

**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
Bureau of Land Management

Bakersfield District  
Bishop Resource Area  
787 N. Main Street, Suite P  
Bishop, California 93514

**April 1993**

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# **Bishop Resource Management Plan Record of Decision**



**As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.**

**Cover Photo: Virginia Creek about 1 mile above Conway Summit**

# **Bishop Resource Management Plan Record of Decision**

**Approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Haste  
State Director, California

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Date

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management<sup>1</sup>  
California State Office  
Bakersfield District  
Bishop Resource Area**

<sup>1</sup>The USDA Forest Service, Inyo National Forest, is a Cooperating Agency for the Transmission Line Corridor portion of this Record of Decision.

# Bishop Resource Management Plan Record of Decision

**Responsible Agency:** Bureau of Land Management, Bakersfield District.

**Cooperating Agency:** USDA Forest Service, Inyo National Forest, for the Transmission Line Corridor portion of the Record of Decision.

**Type of Action:** Administrative

**Abstract:** The Bishop Resource Management Plan Record of Decision records the Bureau of Land Management's final land use decisions for managing public lands administered by the Bishop Resource Area, Bakersfield District, California.

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# Record of Decision

## Introduction

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This document records the decisions made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for managing BLM administered public land surface and federal mineral estate in the Bishop Resource Area. Located in the eastern Sierra region of California in Inyo and Mono Counties, the Bishop Resource Area encompasses 750,000 acres of public land and about 9,000 acres of federal mineral estate under private land (Figure 1). The area office also administers mineral leases on two million acres of the Inyo and Toiyabe National Forests.

The Bishop Resource Area is divided into nine geographically delineated management areas (Figure 2). This Record of Decision includes policies, guidelines, valid existing management, standard operating procedures, and land use decisions applicable to the entire resource area; land use decisions specific to each management area; and a decision regarding designation of an east-west transmission line corridor. It also includes livestock grazing decisions carried forward from earlier documents.

The Inyo National Forest was a cooperating agency for the decision regarding potential designation of an east-west transmission line corridor across BLM and Forest Service managed lands.

## Decision

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The decision is to approve the proposed action as published in the final Bishop Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP and EIS), issued in October 1991 (dated August 1991), except for decisions concerning the east-west transmission line corridor and the

Bodie Bowl Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The east-west transmission line corridor decision is changed to the "No Action" alternative.

In the Bodie Bowl ACEC, the proposed locatable mineral withdrawal has been expanded to include all public lands within the ACEC boundary, and language has been added to ensure consideration of potential park and visitor facilities in the ACEC management plan. A complete listing of approved decisions is included in this Record of Decision.

The approved RMP decisions focus on resolving four major issues identified through public involvement early in the planning process. These issues were:

**Recreation** - how to provide for a variety of recreational uses, meet increasing demand for recreation opportunities, and reduce potential conflicts with other uses or values;

**Wildlife** - where and what management prescriptions are needed to enhance or maintain important wildlife habitats and populations;

**Minerals** - how to meet the demand for mineral uses and reduce potential conflicts with other uses or values; and

**Land Ownership and Authorizations** - where BLM should acquire or dispose of land, how and where public lands should be available for special or private uses, and how land use authorizations can be managed to reduce potential conflicts with other uses or values.

In addition to these issues, specific decisions relate to Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Special Recreation Management Areas, Scenic Byways, and





streams eligible for study as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System. There are also decisions addressing livestock grazing, cultural resources, fuelwood harvesting, fire suppression, and an east-west transmission line corridor.

Area Manager's Guidelines, Valid Existing Management and Standard Operating Procedures listed in Chapter 1 of the final RMP will also guide management of the resource area, and help determine how proposed actions are implemented. These are also included as part of this Record of Decision.

Implementation of the RMP will require some additional planning and environmental analyses. Prior to authorizing site specific actions (habitat improvement projects, fencing, mineral development, etc.), the appropriate level of additional environmental analysis will be performed and documented in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and Department of the Interior and BLM manuals.

## **Alternatives Considered**

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Four alternatives were analyzed in the draft RMP and EIS. These were: 1) No Action/Continuation of Present Management; 2) Custodial Management; 3) Natural Resource Enhancement; and 4) the Preferred Alternative. The first alternative represented a continuation of present levels of resource use and direction. The second alternative represented a direction which favored commodity production such as mining, livestock grazing, and motorized recreation with little BLM oversight or management activity. The third alternative was the environmentally preferable alternative. It represented a direction favoring protection or enhancement of environmental values such as wildlife habitat and aesthetics. The fourth alternative sought to resolve issues in a balanced manner, providing for development of resources while protecting or enhancing environmental values.

Following extensive public comment and analysis on the draft, a proposed action was then developed and presented in the final RMP and EIS. The approved RMP is the proposed action from the final, with changes regarding the east-west transmission line corridor and the Bodie Bowl Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) that resulted from protest resolution. It is an alternative that allows continued commodity production and increased response to local community needs, yet provides for better protection of the environment than did the preferred alternative in the draft..

## **Management Considerations**

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The BLM has the responsibility to manage public lands and resources to provide for a variety of uses. Through the RMP process, the BLM and the public have painted a picture of the resource conditions and activities they desire to see on these lands. Decisions in the RMP are designed to enhance our ability to achieve this picture. Many of the decisions provide guidelines and standards which all activities will follow so the picture can become reality. Because of overwhelming public desire, we placed an emphasis on environmental values in the final RMP decisions.

Over 8,000 acres of Bureau land are identified for potential disposal, and over 18,000 acres of private land are identified as potential acquisitions. The large amounts of land in each category are intended to provide flexibility for land exchanges. If an opportunity arises for a land exchange which would allow us to acquire prime habitat or improve management of public lands and resources, the exchange could occur without a plan amendment. The decision to emphasize land exchanges is intended to prevent a net loss to the local

tax base. It is doubtful that even 25% of the proposed disposals and acquisitions will be completed within the life of the plan.

Groundwater pumping and water export have been central issues in the eastern Sierra for several decades. BLM's position is clarified with the decision to protect local resource conditions by prohibiting groundwater pumping on Bureau land where it would interfere with valid existing water rights, desired plant community goals, or other resource condition objectives.

Watershed withdrawals no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally designed. These withdrawals place serious constraints on our ability to properly manage the land. A change in the watershed withdrawals is proposed that would improve our ability to manage Bureau land, protect federal water rights, and maintain our "4e" comment authority with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Recreation is a mainstay of the eastern Sierra economy. The type best suited for Bureau lands is predominantly dispersed use in semi-primitive, undeveloped settings. The RMP decisions stress the maintenance and enhancement of these settings. They also provide for a variety of recreation opportunities that are compatible with those settings and other RMP prescriptions. Future development of recreation opportunities will include management of uses compatible with the semi-primitive setting.

