



Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features

Sagebrush Ecosystem Council
Meeting

July 17th, 2018



Recommendation

- Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features
 - Measures or actions designed to minimize adverse effects to sage-grouse and their habitats due to disturbances
 - 18 pages
 - 184 design features
- BLM's Required Design Features
- USFS's Standards and Guidelines
- Recommend Referring to the Appropriate Agency's Guidelines

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features (here after Design Features) are used to minimize impacts to sage-grouse and its habitat due to disturbances on a project by project and site by site basis. Design Features in the State of Nevada's plan apply to all newly proposed projects and modifications to existing projects. Existing projects within the Service Area are not currently subject to Design Features; however all Design Features listed below, according to program area, are required to be considered as part of the SETT Consultation process. The State of Nevada recognizes that all Design Features may not be practical, feasible, or appropriate in all instances considering site conditions and project specifications, nor is this list completely exhaustive. Therefore, the SETT in coordination with the project proponent, will consider all of the listed Design Features on a site-specific basis taking into consideration the best available science references for guidance in planning and implementation. If certain Design Features are determined to not be practical, feasible, or appropriate for the specific project site, the SETT will document the reasons the Design Features were not selected. The SETT may also consider additional Design Features that may minimize impacts to sage-grouse and its habitat that are not specifically listed here and document the reasons for selecting the additional Design Features.

Roads

These Design Features apply to all new roads, whether a component of a mining/ energy project or for any other purpose.

- Do not construct new roads where roads already in existence, could be used or upgraded to meet the needs of the project or operation.
- Design roads to an appropriate standard, no higher than necessary, to accommodate their intended purpose and level of use.
- Locate roads outside of key sage-grouse seasonal habitat, such as leks and late brood rearing habitat areas. New roads that are located within 3 miles of a lek should have seasonal restrictions from March 1 to May 15 from 1 hour before sunrise to 9 a.m.
- Coordinate road construction and use among ROW or SUA holders.
- Avoid constructing roads within riparian areas and ephemeral drainages (note that such construction may require permitting under section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act).
- Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings.
- Work with local governments to enforce speed limits and design roads to be driven at speeds appropriate to minimize vehicle/wildlife collisions.
- Establish trip restrictions (Lyon and Anderson 2003) or minimization through use of remote access technology, such as telemetry and remote well control if applicable (e.g., Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).



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- 184 design features
 - 133 are addressed either in the BLM’s own RDFs, in the body of the DEIS (i.e. Avoid Process) or implemented by the BLM as standard
 - 3 to include as comments in the DEIS
 - 48 are not applicable to permitted actions requiring Design Features

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Feature	Location in DEIS
Do not construct new roads where roads already in existence, could be used or upgraded to meet the needs of the project or operation.	RDF Gen 3
Design roads to an appropriate standard, no higher than necessary, to accommodate their intended purpose and level of use.	RDF Gen 3
Locate roads outside of key sage-grouse seasonal habitat, such as leks and late brood rearing habitat areas. New roads that are located within 3 miles of a lek should have seasonal restrictions from March 1 to May 15 from 1 hour before sunrise to 9 a.m.	RDF Gen 1
Coordinate road construction and use among ROW or SUA holders.	RDF Gen 4
Avoid constructing roads within riparian areas and ephemeral drainages (note that such construction may require permitting under section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act).	RDF Gen 2
Construct road crossings at right angles to ephemeral drainages and stream crossings.	RDF Gen 2
Work with local governments to enforce speed limits and design roads to be driven at speeds appropriate to minimize vehicle/wildlife collisions.	RDF Gen 5
Establish trip restrictions (Lyon and Anderson 2003) or minimization through use of remote access technology, such as telemetry and remote well control if applicable (e.g., Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition).	RDF Lease FM 9
Restrict vehicle traffic to authorized users on newly constructed routes by employing traffic control devices such as signage, gates, fencing etc.	RDF Gen 6
Dust abatement on roads and pads will be based on road use, road condition, season, and other pertinent considerations.	RDF Gen 7
Close and rehabilitate duplicate roads by restoring original landform and establishing desired vegetation, in cooperation with landholders and where appropriate authority exists to do so.	RDF Gen 9



Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features

- 3 to include as comments in the DEIS

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Feature	DEIS Comment
<p>Where sage-grouse conservation opportunities exist, BLM and Forest Service should work in cooperation with rights-of-way holders to conduct maintenance and operation activities, authorized under an approved ROW grant, to avoid and minimize effect on sage-grouse habitat.</p>	<p>The SETT recommends that the BLM works in cooperation with the rights-of-way holders to conduct maintenance and operation activities, authorized under an approved ROW grant, in a way that avoids and minimizes effects on sage-grouse habitat.</p>
<p>Design and construct fences consistent with NRCS fence standards and specifications, Code 382 and, where appropriate, use fence markers (Sage Grouse Initiative 2013) around sumps.</p> <p>(Currently using a 1989 H-1741-1 Fencing; http://www.emwh.org/issues/public%20trust/mt%20pt%20threats/fencing/BLM%20Fencing%20Standards%20H-1741-1.pdf)</p>	<p>Consider updating the fence standards based on the NRCS fence standards and specifications, Code 382, and requiring fence markers around sumps or meadows.</p>
<p>All troughs should be outfitted with the appropriate type and number of wildlife escape ramps.</p> <p>(Currently a BLM IM, however set to expire next year)</p>	<p>The SETT requests that the IM that stipulates that “all water developments be outfitted with the appropriate type and number of wildlife escape ramps” be a permanent standard instead of a temporary IM.</p>



Site Specific Consultation Based Design Features

- 48 are not applicable to permitted actions requiring Design Features and have yet to be adopted by the federal agencies
 - 15 are addressed in the State Plan Threat Assessment – Management Actions

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Feature	Management Action in State Plan
Incorporate resilience and resistance and other best available science concepts into fuels treatment planning activities	7.1
Ensure that treatments are configured in a manner that promotes use by sage-grouse.	1.1.1.16
Emphasize the use of native plant species, recognizing that non-native species may be necessary depending on the availability of native seed and prevailing site conditions	1.1.1.16
All fuels management projects should include short and long term monitoring to ensure success and provide for adaptive management. Multiple re-vegetation entries may be required to ensure success.	1.1.1.18
As safety allows, conduct mop-up where the black adjoins unburned islands, dog legs, or other habitat features to minimize sagebrush loss.	1.1.1.10
Eliminate “burning out” islands and fingers of unburned sage-grouse habitat, unless lives and property are at risk.	1.1.1.10
Develop trail mapping, and educational campaigns to reduce recreational impacts on sage-grouse, including effects of cross country travel.	7.1.2.1
Where feasible, locate recreation trails strategically to create or augment fuel breaks in the margins of sage-grouse habitats and landscapes and not create roads or trails where they cause net negative direct and indirect impacts.	7.1.1.6



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- 48 are not applicable to permitted actions requiring Design Features and have yet to be adopted by the federal agencies
 - 33 incorporate into the State Plan Threat Assessment – Management Actions
 - Can be used to guide the BLM in the beginning of the permitting process
 - Can be distributed to conservations and planning groups to utilize in their restoration and fire prevention planning

Site Specific Consultation Based Design Feature	Management Action in State Plan
Provide training to all fuels treatment personnel on sage-grouse biology, habitat requirements, and identification of areas used locally.	1.1.1.8
Provide localized maps to dispatch offices and extended attack incident commanders for use in prioritizing wildfire suppression resources and designing suppression tactics.	1.1.1.11
Relocate or modify existing water developments (including locating troughs to further disperse livestock) that are having a net negative impact on sage-grouse habitats. Any changes to existing water developments must be conducted in accordance with State Water Law and in close consultation with the water right owner in order to avoid a “taking” of private property water rights.	5.1.1.6
Ensure proposed sagebrush treatments are planned with full interdisciplinary input pursuant to NEPA and coordination with NDOW and SETT, and that treatment acreage is conservative in the context of surrounding sage-grouse seasonal habitats and landscape.	5.1.1.16
In coordination with appropriate agencies, consider development of fuel breaks in reclamation design.	6.1.2.3
Special recreation permits must have stipulations to minimize impacts to sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat based upon the specific activity and ensures net conservation gain of sage-grouse habitat.	7.1.1.1