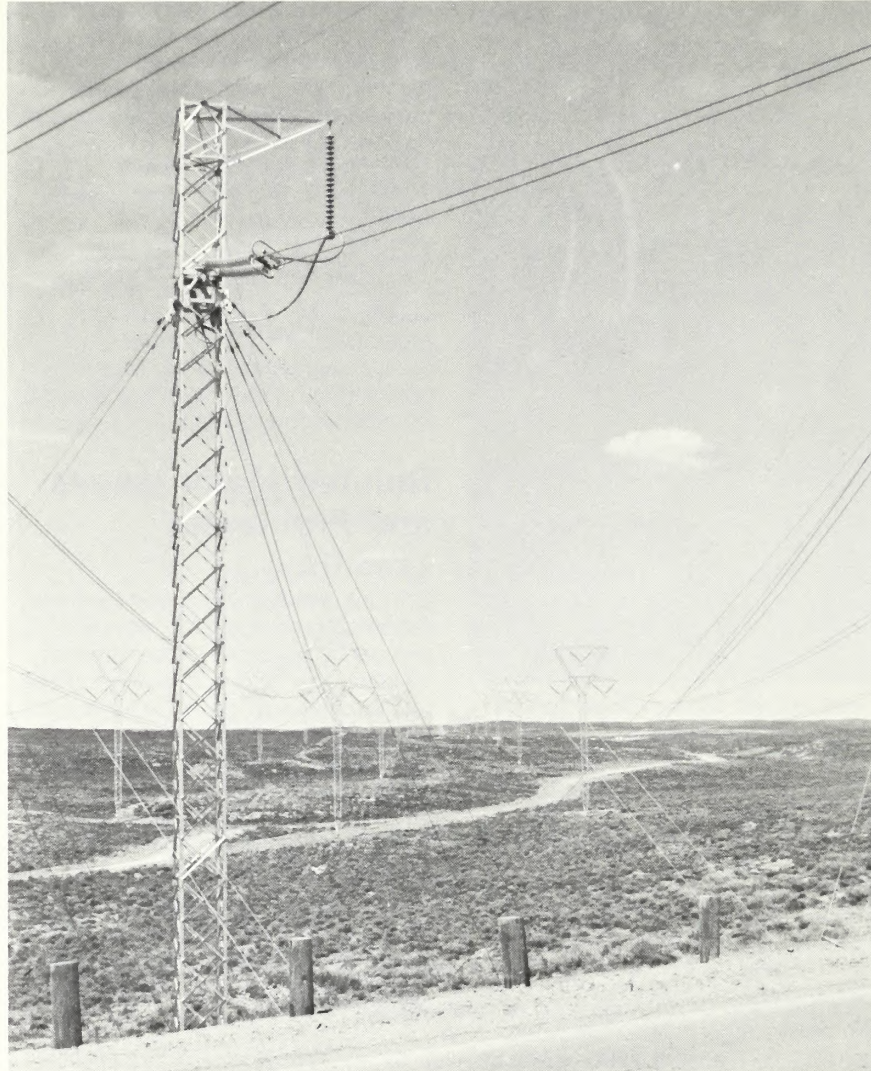


**Rationale:** The population of Sweetwater County is expected to nearly double by 1990. This growth is directly related to the intensive mineral development occurring within and adjacent to the planning unit. Land will be needed for residential, commercial and industrial use. Should the private sector be unable to provide suitable land, public lands may be utilized to assure orderly development and growth. Only minor impacts on other resources and a positive socio-economic benefit to the area would result. The public supports the decisions.

## 2. Public Purposes

**Reserve lands for transfer to non-federal ownership or lease as needed for public purposes. Lands subject to these recommendations are near Green River and Rock Springs and total approximately 3,100 acres. Any transfer of land must be consistent with and approved by local governmental planning and zoning authorities.**

**Rationale:** In areas of rapid growth, nearby public lands are being sought for public purposes. The Bureau can respond to demand by providing such land. In order to maintain orderly growth, transfers are to be consistent with local land use plans. The public supports the decision. Socio-economic benefits would result and only minor negative impacts may occur.



PP&L powerlines are necessary. Keeping them together as they are here, west of the plant, reduces impact on the rest of the land.

## 3. Utility System Corridors and Rights-of-Way

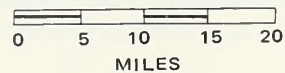
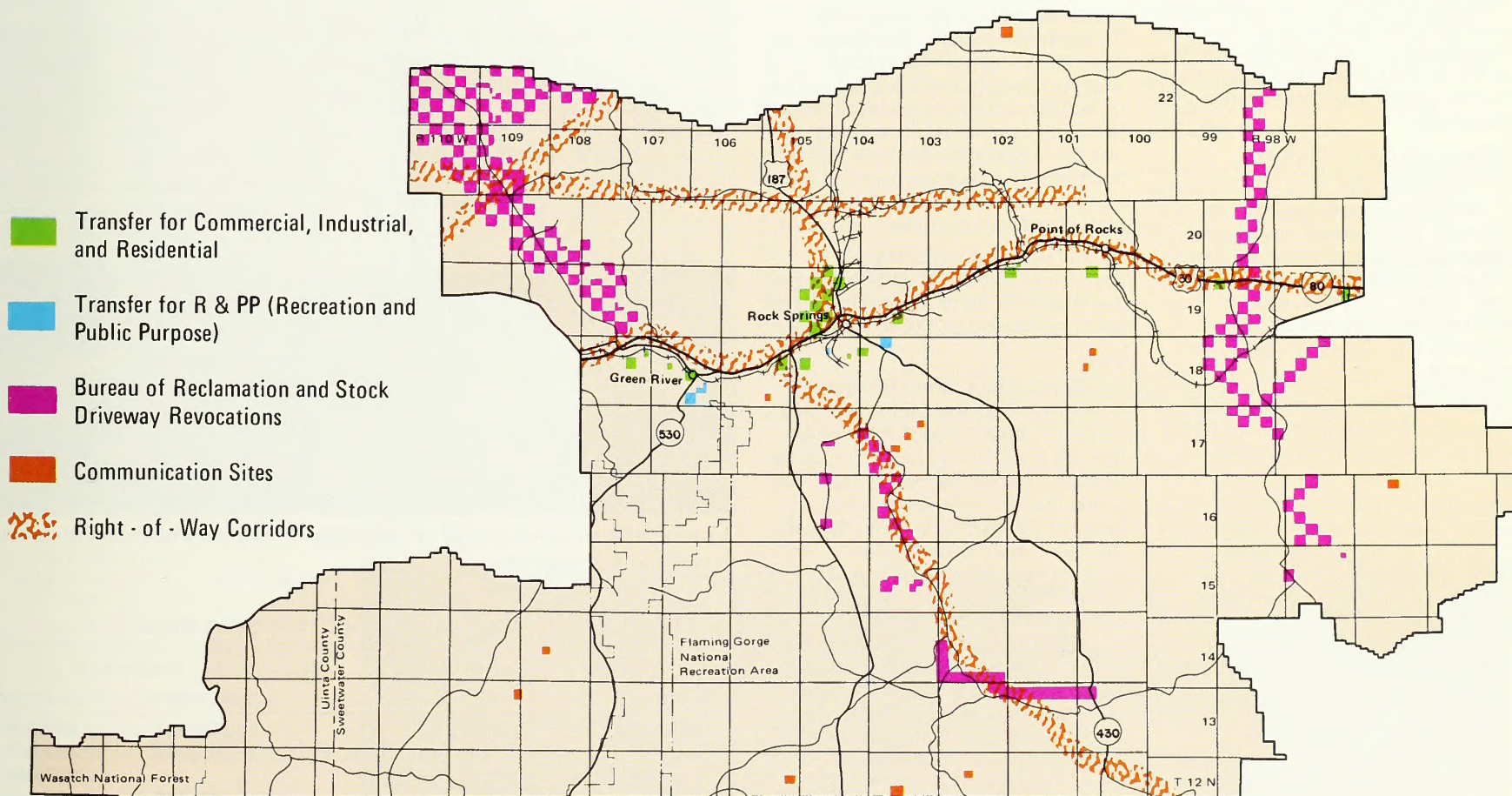
**Confine future utility expansion to existing utility system corridors whenever practical, emphasizing less visible alignments, minimizing width requirements and maximizing multiple occupancy.**

**Issue right-of-way authorizations in other areas subject to environmental assessment and surface protection and rehabilitation stipulations.**

**Rationale:** The concentration of utility rights-of-way would prevent many of the impacts associated with intrusions into largely undisturbed areas. Public comment favored this approach providing the Bureau remains flexible since future development may require modification of corridors.



# LANDS





# MINERALS

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Minerals map, page 17.)

### Program Description

The minerals program includes the disposal of minerals by lease, license, or permit; coordination of minerals development with other land uses; and the assurance of rehabilitation of mined land; as well as the evaluation and processing of mineral patent applications and appraisals.

Minerals on public lands are categorized by law as:

*Locatable* — Those that may be "staked" and claimed under the General Mining Law of 1872. These are mainly metals, e.g., gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc and uranium, but also include some non-metallic minerals, e.g., fluorspar, asbestos and mica.

*Salable* — Those that may be sold under the Material Sale Act of 1947, e.g., common varieties of sand, gravel and stone.

*Leasable* — Those that may be leased under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, e.g., oil and gas, coal, oil shale, phosphate, trona (sodium), potassium and geothermal steam.

### Resource Description

Mineral production in the Salt Wells-Pilot Butte units is shown in Table 3.

Other minerals in the planning area which are not currently under production include:

#### Salt Wells

Oil shale  
Trona  
Uranium

#### Pilot Butte

Oil shale  
Potassium  
Uranium  
Pumice

#### Oil and Gas

The entire planning area contains economic oil and gas resources. Presently the majority of federal minerals are under lease. BLM reviews (for approval by USGS) three oil and gas drill plans per month and two Notices of Intent to conduct oil and gas exploration per month in the planning area. Notices average 30 miles of line. Exploration is expected to continue at a high level.

Oil and gas exploration and production started in 1915 in the area and presently there are 43 producing fields containing 557 producing wells.

#### Coal

In 1852, Captain John Stansbury, U.S. Army Engineer Corps, reported numerous beds of coal in the Rock Springs area. Upon completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, the Union Pacific Railroad began to develop the coal resources along the rail line to fuel its locomotives. The first mines were opened near Point of Rocks. Before the railroads switched to diesel fuel in the 1950's, as many as 80 mines operated in the area. With the present demand for coal to provide energy for industrial plants and electricity generation, several of the old mines are being reactivated and new ones are planned.

Table 4 lists the proximate analysis of coal formations in the area. Western coals are valued for their low sulfur and ash content while maintaining reasonable Btu levels.



A new drilling site southwest of Fourteenmile. Oil and gas exploration is expected to continue at a high rate.

TABLE 3 MINERAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS

Mineral	Unit	Production	
		Salt Wells	Pilot Butte
Oil — 1975	Barrels	3,832,000	477,000
Gas — 1975	Thousands of cu. ft.	48,973,000	32,108,000
Trona — 1976	Tons		2,600,000
Coal — 1975	Tons	125,000	1,226,000



**TABLE 4 PROXIMATE ANALYSIS OF COAL SAMPLES**

	Wasatch	Ft. Union	Lance	Almond	Rock Springs	Average
<b>Btu</b>	<b>9,594</b>	<b>9,603</b>	<b>9,745</b>	<b>10,020</b>	<b>11,011</b>	<b>9,994</b>
<b>% Sulfur</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>0.68</b>
<b>% Ash</b>	<b>8.53</b>	<b>7.78</b>	<b>5.86</b>	<b>7.57</b>	<b>9.09</b>	<b>7.76</b>
<b>% Water</b>	<b>18.92</b>	<b>19.25</b>	<b>20.70</b>	<b>17.72</b>	<b>10.81</b>	<b>17.48</b>

Two coal mines operate in the planning units: the Bridger Coal Company's strip mine and the Stansbury Coal Company's underground operation.

The majority of the planning area has been classified valuable for coal by USGS. The identified economic coal reserves are located along the flanks of the Rock Springs Uplift. Coal in the rest of the area lies too deep to be mined economically at present.

Much of the economic reserves occurs in the checkerboard area in which the Union Pacific Railroad and its subsidiaries almost exclusively control mineral rights on the odd numbered sections.

#### **Sodium (trona)**

Production of sodium began in southwest Wyoming as early as 1902. Increased operating costs caused the brine evaporation plant to close in 1908. Underground mining (Westvaco/FMC) began in 1947. Stauffer (1962), Allied (1968) and Texasgulf (1977) have opened mines and built processing plants

Most of the known sodium leasing area is located on the checkerboard land pattern.

Trona, mined to produce soda ash, is used in glass making and is a major ingredient in the manufacturing of sodium phosphate, paper, dyes, and water purification. Recently, soda ash has been used in the scrubbers at the Jim Bridger Power Plant east of Rock Springs to aid in emission control.

In addition to refined soda ash, the trona is used to make baking soda and laundry detergent. The indicated reserves for the known trona beds

are estimated to be at least 50 billion tons. The known trona beds extend beyond the boundaries of the planning unit. Production of trona is by underground mining at a depth of 500 to 1,500 feet.