Scenery is an important value to visitors who travel to the eastern Sierra. Visual resource management was strengthened in the final RMP to increase protection for areas of high scenic quality and to reduce cumulative adverse impacts on visual resources in the region. Since the early 1980s, Americans have grown increasingly sensitive to impairment of scenic landscapes and environmental values. They prefer increased environmental protection and appear to be willing to incur costs associated with that protection. The RMP's emphasis on visual resource management reflects this viewpoint.

The "limited" off-highway vehicle designation which covers most of the resource area is necessary to prevent adverse impacts that would result from unrestricted use. Detailed activity plans, developed with public participation, will identify specific vehicle use opportunities and restrictions.

Wildlife resources are another important value in the eastern Sierra region. Bureau lands provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species and the public has expressed growing concern for proper management and protection of these habitats. Numerous decisions in the RMP emphasize protection and enhancement of important plant and animal habitats without eliminating other land uses. Specifically, yearlong protection restrictions and desired plant community goals were established to maintain and restore streams, riparian areas, meadows, aspen groves and other important wildlife habitats.

Livestock grazing decisions are not being changed in most areas because decisions based on the Benton-Owens Valley and Bodie-Coleville Grazing EISs completed in the early 1980s are still valid. Federal grazing regulations and BLM rangeland monitoring policy allow for changes in grazing use based on monitoring of resource condition and objectives. Livestock management may change in some areas to improve management of important vegetation and habitat types.

The existing mineral withdrawals on the Bishop Petroglyph Loop and at the Dogtown historic site will continue to protect cultural resources. Additional withdrawals, such as the withdrawal around Bodie State Historic Park, will be implemented to protect important historic, wildlife, riparian and recreational values. Withdrawals were not proposed to protect endangered, threatened or candidate species since most habitats occur in areas with low mineral potential or on sites already under valid claim.

The Bodie Bowl has been the focus of considerable controversy due to potential impacts of mining on the town of Bodie. Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designation, a locatable mineral withdrawal, and other decisions affecting the Bowl were made to protect the integrity of the National Historic Landmark (NHL). The boundary of the NHL will be determined by the Department of the Interior and include historic resources within the Bodie Bowl that are of national significance.

The ACEC boundary (5,935 acres) covers the zone of influence on historic and associated visual resources

which deserve special recognition and management. As a result of ACEC designation, this nationally significant resource will receive additional recognition and all mineral exploration and development activities will require a Plan of Operations. This gives BLM greater control over these activities. The entire ACEC will also be withdrawn from mineral entry to preclude the establishment of future mining claims within the Bodie Bowl and thereby help protect these important cultural, recreational and scenic values.

An ACEC Plan will be developed with full public participation and input. Limits of Acceptable Change that will be developed for the ACEC Plan will describe standards which all activities on public lands within the ACEC must meet. Mineral development and other activities could occur if they could meet these standards.

No east-west transmission line corridor is established. If we receive an application for a transmission line in the resource area, a complete environmental analysis will be prepared and a decision will be made based upon that analysis.

## **Mitigation and Monitoring**

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RMP decisions will be reviewed annually to track implementation and to determine if plan amendments are needed. Resources will also be systematically monitored to ensure that resource condition objectives established in the RMP are being met. Future management changes will be made based on monitoring and evaluation.

The implementation of RMP decisions is tracked using the Bureau's Decision Implementation Tracking System. This computerized tracking system, referred to as "DEC," consists of a summary of each RMP decision, the estimated cost to implement each decision, and a schedule for implementing each decision. Using DEC, all decisions are evaluated annually to assure compliance with RMP direction. The DEC system is also used to forecast annual funding needs and to determine when changes in the plan are necessary.

Activity plans will explain how, when, and where resources will be monitored. This monitoring will determine the effectiveness of Bureau actions in meeting resource condition objectives (for example, desired plant community goals and livestock utilization standards) established in the RMP. An interdisciplinary team will develop these plans for a variety of programs including livestock grazing (Allotment Management Plans), wildlife (Habitat Management Plans), off-highway vehicles (such as the High Desert Off-Highway Vehicle Plan), and others.

Mitigation and stipulations will be built into individual plans and projects based upon the required environmental review. Additionally, actions within the resource area will follow Area Manager's Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures listed in Chapter 1 of the final RMP, and in this document

## **Public Involvement**

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The Bishop Resource Area made a conscientious effort to involve the public in the planning process, with numerous public notices, public meetings and mailings.

To initiate the process, we consulted with federal, state, county and city agencies as well as numerous private organizations and individuals. Key issues to be addressed in the RMP and EIS were identified following these consultations. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare the Bishop RMP was published in the Federal Register on June 27, 1988, and identified the six preliminary issues to be analyzed. The NOI also stated that there would be extensive public involvement during plan development.

Public scoping meetings were held in Lone Pine, Bridgeport, Walker, Bishop and Independence, California in July of 1988 to identify public concerns. Notification was sent to about 650 individuals. Announcements were also made in the local media. Ninety-four people attended these public scoping meetings. The results were summarized and sent to all who attended and to those on the RMP mailing list. The preliminary issues identified in the NOI were generally confirmed at the meetings. Some new concerns were also identified.

A NOI of proposed planning criteria for the RMP was published in the Federal Register in September 1988. Planning guidelines based on public and internal comments were prepared and distributed in April and June of 1989.

After a range of potential management alternatives were developed by BLM staff, public workshops were held in Bridgeport, Mammoth Lakes, Benton, Bishop and Independence, California in April 1990 to obtain further public input before publication of the draft RMP and EIS. A letter announcing the workshops and a summary of the alternatives were sent to those on the RMP mailing list. There were several announcements in the media and key contacts were personally notified. Many received detailed advance briefings. An average of 75 people attended each workshop and much valuable input was received. Several individuals were pleased to have the opportunity to provide input before the draft RMP was published.

After publication of the draft, the 90 day public review period was from October 19, 1990 to January 17, 1991. To facilitate review and receive comments, public meetings were held in Independence, Bishop, Bridgeport and Benton, California in late November and early December. A total of 160 people attended the meetings. About two weeks after the meetings, a letter which summarized comments and responded to concerns was sent to individuals on the RMP mailing list. Over 600 comment letters were also received during the public review period. Substantive oral and written comments were made on livestock grazing, mining, off-highway vehicle use, transmission line corridors, acquisitions and disposals, watershed withdrawals and many other topics. Responses were made in the final RMP to all written comments received.

Numerous meetings were held with concerned individuals and organizational representatives during preparation of the final. They provided input, and were allowed to examine our files.

The final RMP and EIS was mailed to approximately 650 addresses, including agencies, organizations, political entities, individuals and libraries. A complete list is on file at the Bishop Resource Area office.

Contact was continued with interested individuals and organizations during the final protest period. Notice of availability of the final RMP and EIS was made in the Federal Register by the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency on November 8, 1991. The official protest period ended on December 9, 1991. Contact has continued with most interested parties during the resolution of protests.

The Bishop Resource Area is committed to working with interested individuals, groups and agencies during plan implementation.

## **General Policies**

The following laws and policies guide planning and implementation of the RMP. [References are to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA)].