#### **Oil Shale**

The oil shale of the Green River Formation is the largest known hydrocarbon deposit. Estimates put on the total oil in Wyoming, Colorado and Utah at 2,000 billion recoverable barrels. Deposits in this unit are of lower grade and deeper than those of the Piceance Creek Basin in Colorado. The estimated reserve in this part of the basin is 400 billion barrels and present technology does not exist to allow economic extraction. Much of the area is classified valuable for oil shale by USGS.

## **Related Major Issues and Problems**

### **Oil and Gas Leasing and Development**

The entire planning area is considered as having potential for oil and gas development. Projected production of oil from public lands will increase by 50% and gas by 25% by 1990. Therefore, continued intensive exploration and development can be expected throughout the area.

Leasing, accompanied by subsequent exploration and development, will have varying degrees of impact on the environment, community services, economy, visual resources, potential natural areas, critical



The Jim Bridger mine at Point of Rocks, one of two operating coal mines in the unit.



watersheds, wildlife habitat, sage grouse breeding complexes, raptor nesting sites and prairie dog towns (black-footed ferret habitat).

Special areas of concern are:

Red Creek Basin — (53,000 acres)  
Critical watershed and wildlife habitat, potential natural area.

Adobe Town — (68,000 acres)  
Potential for wild horse management and natural area. Important raptor and prairie dog habitat.

Sage grouse breeding complexes — (70,000 acres)  
Disturbance during reproduction period, April 1 to June 30.

### **Coal Leasing and Development**

Sunoco Energy Development Company and Rocky Mountain Energy Company (Long Canyon) and Black Butte Coal Company and Bitter Creek Coal Company (Black Butte) plan on opening new mines.

The Long Canyon Mine would be located approximately 15 miles north of Rock Springs, Wyoming. The mining area boundary would encompass 14,700 acres. The underground operation would mine approximately 250 acres of coal seam per year. A maximum of 200 surface acres would remain disturbed or unreclaimed for the life of the mine. Construction would begin in 1978 with full operation expected in 1983. Average annual production would be 2 million tons per year with a probable mine life of 40 years. Most of the coal would be used for electrical power generation in the Pacific Northwest. Transport of the coal would be by unit trains. Ancillary facilities required include a six-mile railroad spur line, roads, power and telephone lines and a water pipeline.

The Black Butte Mine would be located approximately 25 miles east of Rock Springs, Wyoming. The mining area boundary encompasses 47,000 acres of which 10,000 acres would be mined at a rate of 400 acres per year. A maximum of 2,000 acres would be disturbed or unreclaimed in any typical year. Mining would be by stripping and open-pit methods. Construction would begin in 1978 with full operation expected in 1981. Average annual production would be 7 million tons per year with a probable mine life of 25 years. Most of the coal would be used for power generation plants by out-of-state markets. Transport of the coal would be by unit trains with one-half of the production going to Idaho and the remaining half going to Illinois. Rights-of-way would be required for a railroad spur, access road, and power and telephone lines.

In addition there are 22,400 acres subject to noncompetitive preference right leasing, approximately 81,500 acres nominated suitable for competitive leasing and approximately 334,200 acres underlain with coal which has a future potential for development. There are no firm proposals for mining the above areas to date.

Increased coal mining could result in numerous conflicts with other resources uses and could place added demands on community services, resulting in social and economic changes.

The primary conflict would be to deer and antelope winter ranges, with some disturbance to elk habitat around Black Buttes and Upper Salt Wells Creek. Raptor nesting sites along Cooper's Ridge may be disturbed or eliminated along with some marginal sage grouse habitat.

Impacts of a lesser degree would occur to livestock grazing, watershed (surface and groundwater hydrology), cultural and historical sites including portions of the Overland Trail and visual resources.

Areas proposed for exclusion from coal exploration, leasing, and development are: (1) lands around communities and along Interstate 80 (2,000 acres), (2) Red Creek Basin (53,000 acres) for watershed, wildlife and natural area protection, and (3) Adobe Town (68,000 acres) having special wild horse, natural area and raptor-prairie dog habitat values.

### **Sodium (Trona) Leasing and Development**

Trona mining is limited to the northwest segment of the planning area. This underground mining affects land surface in a far more site-specific way than strip mining. Issues that may develop involve the cumulative air degradation and problems associated with large settling ponds and their highly toxic contents.

There is also local and regional concern for the protection of the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Damages to the aesthetics, environment and water quality are the major concerns.




**The FMC trona plant west of Green River. Baking soda and other products result from this underground mining.**




# MINERALS





## Sodium


 Sodium Lease Applications

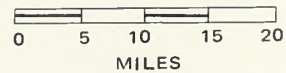
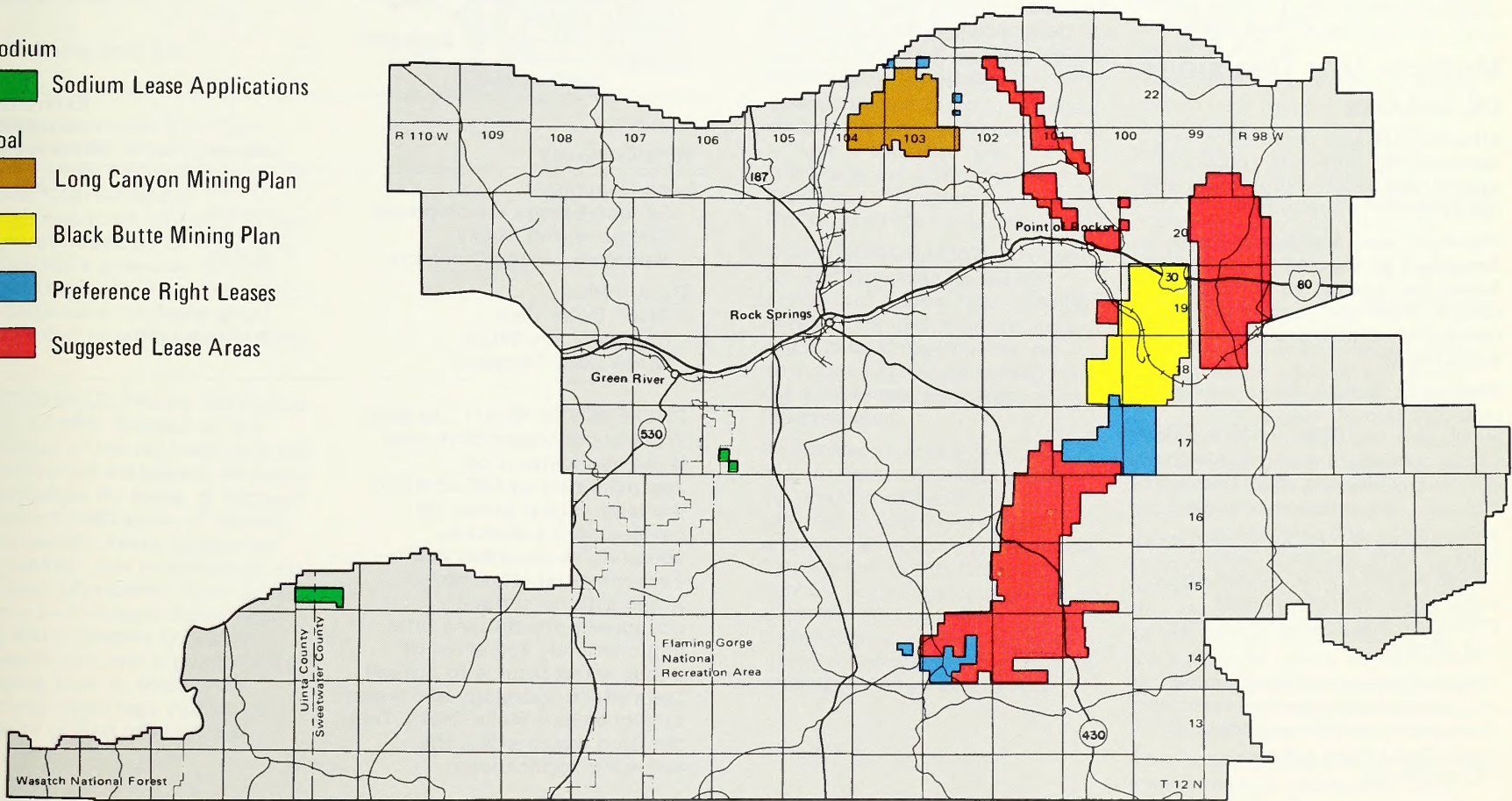
## Coal

 Long Canyon Mining Plan

 Black Butte Mining Plan

 Preference Right Leases

 Suggested Lease Areas





## Multiple Use Objectives

Promote federal energy mineral and other mineral development in an orderly and timely manner to assist the nation in achieving energy independence while providing adequate environmental safeguards and strict rehabilitation standards.

## Multiple Use Decisions Oil and Gas

**Allow oil and gas exploration and development unit-wide subject to appropriate surface protection and rehabilitation stipulations.**

**The Red Creek and Adobe Town Areas will be studied for potential future designation as primitive or natural areas and receive more restrictive surface protection stipulations.**

**Rationale:** Surface values can be protected through appropriate stipulations and reclamation. Surface values considered during leasing and development include historic trails and sites, recreation sites, known archeological and paleontological sites, streams and water quality, critical wildlife habitat, timber areas, visual resources and possible threatened and endangered plants and animals.

The entire planning area contains economic oil and gas resource. The development of this resource is a major step toward energy independence.

Public comment supports the need for advance planning and control of developing areas to limit number of access roads constructed and for rehabilitation of existing roads not necessary for the continued production of oil and gas in developed fields. Also identified was the need to limit or regulate access and development during certain periods of the year to protect watershed and critical wildlife values.

## Coal

**1. EXISTING LEASES: In conjunction with USGS, review and approve mining and reclamation plans on previously leased coal areas having adequate reclamation and environmental stipulations. This decision applies to the following site-specific proposed mines.**

Mine/Company	Acres	Estimated Reserves Million Tons
Long Canyon: Sunoco Energy Development Company and Rocky Mountain Energy Company	10,000 (under- ground mine)	80
Black Butte: Black Butte Coal Company and Bitter Creek Coal Company	10,000 (strip mine and open-pit)	175

**2. PREFERENCE RIGHT LEASES: Process noncompetitive coal lease applications on approximately 22,000 acres of the federal coal estate for development subject to adequate reclamation and environmental stipulations. Areas with no surface occupancy stipulations total approximately 400 acres of public water reserve to protect the surface hydrology and water quality of Salt Wells Creek. This decision would affect the following applications.**



Company	Applications	Acres	Location
Ark Land Co.	4	8,201	30 miles south of Rock Springs
Rosebud Coal Sales Co.	2	3,028	25 miles southeast of Rock Springs
Peabody Coal Co.	1	2,880	20 miles north-north-east of Rock Springs
Black Butte Coal Co.	2	7,635	25 miles southeast of Rock Springs

There are presently no firm proposals for development of these areas although the Black Butte Coal Company applications lie adjacent to the general boundary of the Black Butte Mine proposal. Mining would be by both surface and underground methods with estimated reserves of 60 million tons.

3. **SUGGESTED AREAS SUITABLE FOR LEASE:** Subject to the findings of the regional coal environmental statement, develop a schedule for lease of approximately 81,000 acres of federal coal estate. Areas suggested for leasing, but subjected to no surface occupancy, total 2,000 acres and include raptor nesting sites, historic Overland Stage Route and a public water reserve area to protect the surface hydrology and water quality of Salt Wells Creek.

**Rationale for Coal Decision 1, 2, and 3.** Present projections indicated the consumption of coal in the United States will double by 1990. Coal in the planning area will be in high demand because of its low sulphur, low ash, high Btu rating, easy accessibility and proximity to adequate transportation systems. Public support for mining was voiced at MFP meetings provided consideration is given to adequate surface protection stipulations and surface reclamation. The environmental assessment and statement will provide the base for needed protective stipulations.

4. **COAL EXPLORATION: Except for Red Creek Basin (53,000 acres) and Adobe Town (68,000 acres), keep the planning area open to coal exploration. No new areas are to be leased until the environmental assessment is completed.**

**Rationale:** Inventory data and industry forecasts indicate that interest in the deeper coal reserves is unlikely to surface prior to 1990. A study to determine future plans for Red Creek and Adobe Town will be completed within the next five years. The environmental assessment and statement will provide the base for needed protective stipulations.

## Sodium (Trona)

**Lease for sodium those areas currently under application and allow for exploration. Provide stipulations to restrict processing of sodium adjacent to the Blacks Fork and Green River and with proper environmental constraints to protect wildlife and visual resource values.**

**Rationale:** The proximity of current sodium beds and lease applications to existing mines and processing plants are such that the lease applications would provide an important backup source for existing operations. Geologic formations indicate that development would occur through underground mining.

The Sweetwater County Planning and Zoning Commission has recommended against issuance of sodium leases adjacent to Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

## Sand and Gravel

**Identifying areas suitable for sand and gravel sales adjacent to expanding communities.**

**Rationale:** The expected growth of communities and facilities required to support this growth (buildings, roads, etc.) will place an increased demand for this product within the next 15 years. Specific quality determination will require inventory and exploration. Excavation and sale will create surface disturbance areas.

When specific sites are identified, the conflicts can be determined. The impacts can then be mitigated or the site rejected.



# Forest Products

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Forest Products map, page 21.)

### Program Description

The forestry program includes inventory, evaluation and management of the forest resources on the public lands. This includes forest development and rehabilitation; timber management, sale of forest products such as timber, posts, poles and other vegetative products from forest lands; timber trespass; and forest pest and disease control.

### Resource Description

Acres of forested land and forest products sold in the planning area are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

The commercial timber resources in the area are located on Black, Pine and Little Mountains with a very small stand of about 15 acres on Pine Butte.

The Little Mountain stand consists of mixed types of conifer and aspens. The conifer is predominantly subalpine fir with lodgepole pine occurring in association with the fir. This timber occurs on the north side of Little Mountain.

The Pine Mountain stand consists of conifer and aspen. The conifer stands are nearly pure lodgepole but include subalpine fir, limber pine and aspen. The timber is located on the north and northeast sides of Pine Mountain.

The commercial stands are of pole size and are overstocked. The combination of poor site, small product size and poor stand condition reduces the commercial value for harvest.

The lodgepole stands, especially sawlog trees, have been infested by mountain pine beetle and most trees in this size class have already been killed. The younger lodgepole is often infested by dwarf mistletoe.

While there are scattered Christmas trees throughout the conifer stands, there is little demand for commercial use due to poor quality and distance from communities.

The aspen stands are fairly old with little natural regeneration occurring. The lack of regeneration is due to livestock grazing concentration and the presence of deer and elk which eat the young trees and seedlings. The older trees have been highlined by browsing animals and no longer furnish much forage. The stands are very important in furnishing shade and cover for wildlife and livestock. They also are important from the recreation standpoint.

### Related Major Issues and Problems

Because of distance from existing mills, there is little demand for saw timber. There is a local demand for posts, poles, Christmas trees and firewood. Sales approach 130,000 board feet per year. Many of the existing stands are deteriorating because of disease and fungus growths. Stands could be improved by removing the decadent trees. It is estimated that under proper cutting practices, a demand of 236,000 board feet annually could be satisfied from aspen, lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, Douglas fir and juniper.

Some of the conflicting activities are coal mining, oil and gas development, vegetative treatment to increase livestock and wildlife forage and rights-of-way associated with resource development and use.

**TABLE 5 FOREST TYPES**

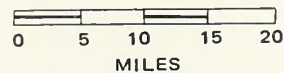
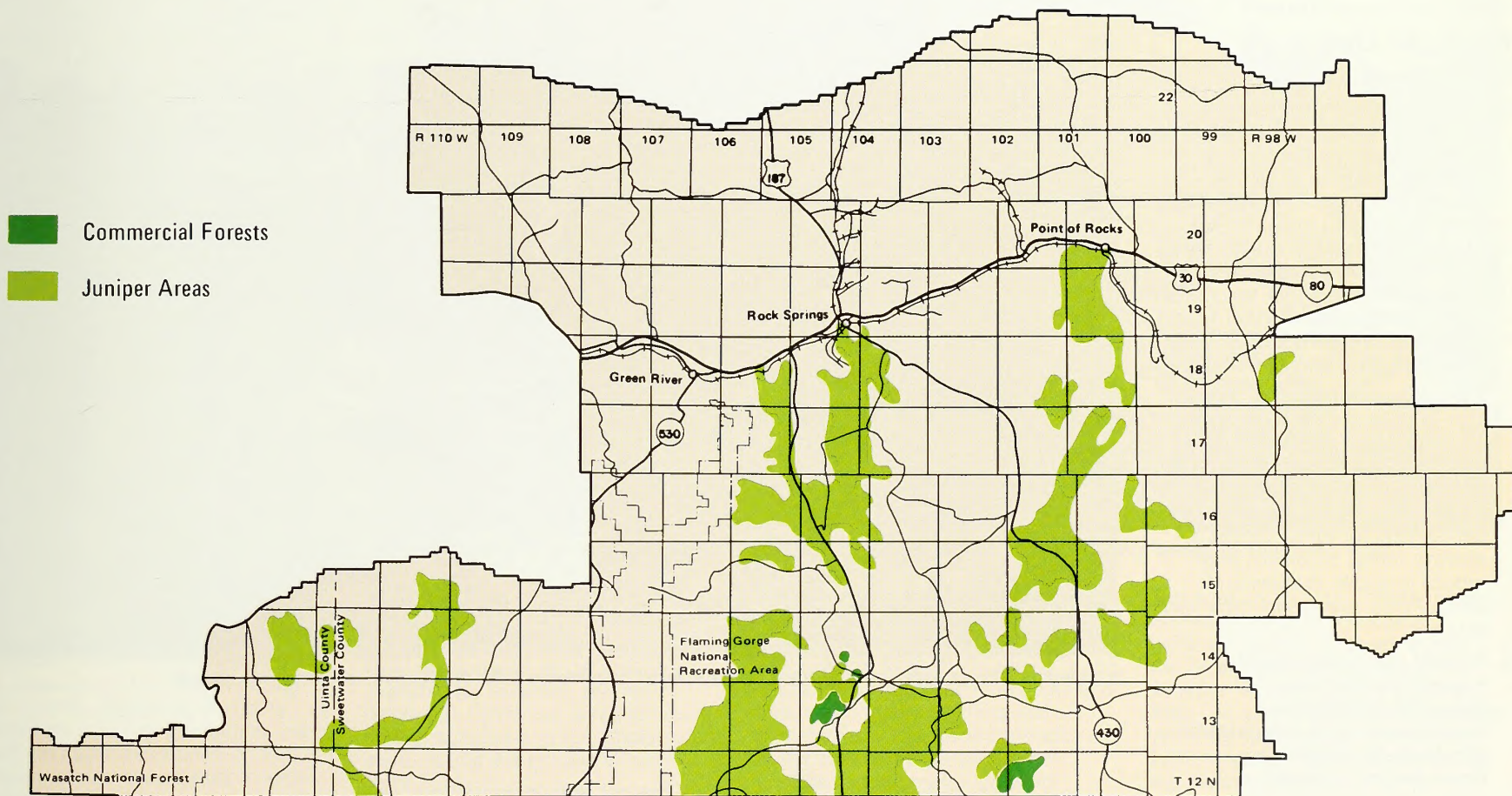
Species	Acreage	
	Salt Wells	Pilot Butte
Douglas Fir	15	
Subalpine Fir	2,343	
Aspen	2,000	500
Lodgepole Pine	1,000	
Juniper	241,080	5,100
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>246,438</b>	<b>5,600</b>

**TABLE 6 FOREST PRODUCTS SOLD — FY 76**

Product	Unit	Units	
		Salt Wells	Pilot Butte
Fuel Wood	Thousands of Board Feet	99	0
Post and Poles	Thousands of Board Feet	29	0
Christmas Trees	Number	460	0
Seedlings	Number	6	0



# FOREST PRODUCTS





## Multiple Use Objective

Provide a sustained yield of forest products for stand improvement and to meet local demand while considering other resource values such as aesthetics, water quality, wildlife and the environment.

## Multiple Use Decisions

1. **On Pine and Little Mountains, harvest post and poles by silviculturally sound cutting methods such as selective cutting or blocks limited to less than 10 acres in size and five chains (330 feet) in width. Thin pure stands of overstocked lodgepole pine within the timber types. Allow sale of other forest products (Christmas trees and firewood) on a demand basis.**

**Rationale:** Forest stands in the area are presently overstocked. Thinning these stands and harvesting the mature trees on a sustained yield basis by sound harvesting methods will help meet the demand for forest products, improve forest conditions and reduce losses to disease and pests. Public comments favor this practice.

2. **Protect the timber stands, minimizing their loss to industrial development, construction and revegetation practices by eliminating unnecessary removal.**

**Rationale:** Because of the economic importance and need for furthering the nation's energy self-sufficiency policy, areas that contain valuable deposits will be

mined where timber stands now exist. However, an assessment of the timber stands prior to development of energy minerals

should assure minimum disturbance. Rehabilitate and replant trees after industrial uses occur.



Woodlands, shown here south of Rock Springs, must be preserved, for production and aesthetic values.



# RANGE MANAGEMENT

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Range Management map, page 25.)

### Program Description

The range management program includes inventory, evaluation, and management of the forage resource on public lands for use by domestic livestock and wild horses. The program involves authorizing and supervising grazing use, developing and maintaining supporting livestock management facilities and protecting the range from weed infestations, pests and diseases.

The history of livestock grazing in Wyoming goes back for more than 100 years. Large ranching enterprises were among the first uses of the public lands in Wyoming. Cattle numbers in the state increased from 8,000 in 1870 to 1.5 million in 1885. Sheep began to appear on Wyoming rangelands in the mid-1800's and by 1894 outnumbered cattle by more than a million. In 1909 sheep numbers reached a peak of 6 million. These sheep operations were mostly nomadic and many spent all year on the public lands. The condition of the range deteriorated under this increased use.

In the 20's and 30's, ranchers and concerned conservationists demanded action which resulted in the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934. Presently, Wyoming ranks first in sheep production and fourth in cattle production in the western states even though sheep numbers have dropped to 1.3 million. Cattle numbers as of July 1976 were 2.1 million. Economic conditions in the sheep industry as well as labor and predator problems are compelling many operators to shift from sheep to cattle.



Wyoming is first in sheep production. Here a shearing session begins near Big Island Bridge on the Green River.

### Resource Description

Most public lands in the area are available for livestock grazing. Generally, cattle use is made during spring, summer and fall. Sheep use is made during the fall and winter.

The checkerboard lands located in the northern portion of the area generally have light summer grazing. The lack of available stock water is a major limiting factor in providing

summer grazing. Much winter grazing occurs in this area due to elevation, vegetation and availability of snow for stock water. Most of the sheep herds graze the surrounding mountains and high country during spring and summer use. This leaves the plants in the checkerboard area largely undisturbed during the growing season, allowing them to complete their growth cycle for vigor and reproduction.

The area south of the checkerboard and east of Flaming Gorge is generally grazed by sheep during winter months and cattle in the summer. However, there is some year use by both classes of livestock yearlong. Grazing use on Pine and Little Mountain areas occurs during the summer months.

Generally, the limiting factor for livestock grazing in the area east of Flaming Gorge is the lack of available water during the summer months.



In general, the checkerboard area is in good condition due to the restriction to winter use and the decline in sheep numbers over the past 15 years. The remainder of the planning area is in fair to good condition with the exception of Red Creek Allotment. Part of the erosion in Red Creek is due to natural or geologic conditions. However, portions of the allotment have been overgrazed, resulting in accelerated erosion and increased sediment in Red Creek.

Wild horse numbers have increased approximately 300% from January 1972 to March 1976. Continued yearlong grazing by these animals has an adverse effect on range condition. Adobe Town area, which is highly erodible, has one of the largest concentrations of horses in the unit. Uncontrolled horse use, in addition to livestock and wildlife use, can cause a change in the plant composition with a resultant downward trend in vegetation. Lack of livestock management, especially on areas having spring and summer grazing use and areas near water, is affecting the vegetative resource. Several species of plants within the planning area have been proposed for endangered or threatened status. Those now proposed are twinpod, vetch, penstemon, draba, prince's plume and rock cress. Inventories will be continued to determine if additional species, which are eligible or designated, are present in the area.

Table 7 shows the major vegetative types and acreages of all lands within the planning area and Table 8 shows range statistics.

**TABLE 7 MAJOR VEGETATIVE TYPES**

Vegetative Type	Acreages		
	Salt Wells	Pilot Butte	Totals
Grass	25,380	20,882	46,262
Meadow	10,100	20,711	30,811
Perennial Forbs	3,200	15,859	19,059
Sagebrush	1,504,800	787,547	2,292,347
Conifer	4,300		4,300
Waste	9,760	990	10,750
Barren		2,254	2,254
Juniper	241,080	5,100	246,180
Broadleaf and Mountain Shrub	28,320	20,495	48,815
Saltbush	225,220	93,141	318,361
Winterfat		5,239	5,239
Greasewood	102,720	52,010	154,730
Annuals	3,360		3,360
Not Surveyed	61,492	91,772	153,262
<b>Unit Totals</b>	<b>2,225,812</b>	<b>1,116,000</b>	<b>3,341,812</b>

**TABLE 8 1976 RANGE STATISTICS**

	Salt Wells	Pilot Butte
Number of Operators	54	23
Total Qualifications (AUMs)	119,453	67,293
Number of Wild Horses	1,685	1,915
Number of Water Developments	216	35
Miles of Fence	116	19

\*Total demand for forage at time of adjudication.

## Related Major Issues and Problems

Composition and density of the understory species are affected by livestock grazing. Past continuous grazing has been the major factor in deteriorating the conditions of the native range. Heavy use is occurring around water sources and in meadows. Minimal forage allocations have been made for wildlife and none for wild horses. The checkerboard land ownership pattern results in administrative management problems. Mining, oil and gas production and related activities are having an impact on forage production.

Range conditions may be maintained or improved by implementing grazing systems which, at a minimum, provide for rotation of use. Fencing and water developments would be required to facilitate the rotation of livestock use during the growing season and to separate areas of allotted livestock grazing. Livestock operators desire the flexibility to change class of livestock to respond to economic fluctuations in market price, predator losses and production costs.