1. Management will be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield [Section 102(a)(7)].
2. Public lands are to be retained in federal ownership unless disposal serves the national interest [Section 102(a)(1)].
3. Public lands may be made available for disposal if they are difficult and uneconomic to manage and are not suitable for management by another federal department or agency [Section 203(a)(1)].
4. Public lands will be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use [Section 102(a)(8)].
5. Public lands will be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber including implementation of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, as it pertains to the public lands [Section 102(a)(12)].
6. The Bureau will give priority to the management and protection of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern [Section 202(c)(3)].
7. The Bureau will weigh long-term benefits to the public against short-term benefits [Section 202(c)(7)].
8. Management of public lands will consider:
  - a. Safety of the public and Bureau personnel;
  - b. Relative cost-effectiveness of managing individual tracts;
  - c. Fiscal ability of the Bureau to effectively manage lands and interests (including easements) over the long term; and
  - d. Alternative management schemes and creative partnerships with other agencies and organizations.
9. The BLM will not dispose of Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) or other resources of high national interest to non-federal agencies. Disposal of the habitat of endangered, threatened or sensitive species to non-federal agencies or nonprofit organizations may be considered only if the protection and conservation that would be afforded the habitat following transfer of title equals or exceeds the level afforded by federal

ownership. Such determination would be made by the State Director. Disposal of the habitat of officially listed endangered or threatened species would occur only after consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

10. BLM will continue to cooperate with the California Department of Fish and Game on Deer Herd Management Plans.
11. Site-specific inventories and analyses for endangered and threatened species, historic and prehistoric cultural properties, and mineral values are required prior to disposal of public lands and interests.
12. BLM will comply with the provisions of Sections 106 and 110 of the Historic Preservation Act including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for actions which may affect prehistoric and historic properties.
13. The Bureau will consult with local Indian communities to identify their concerns when projects might affect them. These concerns will be considered in the decision making process.
14. BLM will comply with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, including consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on projects that may affect endangered or threatened species.
15. BLM will participate in the state's comment process to provide input on proposed water uses which may affect the public lands.

## **Area Manager's Guidelines**

1. The preferred method of land tenure adjustment (both acquisition and disposal) is exchange. The Bureau intends to acquire lands from willing sellers.
2. Acquisitions and disposals identified in this RMP provide a list of parcels available for transfer. The Bureau intends to balance acquisitions and disposals such that no net decrease in private land occurs during the life of the plan.
3. Transfers of Bureau land to other agencies will be limited to small and isolated parcels.
4. Vegetation will be a key element in the plan and management will be directed toward the achievement of desired plant community goals.
5. Vegetative goals for watershed protection and wildlife, riparian and sensitive plant habitats will be given strong consideration in relationship to livestock forage needs. Permittee desired practices will be allowed provided vegetative goals can be met.
6. Rehabilitation of riparian areas will receive high priority for project implementation. Efforts will be made to return all watersheds in declining condition to equilibrium.
7. Actions that interfere significantly with efforts to maintain or enhance mule deer winter range will generally not be allowed.
8. Actions that interfere significantly with efforts to maintain or enhance sage grouse habitat will generally not be allowed.

9. Allotment Management Plans in the Bodie Hills Management Area will be developed or revised using the Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) process.
10. The RMP provides that off-highway vehicle use on all public lands will be limited to designated routes, with 1 open area (Poleta Canyon) identified. Specific route designations will be made in the on-going High Desert Off-highway Vehicle Study, the USFS/BLM Interagency Study, and the Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) process in the Bodie Hills. If the Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area is designated as wilderness, the area will be closed to vehicle use.
11. Mineral leasing decisions within the Inyo and Toiyabe National Forest boundaries will be in conformance with the respective forest plans.
12. Fuelwood harvesting prescriptions will be compatible with those on adjacent National Forest System lands.
13. Fire management plans and policies will emphasize suppression cost reduction and fire prevention at the urban-wildland interface.

## **Valid Existing Management**

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Decisions and recommendations made in the following documents are still valid and are incorporated into this Record of Decision.

1. Benton-Owens Valley and Bodie-Coleville Grazing EISs (1981 and 1982). These documents cover 69 allotments and 633,980 acres of Bureau land. Decisions carried forward are listed in the Livestock Grazing Decisions section and Appendix 4 of this Record of Decision.
2. Benton-Owens Valley/Bodie-Coleville Final Wilderness EIS (1987). This document covers 19 Wilderness Study Areas which include 287,876 acres of Bureau land.
3. California Vegetative Management EIS. Any herbicide use will be consistent with procedures and limitations described in the California Vegetation Management Final EIS and Record of Decision (November 1988).
4. Existing Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMPs), Habitat Management Plans (HMPs), Allotment Management Plans (AMPs), Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) Management Plans, Cooperative Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) will remain in effect. Existing plans and agreements will be updated as required to incorporate RMP decisions.
5. Bureau lands in the Mammoth-June Lakes Airport Land Use Plan Area will be managed in accordance with the Benton-Owens Valley Management Framework Plan amendment (1989) for that area.
6. The Cooperative Management Agreement with Bodie State Park will remain in effect.

## **Standard Operating Procedures**

Standard Operating Procedures provide specific guidelines for managing the various resources and activities occurring throughout the resource area.

### **Grazing Systems**

1. Plant phenology of key forage species for livestock and wildlife will be considered in determining grazing schedules.
2. Grazing system design will include consideration of wildlife habitat, watershed and desired plant community goals.
3. Average annual livestock utilization of key forage species on meadows will not exceed 60% unless there is an Allotment Management Plan or desired plant community goal which requires a different level.
4. Allotment Management Plans will be used to resolve conflicts between livestock and other resource values.

### **Grazing Management Practices**

1. Salting and supplemental feeding locations will not be located within 1/4 mile of riparian zones, aspen groves and meadows, or on sage grouse strutting grounds, sensitive plant habitats or sites that are highly susceptible to soil erosion.
2. Sheep will be herded.
3. Sheep bedding grounds will be designated, and will not be located within 1/4 mile of riparian zones, aspen groves, meadows and sage grouse strutting grounds, or on sensitive plant habitats or sites that are highly susceptible to soil erosion.
4. Trailing use will be controlled and trailing routes will be identified.
5. Livestock conversions proposed by the permittee will be considered on the basis of resource needs, allotment capability and management objectives. If conversions are made mainly for convenience of the permittee, range improvement structures necessary to implement the conversion will be financed and constructed by the permittee.
6. Annual utilization checks will be conducted during the grazing season on selected meadows and key wildlife habitats.
7. Trampling of soils will be monitored in conjunction with forage utilization to determine whether the limit of allowable grazing has been achieved.

### **Range Improvement Project Development**

1. Livestock watering and handling facilities (corrals, chutes, dipping vats, etc.) will normally not be located within 1/4 mile of riparian zones, aspen groves and meadows, or on sage

grouse strutting grounds, sensitive plant habitats or sites that are highly susceptible to soil erosion.

2. Fences will not be located on sage grouse strutting grounds or sites that are highly susceptible to soil erosion. Let-down fences will be constructed in areas where sage grouse are susceptible to strikes on wire as they enter or leave a lek site.
3. Fence construction will conform with the objectives and specifications in Bureau Manual 1737.
4. All livestock watering facilities will be designed to facilitate wildlife use. Wildlife escape ramps will be installed and maintained in water troughs.
5. Springs and seeps incurring damage from livestock trampling will be fenced.
6. Benefits to range, fisheries, wildlife, recreation and watershed will be considered when designing range improvement projects.
7. Vegetation manipulation projects will be rested from grazing for at least two growing seasons following treatment.
8. Vegetation manipulation projects will use irregular patterns to create more edge. Islands of vegetation will be left for cover.
9. All chemical applications will be preceded by an approved Pesticide Use Proposal and supervised by a Certified Pesticide Specialist. Before chemicals are applied, the BLM will comply with Department of the Interior regulations and Bureau Manual 9222, and other applicable laws, regulations and court orders. Herbicide use will be prohibited within 150 feet of streams. Any pesticide (as defined under Section 2 (u) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as amended) used will be:
  - a. Registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of California;
  - b. Specifically registered for the proposed use;
  - c. Used only in accordance with requirements for safe mixing, storing, loading and disposal of such poisons;
  - d. Marked with a current label;
  - e. Used in accordance with its label and all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations; and
  - f. Applied so that worker safety is ensured.
10. Maintenance of structural improvements shall be provided by the user deriving the primary benefit from the improvement.
11. Brush control will be prohibited on sage grouse breeding complexes and wintering grounds.
12. All vegetation manipulations will leave 200 feet of undisturbed vegetation on both sides of all roads. Vegetation will not be manipulated on drainages with over 30% slope.

13. Seed mixtures adapted to the planting site will be used for seeding. Mixtures will include a variety of browse, forbs and grass species that are desirable for both livestock and wildlife. All seed sources will be certified "weed free."
14. Burned areas will be rested for three growing seasons before grazing.

### ***Wildlife***

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1. Consult with the California Department of Fish and Game prior to design and accomplishment of wildlife habitat improvement projects.
2. Notify the California Department of Fish and Game one year in advance of any revegetation or vegetation manipulation projects.
3. Manage candidate species, sensitive species and other species of management concern in a manner to avoid the need for listing as state or federal endangered or threatened species.
4. Consult informally with the California Department of Fish and Game about any project with potential impacts on state-listed endangered or threatened plants and animals.
5. Consult with the California Department of Fish and Game about any proposals that may result in the depletion of resident or migratory fish.
6. An inventory for candidate species and other species of management concern will be completed prior to authorizing any activity that may impact a stream with a thermal source.

### ***Riparian and Wetland***

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1. Maintain the natural channel configuration of all streams.
2. No new road construction will be permitted within 150 feet of riparian areas unless absolutely necessary and impacts can be mitigated. Avoid the construction of roads or trails that parallel streams.
3. Construction of new stream crossings will be kept to a minimum. All stream crossings will be designed and constructed to maintain existing channel morphology and minimize impacts to riparian and aquatic habitat. Crossings in streams supporting active or potential fisheries will be designed and constructed to allow fish passage. The streambed will be armored upstream and downstream of any crossing that has neither a bridge nor a culvert.
4. Relocate existing roads out of riparian areas where feasible or necessary to restore watershed stability.
5. Remove livestock watering facilities from riparian zones where feasible.
6. Rehabilitate or fence riparian areas that consistently show resource damage from any cause if conflicts cannot be resolved in another manner.
7. Avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development or new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practical alternative.

## ***Soil, Water and Air***

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1. An inventory of existing water quality and beneficial uses will be completed prior to authorizing any project with potential impacts on water quality. Best Management Practices and appropriate mitigation will be identified during project level environmental review and applied during project implementation to ensure compliance with the Federal Antidegradation Policy.
2. Any activity involving discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or their adjacent wetlands will be reviewed for compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
3. No stream modifying activities or other activities that increase sedimentation of the aquatic zone will be permitted during the following periods:
  - a. February 15 to August 20 for streams with resident rainbow trout or cutthroat trout populations; and
  - b. October 1 to April 15 for streams with resident brown trout or brook trout populations.
4. Construction activities within streams will comply with the State Fish and Game Code as to notification and incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures.
5. Limit vegetation removal and other surface disturbing activities to the minimum required for project implementation. Require soil retaining structures or other special methods as needed to control erosion on steep slopes or unstable soils.
6. Best Management Practices and appropriate mitigation will be identified during project level environmental review and applied during project implementation for any ground disturbing activity that may reduce soil productivity, or cause surface erosion or mass wasting.
7. Avoid the use of soil disturbing equipment or vehicles on wet, poorly drained or erosive soils.
8. Require soil layer separation and topsoil stockpiling for any activity that involves mechanical soil disturbance. Soil layers will be redeposited and recontoured to their natural configuration following project completion.
9. Secure any necessary permits or clearances from state and local agencies relative to air quality requirements for projects that may impact air quality.

## ***Minerals***

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1. Reclamation bonds will be required for all minerals actions occurring under a Plan of Operations in accordance with Memorandums of Understanding with Inyo and Mono Counties.
2. Claim markers must be in conformance with state law and Bureau policy.
3. All Notices of Intent will be reviewed for undue and unnecessary degradation determination. Cultural, endangered and threatened species, and sensitive plant habitat clearances will be done as a minimum.
4. All mineral operations will conform with the state's Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, and county and local health and operations requirements.

5. For abandoned mine shafts and mine shafts under a Plan of Operations, a survey for wildlife use, particularly bats, will be conducted. If bats are present, mines will be gated. Gate design will also consider the needs of other wildlife species potentially inhabiting the mine. If sealing of known hibernacula or maternity roosts must occur, sealing will not occur during the winter or maternity period. If surveys determine there is no use or potential for use by bats, sealing may be done at any time.

## ***Realty***

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1. A site-specific environmental assessment will be required before any disposal of BLM land. Only parcels identified in the RMP will be available for disposal. All other BLM lands will be retained in public ownership.
2. All existing and future powerlines must meet non-electrocution standards for raptors. Raptor habitat enhancement will be incorporated into facility design where feasible.
3. The Bureau will file for state appropriative water rights for all existing and any new surface water facilities on which federal funding has been or will be expended. In addition, the Bureau will assert federal reserved water rights for Public Water Reserves.

## ***Recreation***

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1. All Bureau lands will be designated as either closed, limited, or open to off-highway vehicle (OHV) use.
2. Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use will be monitored throughout the resource area. Monitoring efforts will be concentrated in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wilderness Study Areas, other specially designated areas and areas incurring resource impacts. Mitigation, where needed, will be applied to eliminate or reduce resource problems caused by OHV use.
3. Within two years of the RMP Record of Decision, the BLM will begin studies to make suitability or non-suitability determinations for waterways determined eligible under the Wild and Scenic River review process.