Improved range conditions will benefit livestock, wild horses, wildlife, watershed and visual resources.

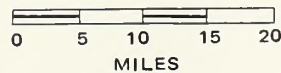
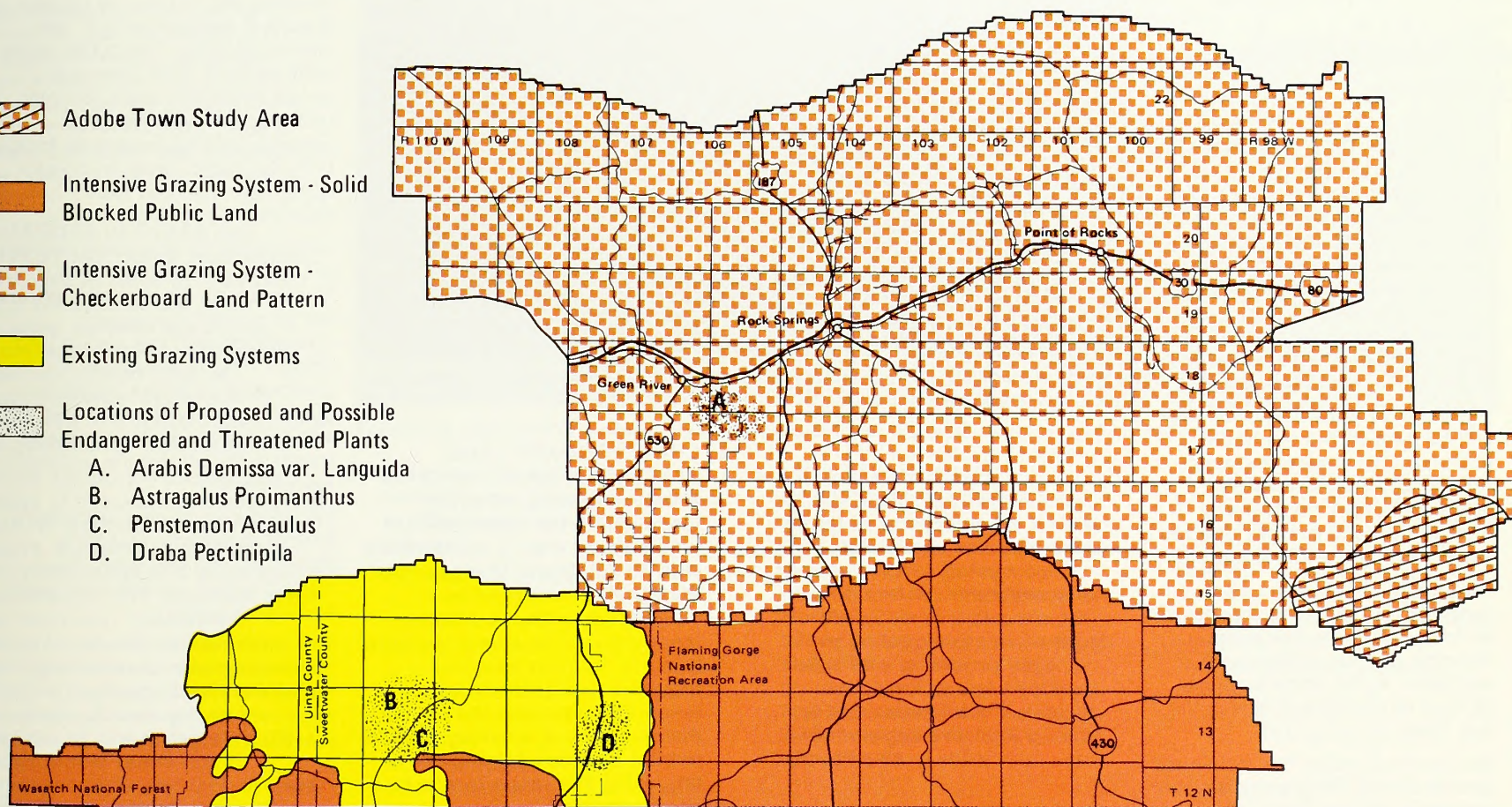
Management facilities such as fences may conflict with migration of big game and wild horses, restrict the recreationists and disturb open space values.



# RANGE AND LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT



-  Adobe Town Study Area
-  Intensive Grazing System - Solid Blocked Public Land
-  Intensive Grazing System - Checkerboard Land Pattern
-  Existing Grazing Systems
-  Locations of Proposed and Possible Endangered and Threatened Plants
  - A. *Arabis Demissa* var. *Languida*
  - B. *Astragalus Proimanthus*
  - C. *Penstemon Acaulus*
  - D. *Draba Pectinipila*





## Multiple Use Objective

Manage livestock in a manner that will increase available forage for livestock and provide improvement in wildlife habitat, watershed conditions and other related resources, as well as protection for endangered or threatened plants.

## Multiple Use Decisions

- 1. SOLID BLOCKED PUBLIC LANDS:** In Area 1, authorize livestock grazing on 23 allotments under an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) implemented to meet the physiological requirements of the forage resources, considering range users' operation, protection and maintenance of wildlife habitat and visual resource impacts.

Facilities to implement the AMP will be held to the minimum necessary to assure improved forage conditions, provide proper livestock control and distribution and protect riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat.

**Rationale:** Eighty-seven local livestock operators are dependent on forage from the Salt Wells Planning Unit for a year-round operation. Public lands produce 65% of all livestock forage in the Salt Wells Planning Unit.

Studies have shown that continued grazing during the growing season reduces plant vigor and reproduction. Fences and water developments are required to facilitate the rotation of livestock use during the growing season.



Sagebrush spraying allows the grass to come back. But antelope and sage grouse must be considered.

Livestock grazing will be authorized by allotment on the basis of (1) forage allocations for wildlife, (2) grazing capacity determinations by class of livestock and (3) proper season of use consistent with forage requirements and watershed protection. In anticipation of complete removal of wild horses from the area, no forage allocations have been made for them. Some adverse comments have been made on this decision.

- 2. CHECKERBOARD LAND PATTERN:** In Area 2, authorize livestock grazing on public lands within the checkerboard land pattern area in accordance with an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) developed in conjunction with the private landowners. Implement the plan to meet the physiological requirements of the forage resources, assuring the maintenance of existing wildlife habitat and maintaining or improving the range forage to a good condition.

**Reduce livestock forage authorization in a sufficient amount to support and maintain a wild horse population of up to 500 animals, on a yearlong basis, in the Adobe Town area as shown on the map.**

**Rationale:** Range livestock ranching will continue to be an important segment of U.S. red meat production. The public lands produce 65% of all livestock forage in the Salt Wells Planning Unit. Eighty-seven livestock operators are dependent on forage from the public lands for a year-round operation and their economic well-being.

Implementation of grazing systems is complicated due to the existing land patterns. Management efforts will be carried out through cooperation with the private land holders. This is necessary to continue to authorize livestock grazing on an economic basis and still provide for multiple use and maintain or improve the vegetative resources.

Facilities constructed will adhere to BLM standards relating to protection of archeologic and historic values, wildlife movement and visual quality.

The public recommended coordination with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, minimum fencing and changes in present management.



**3. EXISTING GRAZING SYSTEMS:**  
**In Area 3, continue to authorize livestock grazing and evaluate the existing AMPs to assess needed revisions in the system and grazing capacity. Also, initiate necessary actions to protect the forage resource.**

**Rationale:** Nineteen, of the 87 livestock operators dependent on forage from public lands, are specifically identified with this decision. Revisions in existing plans may be necessary due to water availability and overgrazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife.

**4. CHANGES IN CLASS OF LIVESTOCK:** Allow permanent changes in class of livestock and seasons of use when grazing systems are being developed to protect multiple use values and after an environmental statement is prepared. Authorize conversions in accordance with an AMP.

Allow temporary changes in class of livestock and season of use for periods of up to three years, subject to extensions, provided range and watershed conditions have remained static or improved. Conversion allowances will be based on environmental assessments and grazing capacity determinations by class of livestock and season of use considering (1) nonsuitable range due to inaccessibility and lack of water and distance from water; (2) reductions for wildlife when applicable and (3) reductions for wild horses when applicable.



Fences, as here at Fourteenmile, are a management tool, assuring balanced use of the forage.

**When conversions are in a common use area, a consensus of other operators may be required.**

**Rationale:** The public recommended livestock conversions be made at the earliest possible time. At present, BLM is required to complete AMPs and environmental statements to ensure maintenance or improvement of sustained resource values. Temporary conversions will be considered in the interim to provide flexibility to livestock operators to the degree that existing resource values can be protected and maintained.

**5. VEGETATION TYPE CONVERSIONS:** Decisions on vegetative treatment to increase livestock forage will be made on a case-by-case basis after grazing system implementation. Normally, no spraying will be allowed along streams in aspen and willow groves, in sage grouse breeding and nesting areas, in antelope and deer winter ranges and high quality visual areas.

**Rationale:** After implementation of a grazing system, vegetative treatment may not be required. A case-by-case approach, if the need still exists, would minimize conflicts with other resource values. The conversion would be subjected to environmental assessment and benefit cost analysis.



# WILD, FREE-ROAMING HORSES

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Wild, Free-Roaming Horses map, page 29.)

### Program Description

Wild free-roaming horses and burros are under the jurisdiction of the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture for the purposes of management and protection. PL 92-195 of December 15, 1971, provides for managing wild horses within ranges which may include private lands, providing that a cooperative agreement for management can be reached with the private landowner. The act also provides that horses must be removed from private land if requested by the landowner.

A number of conditions have contributed to changing the horse populations. For instance, the growth of the livestock industry in the west, the reduced use of horses by the military following World War I, the abandonment of farm horses due to mechanization, the extensive gathering of horses for commercial meat purposes, periods of extreme weather and forage conditions and the recent passage of legislation to protect and manage wild, free-roaming horses.

An Adopt-a-Horse program has been initiated to assist in the management of wild horses. The Bureau conducts roundups on over-populated ranges. The animals are then made available to qualified individuals for their personal use. Removing excess horses for adoption protects the environment and ensures that the remainder of the herd will have a more adequate food supply.



Wild horses range throughout the unit, some 3,500 of them, an aesthetic resource as well as a problem.

### Resource Description

Table 9 shows horse numbers and locations as of March 1976.

**TABLE 9  
WILD HORSE INVENTORY**

Area	Numbers
Checkerboard, North of I-80	1,915
Checkerboard, South of I-80	776
Adobe Town	562
Salt Wells	229
Burntfork	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,499</b>

### Related Major Issues and Problems

The Wild Horse and Burro Act provides for protection and management of wild horse populations on public lands and establishes procedures for control and management of herd units. The Haystack Mountain-Adobe Town area contains one of the larger populations of horses and has the potential for a wild horse management area. Presently, there are approximately 600 horses using this area on a year round basis.

About 2,700 horses graze within the checkerboard land pattern area. Section 4 of the Wild Horse and Burro Act provides for removal of horses from private land. Some requests for removal have been received from private landowners. Also, there are approximately 250 head of horses in small bunches within the Salt Wells and Burntfork areas. These horses are of undetermined ownership and herd sizes are considered too small to maintain a viable herd.