## ***Visual***

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1. Enforcement emphasis for Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes 2-4 will be along key observation points. Outside key observation points, the Bureau will apply designated VRM class prescriptions but the Area Manager may allow development to exceed the VRM class for reasons such as technological infeasibility or low visitor use.
2. The Area Manager may allow temporary projects to exceed Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards in class 2-4 areas, if the project will terminate within two years of initiation. Rehabilitation will begin at the end of the two year period. During the temporary project, the Area Manager may require phased mitigation to better conform with prescribed VRM standards.
3. Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes acknowledge existing visual contrasts. Existing facilities or visual contrasts will be brought into VRM class conformance to the extent

practicable when the need or opportunity arises (i.e. rights-of-way renewals, mineral material site closures, or route designation activity plans).

4. Visual Resource Management Class I enforcement will apply uniformly throughout the Conway Summit and Slinkard Valley Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and the suitable portion of Southern Inyo Mountains Wilderness Study Area unless subsequent activity plans specify otherwise.
5. All powerlines will be constructed using non-specular wire. Steel towers will be constructed of corten steel

## **RMP Decisions**

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The approved RMP decisions are presented in two parts: the area-wide decisions, which present management prescriptions valid throughout the entire Bishop Resource Area; and the decisions for individual management areas, which present management prescriptions specific to each of the nine management areas.

Management area narratives include the following:

**Description** - A brief description of the important resources or values within the management area.

**Management Theme** - A statement of the general management philosophy for the management area. Management themes provide direction for addressing unforeseen proposals.

**Decisions** - Statements of land use allocations and resource condition objectives.

**Support Needs** - Supplemental actions necessary to implement the plan. Support needs will help guide BLM budgeting and programming.

**Rationale** - Explanation for selection of proposed actions specific to the management area.

Decisions are illustrated on the following maps included with this document:

**Map 1 (Land Status)** - depicts land ownership in the Bishop Resource Area.

**Map 2 (Special Management Areas)** - illustrates areas within the Bishop Resource Area deserving special management attention. The proposed Southern Inyo Wilderness Area, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, campgrounds, streams eligible for study as potential additions to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and the Poleta Canyon off-highway vehicle open area are shown on Map 2.

**Map 3 (Land Use Restrictions)** - depicts yearlong protection and seasonal protection areas, existing and proposed locatable mineral withdrawals, and areas to be closed to grazing.

**Map 4 (Lands and Minerals)** - shows potential land acquisitions and disposals, designated utility corridors, areas open to mineral location, and preferred geothermal development zones.

## **Area-Wide**

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### **Management Theme**

Resolve issues in a manner that will protect and enhance environmental values while allowing for resource use and development.

### **Decisions**

Unless otherwise stated in the plan, all Bureau lands will be retained in public ownership. Lands identified for disposal are either difficult or uneconomic to manage and would best serve the public interest in private ownership. Land disposal may also be used to resolve inadvertent occupancy trespass (cases where survey error has resulted in home construction on Bureau land). Bureau lands will not be available for disposal under the agricultural land laws.

- Land exchange is the preferred method of disposal. Where land exchange is impractical, lands identified for disposal may be sold under authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).
- Disposals to resolve inadvertent occupancy trespass will be limited to the smallest legal subdivision which includes the private development.
- Recreation and Public Purpose Act patents may be issued on lands identified for disposal.

Prohibit groundwater pumping where it would interfere with valid existing water uses, desired plant community goals, or other resource condition objectives.

Replace or revise the Executive Order and Congressional Watershed Withdrawals. Any replacement or revised designation must retain the Bureau's "4e" comment authority and protect federal water rights to the same extent they are protected under the existing withdrawals.

Utility Corridors 1/2 mile wide are designated along the following transmission lines:

- The 500 kV DC Intertie from where it enters California near State Highway 167 to where it exits the resource area near Olancho.
- The 115 kV SCE Double Circuit Line from the Bishop Substation to where it exits the resource area near Olancho.

The following conditions and mitigation measures apply to these corridors:

1. Corridors extend for 1/4 mile on both sides of the specified lines with the following exceptions:
  - a. In the vicinity of Benton Hot Springs the corridor is limited to 1/4 mile west of the DC Intertie; and
  - b. Between and along Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) on the Volcanic Tableland, future lines will have to share existing facilities until one or all of the WSAs are released to non-wilderness uses by Congress.

2. Future facilities in these corridors may be allowed to exceed Visual Resource Management (VRM) and Yearlong Protection standards. Extensive mitigation will be required and may include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Painting and use of non-specular steel materials to reduce visibility; and
  - b. Requiring the use of shared facilities.
3. The first applicant for a right-of-way in either corridor will be required to conduct a study to determine how many transmission lines the corridor can accommodate.

Manage the resource area to provide for a variety of dispersed recreation opportunities. Emphasize primitive, semi-primitive motorized, semi-primitive nonmotorized and roaded natural experiences. Maintain and enhance semi-primitive and other physical settings by providing compatible recreation opportunities within those settings. Manage visitor use to conform with semi-primitive and other physical settings. Recreation management may include developing trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding; providing off-highway vehicle use opportunities; designating scenic byways; interpreting natural and cultural resources; and establishing an environmental education program. The Bodie Bowl and the Alabama Hills will remain designated as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs).

- Manage the Bodie Bowl SRMA to preserve the historic integrity of the Bodie National Historic Landmark in coordination with Bodie State Historic Park.
- -Manage the Alabama Hills SRMA to protect unique geologic features and scenic values and to provide compatible recreational opportunities.
- -Provide campgrounds at Tuttle Creek, Goodale Creek, Horton Creek (Owens Valley Management Area) and Crowley Lake (Long Valley Management Area).
- -Vehicle use is limited to designated roads and trails on 748,700 acres. Poleta Canyon is open to vehicle use on 1,300 acres. If Congress designates the Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area as wilderness, 28,200 acres will be closed to vehicle use (Figures 3 and 4). Some seasonal closures will be designated in the resource area in off-highway vehicle management plans. Snowmobile use will be limited to designated areas and routes.
- -Designate U.S. Highway 395 along all Bureau land in Mono County as a Scenic Byway.
- -Manage all activities to conform with Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards (Figures 5 and 6, and Appendix 3). VRM standards will be applied according to Visual Standard Operating Procedures.

Protect and enhance unique or important vegetation communities and wildlife habitats.

- -Yearlong Protection of endangered, threatened, candidate, and sensitive plant and animal habitats.
- -Yearlong Protection of aspen groves, meadows and riparian areas.
- -Manage all stream reaches that contain essential habitat characteristics described in the recovery plan for any endangered or threatened fish species to meet desired plant community goals for riparian areas.
- -Yearlong Protection within 1/3 mile of sage grouse leks.

- -Seasonal Protection within 2 miles of active sage grouse leks from 5/1 to 6/30.
- -No camping within 1/3 mile of sage grouse leks from 3/1 to 6/30.
- -Increase to 60% the amount of sagebrush habitat within 2 miles of leks that has optimum characteristics for sage grouse. (Presently only 30% of sagebrush habitat has optimum characteristics for sage grouse).
- -Manage sagebrush-bitterbrush areas within 2 miles of sage grouse leks to meet desired plant community goals.
- -Pursue the acquisition of wetlands or endangered, threatened, candidate or sensitive plant and animal habitats as opportunities arise.









- -Manage all activities to assure no net loss of wetlands or riparian habitats. Allow mitigation for impacts to wetlands or riparian habitats to occur outside of the resource area.
- -On stream reaches with vegetative bank protection ratings of less than 3, do not allow the streambank artificial soil alteration rating to exceed 20%. Stricter vegetative bank protection and streambank soil alteration standards may be applied in activity plans.
- -Maintain 95% of the previous 10 year mean monthly flow, or 95% of the existing flow, whichever is greater, for all area streams and springs, subject to valid existing rights.

The entire resource area will remain open for locatable mineral entry with the following exceptions:

- -The Dogtown and Bishop Petroglyph Loop mineral withdrawals (2,000 acres) are closed to mineral entry.
- -There are 7,535 acres proposed for withdrawal to protect wildlife, recreation, visual and historic values. If Congress designates the Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area as wilderness, an additional 28,200 acres will be withdrawn from mineral entry.

Provide salable minerals for community and private use.

Provide for geothermal exploration and development.

Livestock management practices including initial stocking rates and forage allocations are based on decisions in the Benton-Owens Valley and Bodie-Coleville Grazing EISs. The following management prescriptions supplement existing grazing decisions:

- -Livestock grazing utilization on key species will not exceed 60% on any allotment unless a different level is specified in an activity plan. When utilization levels, verified through monitoring, exceed 60% a change in livestock management practices will be implemented to achieve the 60% level. Required changes will be developed in consultation and coordination with the livestock permittee and other affected parties. Changes may include one or a combination of the following: changes in grazing preference, season of use, or location of use.
- -Livestock grazing utilization on bitterbrush within mule deer migration corridors or winter ranges will not exceed 30% of annual growth.
- -Manage livestock use of sagebrush vegetation types within 2 miles of sage grouse leks to achieve shrub structure and density characteristics more homogeneous (less patchy) than average. Horizontal cover (grass, forb and shrub combined) in these areas will range between 8 and 20%.
- -If tule elk numbers decline to less than 440 due to competition with livestock for available forage, a change in livestock management practices will be considered and may be implemented.
- -Prohibit livestock grazing in unallotted areas or areas outside of existing allotment boundaries.

Manage cultural resources for information potential by initiating data recovery projects at threatened sites.

Allow only noncommercial harvesting of pinyon nuts.

Limit the intensity of fire suppression efforts used to control wildfires to the most economical response consistent with human and resource values at risk.

- Prohibit the use of bulldozers or other heavy equipment in old growth timber stands, prominent viewsheds, riparian areas, aspen groves, cultural sites, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), mule deer winter ranges, the Alabama Hills and the entire South Inyo and Owens Lake management areas. This restriction may be lifted by the Area Manager to protect human life, private property, structures, visitor safety or sensitive or valuable resources.

### **Support Needs**

Monitor resource conditions as needed to define present conditions and evaluate if resource condition objectives are being achieved. Use monitoring information to determine if changes to authorized uses are needed and if those changes require a plan amendment.

Prepare off-highway vehicle designation and implementation plans in cooperation with the Toiyabe and Inyo National Forests, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and other interested parties.

Coordinate with CalTrans, Mono County, Toiyabe National Forest and Inyo National Forest to designate U.S. Highway 395 as a Scenic Byway.

Develop a program for interpretation of cultural and natural resources. Provide interpretive signing at selected cultural sites.

Develop a program to educate the public on the values of preserving their historic and prehistoric heritage. Work with public schools to enhance their curriculum and to provide training for teachers and students.

Coordinate all fish and wildlife reintroductions with the California Department of Fish and Game and other agencies or groups as appropriate.

Cooperate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other appropriate agencies on the development and implementation of endangered and threatened species recovery plans.

Develop Waterfowl Habitat Management Plans for the resource area. Include actions to protect nesting areas, construct habitat improvement projects, and complete habitat inventories and nesting surveys.

Design and implement habitat improvement projects in cooperation with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Quail Unlimited, Cal Trout and other conservation organizations.

Coordinate with the Inyo and Toiyabe National Forests on the administration of grazing allotments with common operators.

Quantify instream flows over a 10 year period with the following management area priority: (1) Owens Valley, (2) Bodie Hills and Bridgeport Valley, (3) Coleville, (4) Benton and Long Valley, and (5) Granite Mountain, Owens Lake and South Inyo.

Identify all salable mineral deposits. Develop a coordinated mineral material sales program with other appropriate agencies. Complete fair market value appraisals for all salable minerals and update as needed.

Modify the fire suppression plan to incorporate fire-related decisions. Include burn prescriptions to allow for the implementation of limited and modified suppression techniques.

Use prescribed burning to support desired plant community, fire prevention and wildlife habitat goals.

Update the Fuelwood Management Plan.

## ***Coleville Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area comprises 21,560 acres of Bureau land in the northernmost portion of the resource area (Figure 7). Important resources include old growth fir in Slinkard Valley, mule deer winter range in Slinkard and Antelope Valleys, and eleven perennial streams. Three of the streams provide recreational trout fishing and Mill Creek provides habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout. Scenic values in the area are high. Part of the West Walker River has been designated by the State of California as a Wild and Scenic River.

### **Management Theme**

Manage with an emphasis on wildlife habitat enhancement. Species of concern are mule deer, mountain beaver and species associated with old growth forests. Secondary emphasis is on visual resources and recreation.

### **Decisions**

Dispose of up to 45 acres for patent of existing Recreation and Public Purpose Act leases for the Walker Landfill and the Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic.

Acquire up to 846 acres of private land west of U.S. Highway 395 to protect mule deer winter range and scenic values. No private homes will be acquired.

Enhance semi-primitive dispersed recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping and biking.

Designate a Scenic Byway along portions of State Highway 89.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM I - Slinkard Valley ACEC.
- VRM III - North of State Highway 89 and east of Antelope Valley.
- VRM II - Remainder of the area.

Yearlong Protection of mule deer winter range east of Eastside Lane.

Enhance habitat for native quail populations.

Manage Mill Creek, Slinkard Creek, Slinkard Creek Tributaries 1 and 2, and Rodriguez Creek so they remain suitable for reintroduction of Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 50 acres (100%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 120 acres (100%) of aspen to increase wildlife habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 370 acres (100%) of old growth white fir to maintain habitat diversity, provide habitat for old growth associated species and ensure adequate forest regeneration.
- Meet DPC goals on 7,435 acres (75%) of pinyon-juniper to increase wildlife habitat diversity and improve mule deer habitat.
- Meet DPC goals on 850 acres (75%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer.