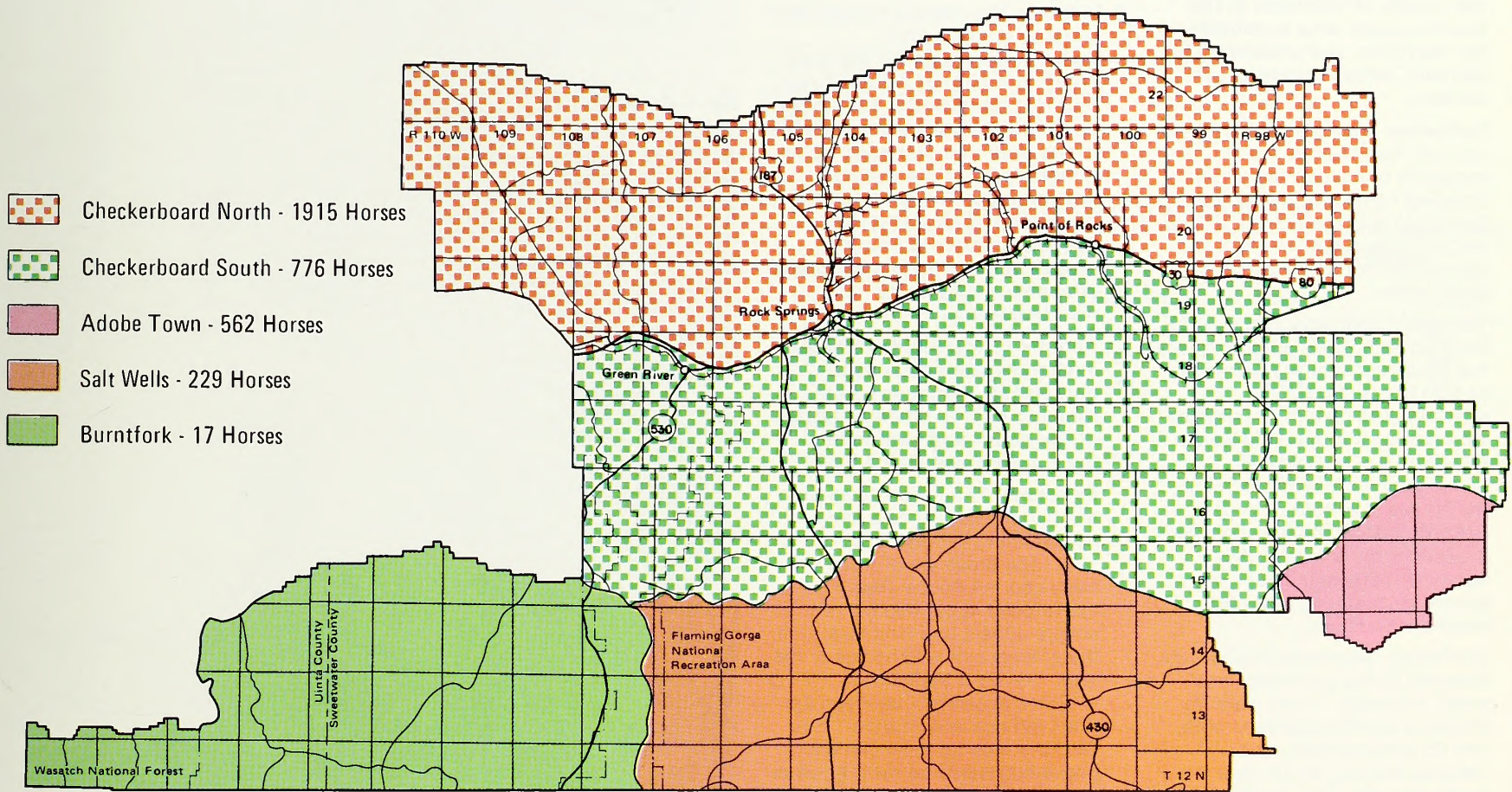
Maintaining maximum population levels throughout the planning areas would complicate management of livestock and also would reduce the vegetative resource important to wildlife, livestock, watershed and recreation. To date, forage allocations for wild horses have not been made. A reduction in livestock or wildlife numbers to accommodate horse numbers would be required, be required.

### Multiple Use Objective

Manage an optimum number of wild horses in the area to fulfill the requirements and intent of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971. Final numbers will be determined by management plans considering the requirements of other resources. Comply with the requirements of the act as pertains to claiming of private horses and removal of wild horses from private lands.



# WILD, FREE-ROAMING HORSES





## Multiple Use Decisions

1. **Remove all free-roaming horses on the checkerboard land and on the Salt Wells and Burntfork areas. In addition, pursue cooperative agreements with the private landowners in the checkerboard area to provide for migration and protection of the wild horses during severe winters.**

**Rationale:** Total removal of the animals from those areas incapable of maintaining viable breeding herds (Salt Wells and Burntfork) is in the interest of the animals to prevent continuous inbreeding that would occur in small herds.

The major landowner in the area, Rock Springs Grazing Association, has requested that BLM remove all wild horses from the checkerboard area in accordance with Section 4 of the Wild Horse and Burro Act. If BLM can demonstrate effective control of the horses, the Rock Springs Grazing Association has indicated it will consider a cooperative agreement allowing horses on private lands during adverse weather conditions.

Conflicting recommendations were received at the workshops and public meetings. These were (1) establish one management area, and (2) allow animals, at a reduced number, to run over the entire planning area except for the Burntfork area.

The wild horse decision is contrary to the wishes of a majority of the public. However, it was made because requests for removal from private landowners and the fact that only 39 horses would be left in the Salt Wells area if reduced to the 1971 level.

2. **Allocate the needed forage and develop a wild horse management plan for the area south and east of Adobe Town and Haystack Butte. The horse population must be supportable in the area and managed as an integral part of the natural environment. The plan will be developed jointly with the Rawlins District to ensure proper population levels, forage allocations and horse management.**

**Acquire private lands (through exchange or a cooperative agreement) to manage free-roaming horses on 16,640 acres of the south and east side of the Adobe Town Ridge.**

**Rationale:** The Adobe Town area has had the largest wild horse population in the district since 1971. The presence of many old traps and the Adobe Town background in old wild horse photos attests to a long history of the presence of wild horses in the area. The herd traditionally migrates seasonally between the Rock Springs and Rawlins Districts. Interim management population would be maintained at current levels of 500 animals.



After roundup the horses are examined for health purposes and sent to "foster" homes.



# WATERSHED

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Watershed map, page 33.)

### Program Description

Watershed management provides for the conservation and production of renewable natural resources. It is concerned with relationships between the management of soil, vegetation and the quality, quantity and timing of water production from watersheds as they affect both on-site and downstream use. Management involves prescribing some kind of land use, nonuse or modification of vegetation cover.

The Bureau's watershed management objective is to enhance water quality, improve streamflow timing and water yield, renew ground water recharge and control floods and sedimentation. BLM also provides for and maintains a uniform system for soils inventory and develops practical soils interpretations. Its soil scientists, hydrologists and watershed specialists interpret and utilize basic watershed management principles and provide technical support in understanding the use of soils and water resource data. These are the variables of the watershed system which are influenced by land use. They enhance both on- and off-site resource values and assist in the planning and development of multiple resource management decisions for all Bureau programs.

Land management practices which affect watersheds can be placed in two general categories: (1) the protection and rehabilitation of soil and plant resources and (2) the management of watershed resources to modify the quantity, quality and timing of water production.

### Resource Description

Erosion condition of lands inventoried is shown in Table 10.

Most of the inventoried lands showed a static trend and much of the present erosion now occurring is considered to be natural geologic erosion.

Water quality in the planning area is good. However, some specific water quality problems do exist or are likely to result from future developments.

**TABLE 10**  
**PRESENT EROSION CONDITION**

Erosion Condition Class	Salt Wells		Pilot Butte	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Stable	31,462	2	74,800	17
Slight	776,313	62	280,300	64
Moderate	437,900	35	78,900	18
Critical	12,129	1	4,400	1
Severe				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,257,804</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>437,400</b>	<b>100</b>



## Related Issues and Problems

Activities such as mineral exploration and development, grazing, road, trail, pipeline and utility line construction and off-road vehicle use contribute to watershed problems if not conducted properly.

Water quality problems are mainly from nonpoint sources. Known water quality problem areas are Killpecker Creek, Lower Bitter Creek and Lower Green River with problems such as salinity, sediment, nutrients, fecal coliform and alkalinity.

## Multiple Use Objective

Manage the watershed resources for maintenance of soil productivity, enhancement of water quantity and quality and mitigation of impacts to watershed values from other resource activities.

## Multiple Use Decisions

1. **Complete inventories for soils and hydrology and establish a water quality monitoring program on public lands to supplement other monitoring programs in the area.**

**Rationale:** Additional data are needed to adequately manage the soil and water resources and to define specific sources and causes of water pollution.

2. **Regulate surface disturbing activities such as mineral, oil and gas exploration, grazing and off-road vehicle travel on areas of high erosion, fragile soil and poor vegetative cover. The Red Creek Basin has been identified as a critical watershed. A study is needed to determine controls.**

**Rationale:** Surface disturbance adds to erosion and sedimentation. Further study is required to identify problem areas and control measures. The Red Creek watershed has high values for water quality, natural values, critical deer and elk winter range, visual resources and woodland resources.

3. **Consider land treatment and type conversions for watershed enhancement after management plan development and adequate site-specific review, environmental assessments and benefit/cost analysis.**

**Rationale:** Specific treatment areas can only be considered on a site specific case-by-case basis. Only treatments which have passed environmental, economic and other resource value tests should be complete.



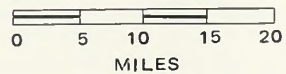
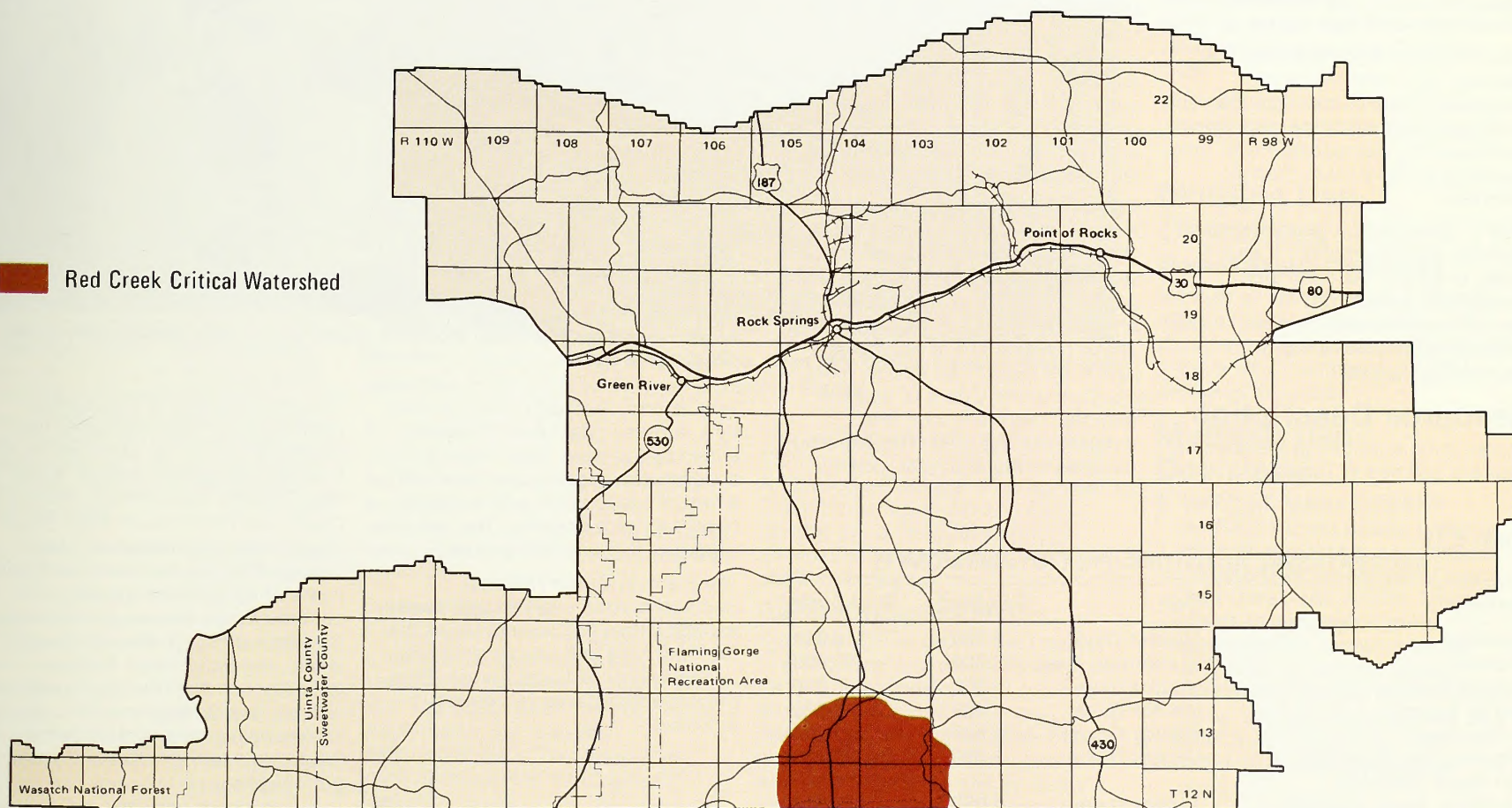
Little Bitter Creek. Plans come and go but natural erosion continues as long as there are water and soil.



# WATERSHED



 Red Creek Critical Watershed





# RECREATION

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Recreation map, page 37.)

### Program Description

The recreation program covers many activities and values. In addition to visitor and cultural resource management, other major activities include recreational vehicle use, river management and protection of natural and wilderness values.

Public lands in Wyoming have the potential for a wide range of recreational uses. These include hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, rockhounding, sightseeing, river floating and many other outdoor activities.

BLM's recreation program provides facilities and information. It also seeks to assure the continued availability of resources for recreational use and increased visitor safety through eliminating or neutralizing hazards.

### Resource Description

Recreational activities in the planning area are outlined in Table 11.

Recreational values of the planning area are closely tied to the open space values and the relatively natural condition. Red Creek and Adobe Town have potential of being designated as natural areas.

Red Creek is an extremely interesting area formed by natural erosion. The steep canyon walls leading to the rolling badland-type hills have kept man from encroaching very far into the area. The area is covered by pinyon juniper with many sagebrush parks and is critical winter range for deer and elk. The area encompasses approximately 24 square miles.

Adobe Town is a highly eroded badlands area which is part of the Uinta and Bridger Formation in the Washakie Basin. The area is extremely rich in archeological artifacts and paleontological remains. These remains are of eocene age which are roughly 50 million years old. Due to the extent of badland features, there are very few intrusions in the area. There are no fisheries in the area and water is



An elk release on Steamboat Mountain. Hunting is a major consideration in the recreation program.

very limited. Available water is used by a large number of wild horses, antelope and deer. The area encompasses approximately 68,000 acres of public lands with excellent opportunity for isolation. This area is unique to this part of the state.