10,520 acres that includes Slinkard Valley (see Special Management Areas Map) are designated as the Slinkard Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to protect wildlife habitat and scenic values and to enhance recreation opportunities. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- -Maintain and improve habitat conditions for mountain beaver (Category 2 species) by limiting the types of uses and vegetative treatments allowed in riparian zones.
- -Yearlong Protection of old growth white fir stands.
- -Manage all activities to conform to VRM I standards.
- -Eliminate livestock grazing on the Dry Canyon and Slinkard Valley allotments if alternative grazing areas are found.

Protect and interpret the historic Golden Gate Mine site.

Consolidate salable minerals to one pit.

Actions within the State-designated corridor of the Walker River will be consistent with the State Wild and Scenic River designation.

Prohibit timber harvesting in old growth areas. Allow commercial and non-commercial fuelwood harvesting of live pinyon and juniper to improve wildlife habitat or meet desired plant community goals. Dead wood (down only) may be collected for campfire use.

### **Support Needs**

Coordinate with CalTrans, BLM Carson City District, Toiyabe National Forest and Mono County to designate State Highway 89 as a Scenic Byway.

Coordinate any recreation management for Topaz Lake with Mono County and the Walker River Irrigation District.

Develop a Habitat Management Plan for the West Walker deer herd in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game and Toiyabe National Forest.

Develop water sources for mule deer east of Eastside Lane.

Develop water sources for native quail populations.

Develop an activity plan for the Slinkard ACEC that emphasizes wildlife, scenic and recreational values.

Implement measures to restore meadows and control erosion in Slinkard and Little Antelope Valleys to improve habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout and other riparian dependent species. Coordinate these activities with the California Department of Fish and Game and Toiyabe National Forest.

Monitor water quality to determine the impacts of cattle and recreational use.

Develop protective and interpretive measures for the Golden Gate Mine site.

Inventory old growth white fir stands for presence and abundance of the southern spotted owl. Evaluate these stands for spotted owl habitat suitability.

Survey bald eagle habitat near Topaz Lake to assess management needs.

## **Rationale**

The Coleville Management Area has significant natural resources including old growth timber, key deer winter range, potential habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout, and habitats that support a diverse assemblage of wildlife species such as pine marten, blue grouse, black bear, mountain beaver and waterfowl. These resources are receiving increased pressure from expanding communities and uncontrolled dispersed recreational use. There is tremendous potential to manage and increase recreational use while lessening impacts to the natural resource base. Many visitors who pass through the area do not realize the scope of recreation opportunities available in this management area.

These decisions will protect and enhance natural resources, while improving recreation opportunities. They also provide some land for local community services. With more intensive management, it will be possible to both increase recreational use and control adverse impacts to the natural environment. ACEC designation for the area surrounding Slinkard Valley will provide additional protection and recognition of the outstanding biological diversity and scenery of this relatively small area.

## **Bridgeport Valley Management Area**

### **Description**

This area contains 13,050 acres of Bureau land west of Bridgeport and north of Conway Summit (Figure 8). It has important scenic, wildlife and riparian values, and supports mineral, recreation and livestock uses. The Travertine Hot Springs Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) has important cultural and recreational values, as well as high geothermal potential.

### **Management Theme**

Emphasize scenic, recreational, cultural and wildlife values in the Virginia Creek and Dog Creek areas while accommodating some community needs near Bridgeport.

### **Decisions**

Dispose of up to 270 acres to provide for residential expansion and community services.

Acquire up to 1,338 acres of private land to protect riparian, wildlife and scenic values.

Enhance semi-primitive dispersed recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, biking and snowmobiling.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- -VRM I - Conway Summit ACEC.
- -VRM II - Southern block of Bureau lands.
- -VRM III - Remainder of the area.

Manage the marshes in Sections 18 and 19 on the west side of Bridgeport Reservoir to enhance waterfowl habitat and provide waterfowl hunting and viewing opportunities.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- -Meet DPC goals on 100 acres (75%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- -Meet DPC goals on 470 acres (75%) of aspen to increase wildlife habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- -Meet DPC goals on 85 acres (75%) of wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- -Meet DPC goals on 1,780 acres (25%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer and sage grouse.



2,700 acres near Conway Summit (see Special Management Areas Map) are designated as the Conway Summit Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to protect scenic values and to enhance dispersed recreation opportunities. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- Yearlong Protection of the ACEC. Target resources are scenery, riparian habitat and recreation opportunities.
- Prohibit livestock grazing on the Conway Summit acquired lands.
- Manage all activities to conform to VRM I standards.
- Enhance dispersed recreation opportunities such as winter sports, camping, mountain biking and hiking.

Travertine Hot Springs (see Special Management Areas Map) is retained as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to enhance recreation opportunities and to protect candidate species habitats, unique geologic features and cultural resources. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- Yearlong Protection of the ACEC. Target resources are recreation opportunities, candidate species habitats, geologic features, and cultural and Native American values.
- Geothermal exploration and development will be allowed only if evidence is provided which shows no impact to the thermal aquifer or surface water source would occur.
- Prohibit shooting in the ACEC.
- Propose the ACEC for withdrawal from locatable mineral exploration and development.

Protect and interpret the Dogtown historic site.

Propose the following stream reaches for withdrawal from locatable mineral exploration and development:

- Dog Creek from Dunderberg Creek to 1.5 miles downstream.
- Virginia Creek from the Toiyabe National Forest boundary to the south boundary of the Dogtown locatable mineral withdrawal.

Provide salable minerals at the Green Creek mineral material pits.

### **Support Needs**

Coordinate recreation management with the Toiyabe National Forest. Focus management efforts along Virginia Creek between Conway Summit and the National Forest boundary.

Coordinate any recreation management for Bridgeport Reservoir with Mono County and the Walker River Irrigation District.

Acquire access around Bridgeport Reservoir to enhance recreation opportunities. Avoid wetland habitat.

Develop interpretive facilities at waterfowl areas in Sections 18 and 19.

Participate on the Mono County Wetlands Technical Advisory Committee. Support the development of a Special Area Management Plan for wetlands in Bridgeport Valley.

Participate with appropriate agencies in determination of Bridgeport Reservoir water level.

Develop a comprehensive Wildlife Habitat Management Plan for the Bridgeport Valley and Bodie Hills management areas.

Develop an Allotment Management Plan for the Green Creek Allotment.

Develop an activity plan for the Conway Summit ACEC that emphasizes scenic values and recreational uses including camping, mountain biking, hiking and winter sports.

Develop an activity plan for the Travertine Hot Springs ACEC that emphasizes recreational use and protection of candidate species habitats, geologic features, and cultural and Native American values.

Develop a hydrologic model of Travertine Hot Springs to provide the basis for impact assessment on geothermal exploration or development.

Explore cooperative management of the Travertine Hot Springs ACEC with Native Americans and other groups.

Provide a BLM information outpost at the Dogtown historic marker on U.S. Highway 395.

Coordinate with CalTrans to relinquish and rehabilitate selected mineral material pits.