The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area and Reservoir are located within the boundaries of the planning area and are administered by the Ashley National Forest. They provide water based recreation activities.

The planning area is crossed by many historic trails, including the Overland, California, Mormon, Pony Express, Oregon, Cherokee, South Pass-Point of Rocks Stage, Kinney Cutoff and Bryon-South Pass Stage. Historic and archeological sites include: Point of Rocks Stage Station (state), Fort LaCiede (private), LaCiede Stage Station (public lands), Dug Springs Stage Station (public lands), Big Pond Stage Station (private), Lombard Ferry (private), as well as Pine Springs and Black Butte archeological sites and Sugarloaf, White Mountain and Cedar Canyon petroglyphs.

The Point of Rocks Stage Station is on the National Register of Historic Places. Sites nominated to date include Dug Springs and LaCiede Stage Stations and Cedar Canyon petroglyphs.

TABLE 11  
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES (PUBLIC LANDS ONLY)

Activity	Unit	Salt Wells	Pilot Butte*
Hunting	Hunter Days	7,700	8,000
Fishing	Fishermen Days	43,000	13,800
Winter Sports	Visitor Days	950	630
Water Sports	Visitor Days	400	4,130
Collecting	Visitor Days	1,500	10,200
Sightseeing (Specific)	Visitor Days	3,050	20,700
Off-Road Vehicles			
4-WD's, Dune Buggies	Visitor Days	1,050	13,650
Snowmobiles	Visitor Days	400	400
Camping	Visitor Days	5,100	50,750
Picnicking	Visitor Days	2,800	600

\*Includes the Sandy Planning Unit



## Related Major Issues and Problems

### Special Management Areas

The Red Creek Watershed has a severe erosion problem resulting in off-site damage to a high quality fishery on the Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam. The cause of these problems is a combination of uncontrolled livestock, deer, elk and antelope use, road construction for access and natural geologic erosion. Portions of this area (approximately 22,400 acres) have values which could justify designation as a natural area. The area is relatively free of intrusions and has a definite wild and scenic character. Additional development in the area would require road or trail construction, increasing the potential for accelerated erosion. Approximately two-thirds of the area is under lease for oil and gas exploration and development. Protection of the area could conflict with future oil and gas development, coal leasing, licensing of livestock use and controlling big game numbers.

The Adobe Town area, located in the east portion of the planning area, has also been identified as having natural values. Natural geologic formations of varied colors give it outstanding scenic qualities. In addition, it is remote and there are few intrusions. Many significant wildlife values are found in the area including raptor and prairie dog habitat. For many years, the area has provided forage and protection for wild, free-roaming horses. The current numbers of animals in the Haystack-Adobe Town area is about 600.



Remains of the old LaClede Stage Station, on private land, are among those sites nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

A "natural" or "special" management area designation would mean restriction of uses such as surface mining, oil and gas activities, road construction, off-road vehicle use and other human related activities.

### Cultural Resources

A major portion of the historic trails is overlain by improved roads, traversed or paralleled by rights-of-way. The South Pass-Point of Rocks Stage Route is a relatively undisturbed trail. The other major route of concern is the Overland Trail.

If mining, oil and gas development and other surface disturbances are allowed along the trails, the historic values could be lost.

The LaClede and Dug Springs Stage Stations are located on public lands. Archeological sites at Pine Springs, Black Butte, Sugarloaf and Cedar Canyon are or may be worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Sites.

### Off-Road Vehicles (ORV)

Currently, ORVs use on the public lands is widespread and unrestricted. Certain limitations on ORV use are being considered to minimize disturbance to critical wildlife habitat and associated animals, to prevent watershed damages and to protect the cultural, natural and open space values.

Areas under consideration for ORV regulation are (1) 53,000 acres in the Red Creek Basin to protect fragile watershed, deteriorating big game range and potential natural area; (2)

68,000 acres in the Adobe Town area to provide for protection and management of raptor-prairie dog area, wild horses, potential natural area and fragile watershed; (3) 70,000 acres to protect sage grouse breeding complexes during the reproductive period of April 1 through June 30; and (4) raptor, peregrine falcon and burrowing owl nesting sites.

This regulation would conflict with unrestricted use of ORVs on public lands.

## Multiple Use Objectives

### Special Management Areas

Manage areas with unique natural features to minimize surface disturbance and preserve the values present until final management decisions are made.

## Multiple Use Decisions

- SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS: Retain public lands in federal ownership and initiate an intensive inventory of the Red Creek and Adobe Town areas to determine their potential for designation as primitive or natural areas. (Complete studies by FY 1980.) Keep surface disturbances to a minimum consistent with requirements of authorized uses.**

**Rationale:** Public comment indicates that these areas should receive special management consideration as long as all values are considered in such designation.



## Cultural Resources

Provide protection and interpretation for significant historic, archeological and paleontological resources while permitting other resource use and development.

### ORV

Keep public lands open to ORV use to the maximum extent possible while minimizing disturbance to critical wildlife habitat and associated animals, watershed values, historic archeological and paleontological resources and natural and open space values.

The decision requires studies to determine the area's suitability for designation as well as the type of designation that should be pursued. The identified areas meet certain criteria that warrant protection. However, much of the Adobe Town area possessing unique values is within the checkerboard land pattern which complicates management opportunities and values.

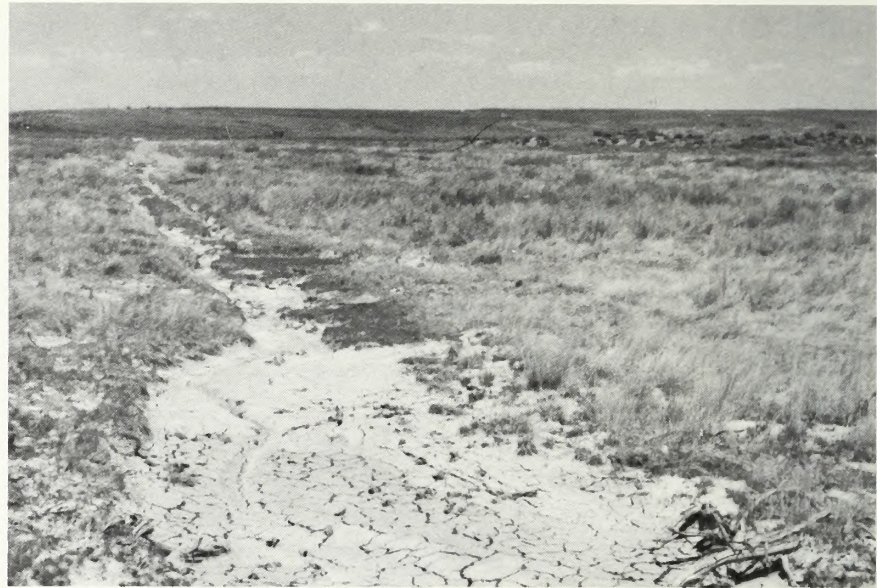
2. **CULTURAL RESOURCES: Protect significant historic trails and sites and undiscovered archeological and paleontological resources from disturbance. Develop an informational and interpretive program to maximize public enjoyment of significant resources. For the trails and sites identified for preservation and restoration through an inventory, exclude surface disturbance from one-quarter mile on either side or within the visible horizon, whichever is closer.**

**Rationale:** Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Executive Order 11593, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 require protection of significant historic, cultural and paleontological resource values.

Many of the trail sites have already been destroyed from the standpoint of being able to accurately retrace the ruts. However the general route should be interpreted and signed to identify the historic value. Where the detailed inventory identifies significant values the stipulations identified in the decision would be enforced to protect and retain these values.

Public comments suggested that the one-quarter mile restriction on all trails was too broad. Each case should be assessed on its own merits. Historic buildings and archeological sites should be protected. Where the loss of an archeological site is unavoidable from energy development, the site should be salvaged prior to development.

3. **OFF-ROAD VEHICLES: The planning area would be designated open to ORV use except for:**
  - a. **restriction of ORVs to existing roads in the Red Creek Basin and Adobe Town areas consistent with studies and possible designation as a special management area.**
  - b. **regulation in sage grouse breeding complexes which would limit ORVs to existing roads from April 1 to June 30.**



Not much . . . but all we have. The Overland Trail near the LaCiede station.

### c. **restrict use to existing roads in raptor, peregrine falcon and burrowing owl nesting areas.**

**The proposed restrictions are subject to a public hearing consistent with implementation of the ORV regulations.**

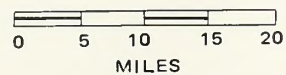
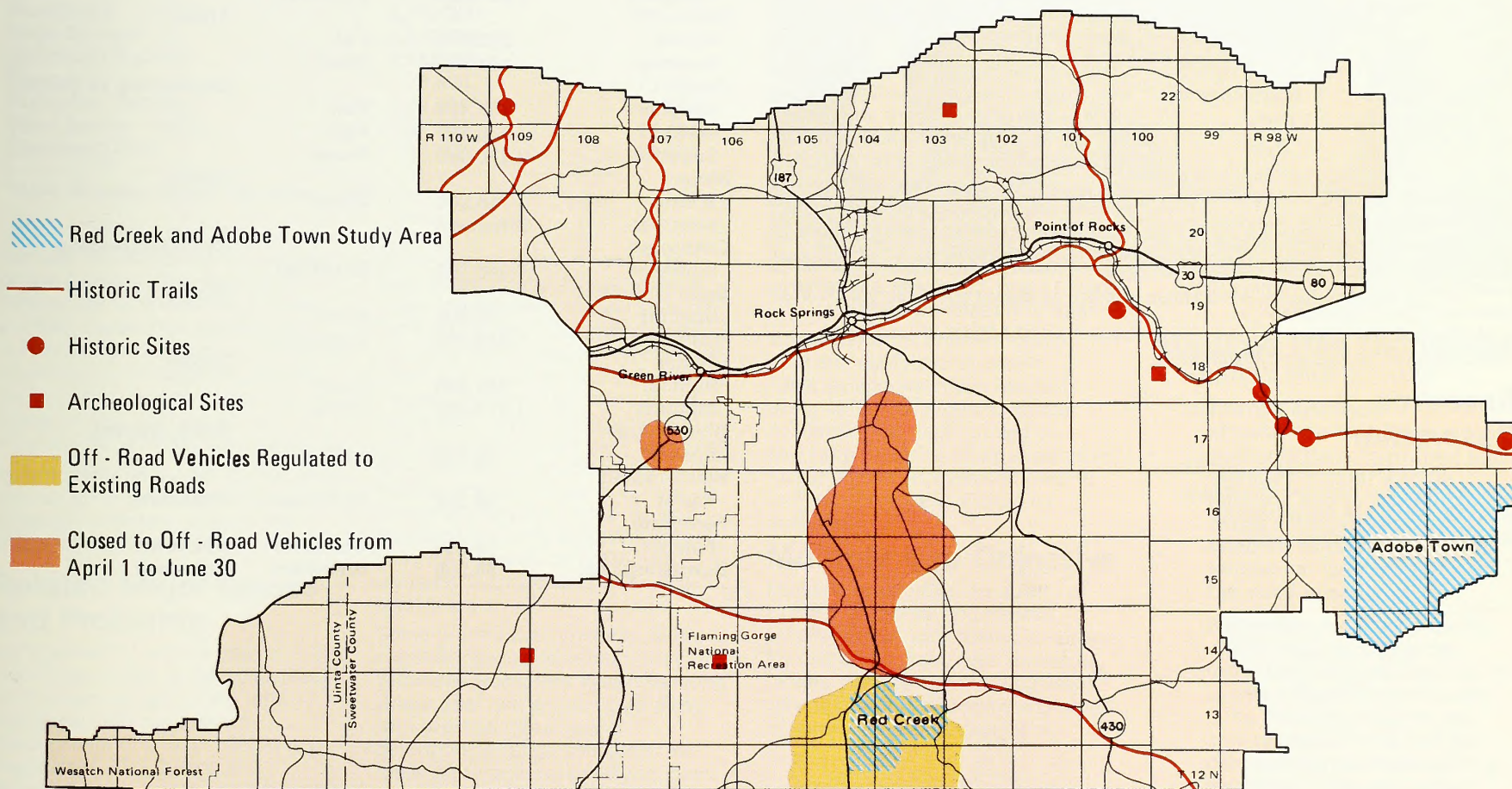
**Rationale:** The decision regulates ORV use in areas of critical watershed value such as Red Creek; critical breeding complex areas for sage grouse; nesting areas for raptors, peregrine falcons and burrowing owls; and in potential natural areas, Red Creek and Adobe Town. Implementation of these ORV restrictions requires coordination with the Rawlins District which has identified the following seasonal restrictions for oil and gas exploration and

development: (1) crucial big game habitat — December 15 to April 15; (2) sage grouse strutting and nesting — March 15 to April 15; and (3) active raptor nesting areas — May 1 to June 30.

Public comment indicates ORVs should be regulated in certain critical areas, kept to designated roads and trails and also should be regulated at certain times of the year in consideration of wildlife and livestock. The regulations should pertain to all ORVs (industry and government), not just to the private recreation user. ORVs should be regulated but not closed in Red Creek and Adobe Town areas. The public felt that it would be impossible to regulate all lands and that all lands should not be regulated.



# RECREATION





## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



(See Wildlife map, page 41.)

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The wildlife program is primarily concerned with the protection and improvement of habitat for all forms of game and non-game wildlife species. Wildlife is a major program in this planning unit because of the quality, variety and abundance of game and aquatic habitat. Wildlife values are an important consideration in developing other program decisions.

In order to protect and enhance these values, habitat management planning has become a major component of the wildlife program. The program activity is closely coordinated with the Wyoming State Game and Fish Department in conformance with their responsibilities for game populations.

### Resource Description

Threatened and endangered wildlife species that are possible inhabitants of public lands are the peregrine falcon and black-footed ferret.

Although most fishing streams are not solely on the public lands, some of the best are shared by several owners, including the public. Colorado River and Bear River cutthroat trout habitat are two of the most critical fish habitats. This significance is based on the rarity and the national interest in maintaining habitat for threatened or endangered wildlife.

Upland game birds and waterfowl are also frequent users of public lands. Habitat improvements are attainable through reservoir construction, reservoir fencing, nest construction and grazing management systems. Habitat management plans will continue to receive attention in the wildlife program.

Tables 12 and 13 provide a summary of major or threatened wildlife species and habitat information.

**TABLE 12** SALT WELLS PLANNING UNIT  
TERRESTRIAL HABITAT DATA

Species	Habitat Acres Approximate	Condition	Population Trend
<b>Antelope</b>			<b>Increasing</b>
Special	16,000	Good	
Winter	558,700	Good	
Summer	1,683,000	Excellent	
<b>Elk</b>			<b>Stable</b>
Winter	252,800	Fair	
Summer	161,300	Good	
<b>Deer</b>			<b>Decreasing to Stable</b>
Special	157,400	Fair	
Winter	958,000	Fair	
Summer	2,210,000	Good	
<b>Moose</b>			<b>Stable</b>
Winter	16,000	Good	
Summer	Unknown		
<b>Cottontail</b>			<b>Cyclic/Increasing</b>
Summer	1,948,000	Excellent	
<b>Sage Grouse</b>			<b>Stable</b>
Special	19,200	Good	
Summer	1,948,000	Excellent	
<b>Chukar</b>			<b>Stable</b>
Special	181,800	Good	
Summer	1,113,000	Good	
<b>Blue grouse</b>			<b>None present</b>
Special	16,600	Fair	
<b>Black-footed</b>			
Ferret	56,300	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Peregrine</b>			
Falcon	16,700	Unknown	Unknown
<b>Burrowing Owl</b>	56,300	Unknown	Unknown



TABLE 13

**PILOT BUTTE PLANNING UNIT\*  
TERRESTRIAL HABITAT DATA**

Species	Habitat Acres Approximate	Estimated Critical Habitat Acres
Deer	2,365,280	568,260
Elk	1,346,290	656,880
Pronghorn	2,750,000	704,230
Sage Grouse	2,812,000	—
Cottontail Rabbit	2,987,000	—
Moose	73,800	73,800
Peregrine Falcon	29,800	29,800
Black-footed Ferret	27,200	27,200
Burrowing Owl	38,580	38,580

\*Also includes Sandy Planning Unit

Detailed information is not available for the planning area regarding endangered or threatened species and their associated habitats. To maintain or protect habitat utilized by threatened or endangered species, the locations, season of use and forage or prey species which influence the animals must be known.

Specific data on habitat for non-game species and raptors are lacking. However, inventory work is now underway in these areas.

## Related Major Issues and Problems

Management of wildlife habitat is of prime importance to the associated wildlife species and to the total ecological interrelationship. Management of crucial habitat is a major issue. The Bureau's responsibility is to provide adequate food and cover on important areas during critical periods of the year. These include winter and early spring ranges for big game, the reproductive period and areas for sage grouse, antelope, deer and elk.

Other related problems result from inadequate forage allocations and water development in relationship to competition for forage with livestock and wild horses, restriction of movement due to fences and disturbance caused by human activity (mining, recreation, ORVs). Vegetative and soil disturbances can have an effect on food, cover and water quality for wildlife species. These activities are increasing and the direct result is decreasing wildlife habitat. Some uses may have to be restricted, limited or excluded within crucial habitat areas.

Some of the major conflicts with maintaining wildlife habitat exist within the Red Creek watershed area where deer and elk numbers along with livestock grazing are deteriorating range conditions and reducing forage availability to meet winter wildlife needs. Other areas will be affected by coal development, particularly those adjacent to important raptor nesting sites. This would involve approximately 1,360 acres of proposed lease area.



Nature's minuet. Sage grouse strutting grounds are a valuable resource.

Other concerns include reduced riparian vegetation for beaver, fisheries and waterfowl habitats along perennial streams. Habitat conditions can be improved by fencing portions of these streams (22 miles) to exclude livestock grazing and restrict surface disturbing activities.

## Multiple Use Objective

Maintain or improve the quality of existing terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat with special emphasis for crucial habitats, such as winter ranges, nesting and strutting areas, calving grounds and spawning areas, to support present populations.

## Multiple Use Decisions

### 1. HABITAT PROTECTION:

- (a) Provide adequate stipulations on land use authorizations to protect and maintain crucial wildlife habitats and to rehabilitate surface disturbances with adapted vegetation species. Implement ORV closures as the need arises.

**Rationale:** Impacts on crucial wildlife habitats cannot be eliminated although they can be largely mitigated over the long term. Presently, most of the area is leased for oil and gas development and exploration is increasing. Coal and sodium leases also cover many areas.



Indiscriminate human activity can have a damaging effect on wildlife. This action can cause extreme stress on the animals during a period when they are least able to withstand the effects.

Closures will be made when the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has documented a problem and made a specific request for closure. These will be limited to the minimum area and time required and will be subjected to public analysis.

**(b) Limit fence construction on crucial deer and antelope winter ranges and construct fences to allow for natural movement of wildlife. Coordinate all fence proposals with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department prior to implementation.**

**Rationale:** Improperly located or poorly designed livestock control fences can greatly restrict wildlife movements. Design standards can be used to mitigate this interference. Careful on-the-ground multi-discipline study can avoid the problems associated with poor fence location. The public supports a minimum fencing policy.

**(c) Restrict all activities within the two-mile radius of known or indicated sage grouse breeding complexes. Close these sites to off-road travel during the reproductive period from April 1 to June 30. Exclude all actions which would significantly alter the vegetative composition of these sites. Coordinate with Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Rawlins District.**

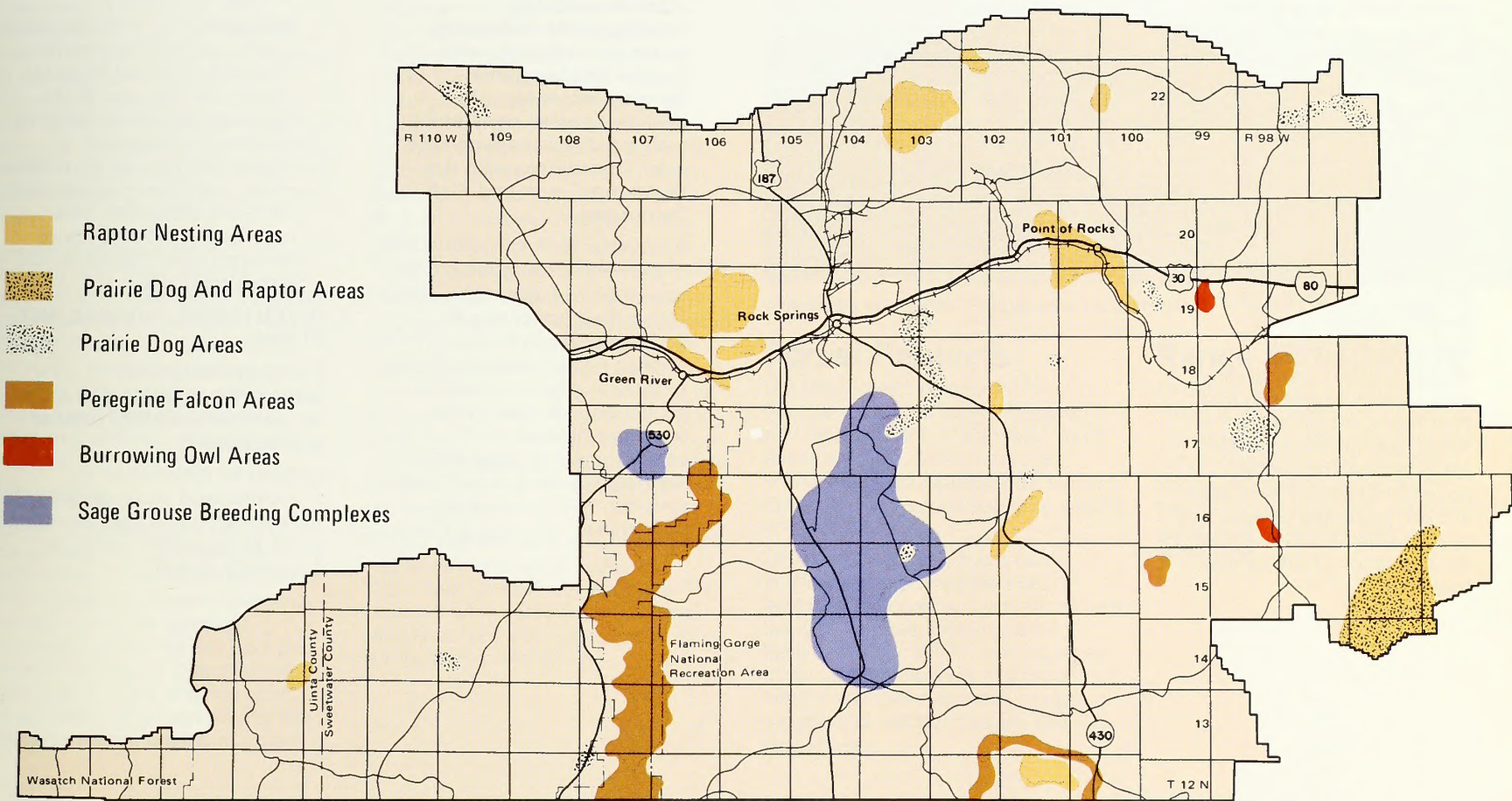
**Rationale:** These sage grouse breeding complexes are essential to reproduction. Disturbance during the reproductive period or to the vegetative composition could have a serious impact on maintaining sufficient birds for hunting in the area. Protection of these sites can be accommodated by achieving minimum disturbance and activity, assuring sage grouse requirements and strict rehabilitation stipulations.



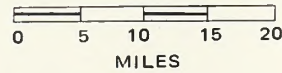
**Forage must be allocated if the antelope is to survive in these times of intensive range use.**



# WILDLIFE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT





(d) **Restrict activity and disturbance within one-half mile of important raptor nesting sites. Authorize no action within this zone that would destroy or interrupt nesting sites.**

**Restrict surface disturbance within prairie dog towns. Allow no surface disturbance if the black-footed ferret is present.**

**Rationale:** Inside the zone protective stipulations can be required to mitigate any short or long-term impact. It is important that raptor habitat be protected and that BLM allow only minimal physical disturbance to occur. Threatened and endangered species require special protective action.

Prairie dogs are part of the total ecological makeup and their habitat must be reasonably protected. Their towns are habitat for the endangered black-footed ferret and are protected as specified by law. Most actions can permit the protection of prairie dog towns.

(e) **Allocate a proportionate share of the forage and vegetative resource for wildlife. As necessary, adjust wildlife, livestock and wild horses to obtain an equitable use balance.**

**Rationale:** Documented reservations have not been made for season of use, class of livestock, area of use, numbers and types of wildlife. There is an obligation to provide necessary habitat for wildlife in balance with other resource needs.

## 2. HABITAT EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT:

(a) **Develop additional upland game bird water, install bird ramps and watering facilities on existing and future multiple use waters. Fence around new and existing reservoirs, spring developments, providing water for livestock, wild horses and big game. Develop water for other wildlife species consistent with a habitat management plan. Coordinate with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.**

**Rationale:** Lack of water is one of the most limiting factors for upland game birds in this area. These developments and facilities would enhance existing habitat areas and allow expansion into other suitable habitat not now being used. Fencing would allow the establishment of adequate vegetative growth around water developments for cover for both chukar and sage grouse.

(b) **Fence aquatic habitat and plant shorelines having potential for improvement. Locate fences to provide sufficient area for livestock and wild horse watering. Include management of these areas in allotment management plans.**

**Rationale:** The standing water inventory identified several sites with potential value for wildlife. Grazing use of the shoreline vegetation depletes riparian and emergent vegetation required for wildlife cover, sediment retention and shoreline protection. This reduces the productivity of standing water habitat to just a watering source.

## 3. INVENTORIES, STUDIES AND PLANS:

**Complete necessary inventories, studies and plans for adequate wildlife habitat management.**

**Rationale:** Information on threatened and endangered wildlife, non-game species, raptors and critical wildlife habitat is essentially lacking.



# CUMULATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

## Lands

Specific land use decisions will provide public lands for orderly development and growth, while allowing consolidation of utility routes into designated corridors.

Social well-being, income, employment, tax base and the general economy of the area will benefit from controlled land disposal and development. The overall environment, including the visual resource, would also benefit from this controlled development, which would confine facilities to zoned areas and corridors, thus protecting open space values.

As a result of these actions, negative short and long term impacts could occur within or near these localized areas. These could include impacts on water quality, visual resources, community services (health, education, police, roads, etc.), historic sites and trails, wildlife habitat and undiscovered cultural resources.

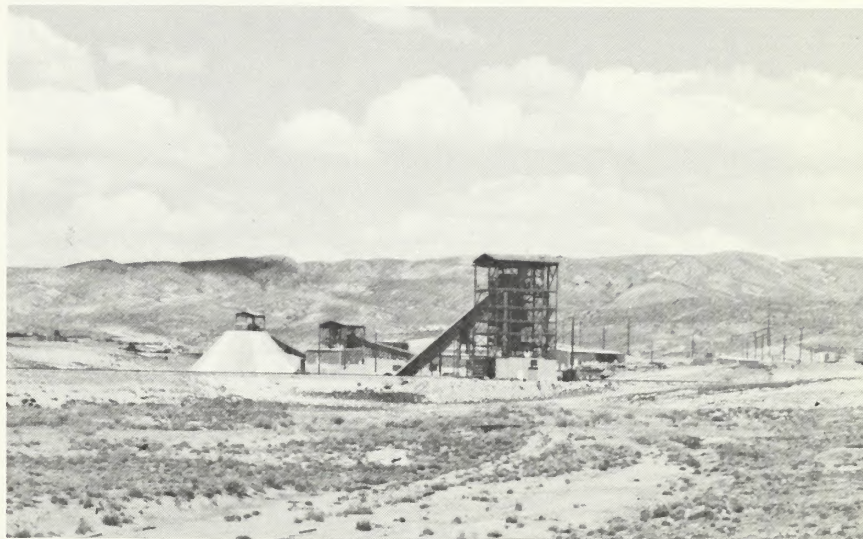
## Minerals

Impacts generated as a result of mineral resource decisions have beneficial and adverse effects on social values and the environment. Minerals having the greatest development potential are coal and petroleum products. Decisions to develop oil and gas and the coal through exploration and mining will provide a needed energy source.

Coal development would result in negative impacts to wildlife habitat, visual resources, livestock forage, water quality and air quality. Special consideration for areas having unique or natural qualities will preserve these important environmental areas as well as the social values. Social values will be adversely affected. Coal development will cause a change in the present lifestyle by increasing the population through employment opportunity, thereby increasing the demand for already limited facilities and public services (schools, law enforcement, medical care, etc.). Benefits will also occur through increased income, employment, tax base and improvement in the general economy.

The decision to allow continued oil and gas exploration and development could have a cumulative and wide ranging adverse effect on other nonrenewable resources throughout most of the area. Impacts would be scattered but localized, and through protective measures, applied to each specific site, the total overall effect will be mitigated.

Social values would be affected both negatively and beneficially, as described for coal development. Oil and gas development will be more widely spread and impact community services to some extent.



Stansbury coal mine. Stipulations go with mines — there's no other way.

## Forest Products

Decisions pertaining to forestry are directly related to stand improvement and development. They would have minor adverse impacts on the environment associated with surface disturbance, visual resources, wildlife and watershed.

Benefits from sales would include employment opportunities, directly adding to the economic and social well-being of the area. Environmental benefits will occur from well managed forest lands in the form of a more healthy and viable resource capable of providing for aesthetic values and other related uses.

## Range Management

Livestock forage decisions are directed at maintaining or improving the vegetative resource. Improved range conditions and increased forage production will provide benefits to all activities dependent on a sustained yield of quality vegetation.



Management practices such as fences, water development and vegetative treatment will be designed and located to minimize their impact on wildlife, recreation, and open space values, while being used as an essential tool for increasing vigor and establishing new plant growth. Allowance for change in class of livestock will be dependent on benefits to the vegetative resource and other competing uses, whichever combination will provide the best ecological balance.

Maintaining a vigorous and healthy vegetative cover will provide a sound base for multiple use management. It will also preserve a way of life and assure long range environmental protection.

## Wild Horses

Control of wild horses in the checkerboard area will be consistent with the Wild Horse and Burro Act. The decision provides for removal of horses from this area, which contains more than 50% private land. This will result in management designed to stabilize horse populations, thus halting overuse on the vegetation, thereby benefiting wildlife, watershed, livestock and overall environmental quality.

## Watershed

Enhancement and protection of water quality, soils and vegetative resources is stressed as a means of improving watersheds.

Environmentally acceptable management practices and land treatments are proposed to improve watershed conditions by correcting past use imbalances. Benefits expected include decreased soil erosion, improved vegetative cover and better water quality.

Adverse impacts are slight to nonexistent, as far as the environment is concerned, although some social impact could be expected as a result of restrictions being imposed on surface disturbing activities.

## Recreation

Minimal impacts are expected as a result of recreation management decisions. In general they favor environmental protection and continuance of present life styles.

Planned control in the authorization of surface disturbing activities and intrusions will preserve historic values and maintain a quality visual resource. Natural areas will be preserved and recreation activities will not be allowed to significantly degrade the existing ecological interrelationships. Historic sites and trails are to be managed and preserved for their social values.

Some restraints for the protection of geologic values, scenic qualities and endangered fauna and flora will cause conflicts with other uses and even within the recreation program. An example of this would be possible restrictions placed on off-road vehicle use.



**If habitat is not assured for this peregrine falcon now — it won't be here later.**

## Wildlife

Management actions are aimed at benefiting wildlife habitat (terrestrial and aquatic) and the associated wildlife species. These actions consistently favor a balanced ecological interrelationship of the environment. Decisions are directed at protecting and improving specific habitat areas such as stream banks, riparian areas, winter and early spring big game ranges, sage grouse strutting grounds and reproductive areas and kidding, fawning and calving grounds.

Other management recommendations include a balanced allocation of the vegetation and water resource, minimum disturbance to wildlife habitat and movement and proper management and control of all other competing uses. Restrictions placed on other activities will impact the existing way of life and mode of operations, but are generally considered to provide more positive social and environmental benefits than adverse impacts.



## INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PLANS

During development of this MFP, an effort was made to coordinate this plan with other federal, state and local government officials. This was to ensure that BLM planning efforts and management decisions were not in conflict with land use plans of other agencies. Agencies or government officials contacted during the planning process included Soil Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Sweetwater County Commissioners, Sweetwater County Planning Commission and the Southwestern Wyoming Water Quality Planning Agency. BLM districts were contacted to ensure coordination.

Many of the decisions in this brochure will have on- and off-site implications affecting other agencies. Major decisions relative to coal development could affect every agency mentioned above. Large scale coal development will create significant workloads for some governmental organizations, especially for the State Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Geological Survey and Sweetwater County.

Decisions relative to land disposition for community expansion, development and public purposes have direct impacts on the local governing bodies. Land transfers without proper direction and purpose would create additional burdens on local governments for controlling use consistent with orderly growth. These decisions are intended to coincide with and are subject to approval by these governing bodies.

Intensifying management of livestock grazing on public lands will directly affect the State Land Commission, Soil Conservation Service and to a minor degree the U.S. Forest Service, which administer lands used by many of the same livestock operators. Management on public lands will have an impact on management objectives of private landowners, namely Rock Springs Grazing Association and Union Pacific Railroad, primarily within the checkerboard area. Implementation of range decisions will affect the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's administration of wildlife populations.



**Review with local governmental officials, as here on recreation-land needs, is a must if the public lands are to be truly public.**

Review and coordination efforts have been carried out with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in relation to wildlife habitat management and protection decisions.

Because of the landownership pattern, many of the management decisions affect other management agencies and their plans. Coordination must not be limited to the planning process but must continue throughout the implementation and evaluation of each decision to assess significant impacts that may have been overlooked.



## ACTIONS AFTER THE MFP

This plan will be followed by on-the-ground actions. Some of these actions may require the development of detailed activity plans prior to implementation of the decisions.

These actions are subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. An environmental assessment is prepared for each action, whether it is initiated by industry or BLM. If the impacts are unacceptable, the proposed action may be modified or rejected.

The implementation of on-the-ground actions by BLM is contingent on necessary funding by Congress. It may be some time before some of these decisions are implemented.

This plan will be continually updated and revised as new resource information becomes available, as technology improves, as needs and demands change, and as laws, regulations and policy change.

Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment.



## GLOSSARY

As in most systems, BLM's Planning System has its own "language." To help you understand some of the terms used in this brochure, a glossary is included for reference:

**Checkerboard Land Pattern:** A land ownership pattern resulting from early railroad grants made by the federal government to the Union Pacific Railroad Company to encourage construction of a transcontinental railroad system and settlement of the west. Generally, even numbered sections are public lands and odd numbered sections privately owned.

**Closed Areas and Trails:** Areas and trails where the use of off-road vehicles is permanently or temporarily prohibited.

**Exploration Plan:** A description of the area to be explored, the method and equipment to be used, access, and the measures to be taken to prevent or control fire, soil erosion, pollution of surface and ground water, damage to fish and wildlife or other natural resources, and hazards to public health and safety during and after exploration.

### **Management Framework Plan**

**(MFP):** A planning decision document which establishes, for a given planning area, land use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple use and management objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is the Bureau's Land Use Plan. It is prepared in three steps: Step One — Resource Recommendations; Step Two — Impact Analysis and Alternative Development; and Step Three — Decision-making.

**Mining Plan:** A description of the area to be mined, the method and equipment to be used and the reclamation proposed.

**Natural Area:** Areas established to preserve scenic values and areas of natural wonder. The preservation of these resources in their natural condition is the primary management objective. Access roads, parking areas and public use facilities are normally located on the periphery of the area. The public is encouraged to walk into the area for recreation purposes.

**Off-Road Vehicle:** Any vehicle capable of, or designed for travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, deriving motive power from any sources other than muscle, excluding: (1) any nonamphibious registered motorboat; (2) any military, fire, emergency, law enforcement or other government vehicle while being used for official or emergency purposes and (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized on public land.

**Open Areas and Trails:** Areas and trails where off-road vehicles may be operated subject to the operating regulations and vehicle standards.

**Planning Area:** One or more complete planning units for which a land use plan is to be prepared.

**Planning Area Analysis:** This document analyzes requirements of the public now and in the future for lands, and renewable and non-renewable resources. It shows the significance of the lands within a planning area to users, operators, the community and region. It is based on data in the URA, Socio-Economic Profile and other regional information.

**Planning Unit:** A portion of a Bureau of Land Management district used for assembling resource inventory data. For each planning unit the district manager prepares a Unit Resource Analysis.

**Primitive Area:** Natural, wild and undeveloped lands in settings essentially removed from the effects of civilization. Essential characteristics are a natural environment that can be conserved and on which there is no undue disturbance by roads and commercial uses.

**Regulated Areas and Trails:** Areas and trails where the use of off-road vehicles is subject to restrictions deemed appropriate by the authorized officer. Restrictions may limit the number of types of vehicles allowed, times of use, areas of trails used and similar matters.

**Riparian Vegetation:** Vegetation associated with the area or zone along the bank of a river or other body of water.

**Socio-Economic Profile:** An information document for use in plan preparation. It describes the human populations in terms of social and economic factors. It also provides a checklist of other state and federal agencies to be consulted. It analyzes and records data relating to a relatively large region or area sharing similar socio-economic characteristics. A region may be a group of entire, adjoining counties, or it may approximate a district. It includes several planning areas.

**Unit Resource Analysis (URA):** A basic source of information on the land and its resources, consisting of:

Base Map

Physical Profile

Resource Inventory Summaries

Resource potential and capability of the land to fill the public's needs for these activities: lands, minerals, recreation, wildlife, watershed, forest products, and range management.

Ecological Profile: a description and an analysis of the existing state of the ecosystems in the planning system.



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Denver, CO 80225-0047



# COMMENT SHEET

**District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901**

Following are my comments regarding the Salt Wells-Pilot Butte Land Use Management Plan:



(tear here)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



COMMENT SHEET

District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
P.O. Box 1869  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

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Bureau of Land Management  
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Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901**



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Phone 778-2220-2326

**DISTRICT OFFICES**

**Rock Springs District Office**

P.O. Box 1088  
Highway 187N  
Rock Springs, WY 82901  
307-362-6613

**\*Green River Resource Area**

**Pinedale Resource Area**

P.O. Box 768  
Molyneux Bldg.  
Pinedale, WY 82941  
307-367-4358

**Kemmerer Resource Area**

P.O. Box 632  
Kemmerer, WY 83101  
307-877-3933

**Worland District Office**

P.O. Box 119  
1700 Robertson Ave.  
Worland, WY 82401  
307-347-6151

**\*Shoshone Resource Area**

**\*Washakie Resource Area**

\*Located at District Office

**Rawlins District Office**

P.O. Box 670  
1300 3rd Street  
Rawlins, WY 82301  
307-324-6621

**\*Divide Resource Area**

**\*Medicine Bow Resource Area**

**Lander Resource Area**

P.O. Box 589  
Lander, WY 82520  
307-332-4220

**Casper District Office**

951 Union Blvd.  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-265-5550, ext. 5101

**\*Platte River Resource Area**

**Buffalo Resource Area**

P.O. Box 670  
Buffalo, WY 82834  
307-684-5586



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