## **Rationale**

Spectacular scenery, important riparian habitat, and significant recreational and cultural values in the Bridgeport Management Area contrast with other important land uses such as mineral development, rights-of-way, livestock grazing and community needs.

The Conway Summit ACEC and VRM I classification will protect the spectacular scenery and enhance compatible uses such as dispersed recreation and camping. Rights-of-way can be routed east of U.S. Highway 395 along an existing transmission line in a VRM III area.

Riparian habitat, cultural resources and other values will be protected by locatable mineral withdrawals for Dog Creek, Virginia Creek, the Dogtown historic site, and the Travertine Hot Springs ACEC. These areas have high potential for mineral development and sensitive resources can be best protected by withdrawing these lands. Most of the management area would remain open to mining, and valid existing mineral rights will be recognized.

Geothermal exploration and development will be allowed in the Travertine Hot Springs area only if hydrologic studies show that these activities will not impact the thermal aquifer or surface water source. This requirement was included to protect special status species, geological features, and recreational and cultural values.

Providing land for community services and residential expansion near Bridgeport will help the local community. Recreation improvements such as interpretive facilities and access around Bridgeport Reservoir will help support increased tourism.

## ***Bodie Hills Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area encompasses 121,150 acres of Bureau land east of Bridgeport (Figure 9). It includes the Bodie National Historic Landmark and has significant mineral, wildlife, riparian, livestock grazing, cultural, and recreational values. Cooperation and coordination with Bodie State Historic Park is an important concern in this management area.

### **Management Theme**

Manage to protect historic and scenic values and to enhance wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities.

### **Decisions**

Dispose of up to 80 acres to Bodie State Historic Park for patent of the existing Recreation and Public Purpose Act lease for the Bodie Cemetery. Provide acreage for park and visitor facilities as determined in the Bodie Bowl ACEC management plan to



protect the values of the State Historic Park and the National Historic Landmark, and to improve management of the area.

Dispose of up to 2 acres near Bridgeport to provide for residential expansion and community services.

Acquire up to 5,725 acres of private land to protect wildlife, riparian, recreational and cultural values.

Enhance dispersed recreation opportunities such as off-highway vehicle touring, primitive camping, mountain biking, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sightseeing and environmental interpretation.

Designate Scenic Byways along Geiger Grade and State Highway 270 (Bodie Road) and a Backcountry Byway from Bodie State Historic Park to Aurora.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM II - Bodie Bowl and main travel corridors.
- VRM III - Remainder of the area.

Seasonal Protection and no snowmobile use in sage grouse wintering areas from 11/15 to 5/1.

Vehicle routes impacting sensitive plant habitats or areas where mule deer or sage grouse concentrate will be closed, seasonally closed or rerouted to improve and protect habitat.

Stabilize and restore selected stream reaches in Aurora Canyon, Hot Springs Canyon, Rough Creek and all tributaries, Atastra Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Bodie Creek, Clark Canyon, Rattlesnake Gulch and Clearwater Creek to improve riparian and aquatic habitat quality. Target specific improvements to:

- Improve channel water storage capacity to increase base flow.
- Reduce turbidity and sedimentation.
- Improve the aquatic environment to increase fish and invertebrate populations.
- Reduce water temperatures in summer to 60 degrees F or less.
- Provide habitat suitable for Lahontan cutthroat trout reintroduction.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 95 acres (50%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 470 acres (50%) of aspen to increase wildlife habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 101 acres (50%) of wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.

- Meet DPC goals on 26,915 acres (75%) of pinyon-juniper to increase wildlife habitat diversity and improve mule deer habitat.
- Meet DPC goals on 25,250 acres (50%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer, pronghorn and sage grouse.

5,935 acres surrounding the town of Bodie (see Special Management Areas Map) are designated as the Bodie Bowl Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to preserve the existing historical integrity of the Bodie National Historic Landmark and to protect scenic values. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- No surface disturbing activities which may adversely affect the National Historic Landmark will be permitted until Limits of Acceptable Change are established in the ACEC management plan.
- No surface disturbing activities will be allowed to exceed the established Limits of Acceptable Change.
- Manage all activities to conform to VRM II standards (see Visual Standard Operating Procedures and Appendix 3).
- Prohibit shooting in portions of the Bodie Bowl to protect historic structures and ensure public safety.
- Yearlong Protection of the ACEC. Target resources are historic and scenic values.
- Propose the entire Bodie Bowl ACEC for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry.
- Employ full fire suppression techniques against all wildfires.

Travertine Hot Springs (see Special Management Areas Map) is retained as an ACEC (see Bridgeport Valley Management Area for ACEC goals and decisions).

Eliminate grazing on the Copper Mountain Allotment if the current permittee transfers or relinquishes his grazing privileges.

Allow commercial and non-commercial green fuelwood and Christmas tree harvesting to improve wildlife habitat or meet desired plant community goals. Dead wood (down only) may be collected for campfire use.

### **Support Needs**

Prepare an activity plan for the Bodie Bowl ACEC through a public participation process that includes all interests and interested agencies. The plan will include:

- Limits of Acceptable Change (LACs) for the entire Bodie Bowl ACEC. LACs may be developed through an EIS analyzing a Plan of Operations or separately as part of the ACEC management plan. An explanation of the LAC concept is provided in Appendix 5 of the final RMP.
- A no shooting zone for the Bodie Bowl that considers historic values, public safety and hunting opportunities. Identification of the no shooting zone will be coordinated through the Coordinated Resource Management Planning process or ACEC plan.

- Issues identified by the California Department of Parks and Recreation or by the public during the ACEC planning process shall be considered and can be provided for, including but not limited to access and facility needs. One goal is consistency of management approach with State Parks.

Coordinate and consult with the California State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for all activities which may affect the Bodie National Historic Landmark.

Develop an activity plan for recreational use in the management area. Incorporate an interpretive element to highlight wildlife, geologic and cultural values.

Coordinate Scenic Byway and Backcountry Byway designations with CalTrans, Toiyabe National Forest, Bodie State Historic Park and Mono County.

Identify and implement closure or seasonal closure of vehicle routes impacting sensitive plant habitats or areas where mule deer or sage grouse concentrate through the Coordinated Resource Management Planning process.

Develop a comprehensive Wildlife Habitat Management Plan for the Bridgeport Valley and Bodie Hills management areas.

Monitor water quality to determine the impacts of recreation, grazing and mining activities.

Coordinate with Mono County to reduce the adverse impacts of road maintenance.

Develop or revise Allotment Management Plans through the Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) process. Existing CRMPs will be revised to incorporate desired plant community and stream improvement goals.

Identify mineral material sources near Bridgeport and U.S. Highway 395.

Coordinate with CalTrans to relinquish and rehabilitate mineral material pits to meet viewshed objectives.

## **Rationale**

The Bodie Hills Management Area has a large number of high quality resources including wildlife, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, livestock grazing and minerals. These decisions are designed to accommodate a wide variety of uses, while protecting and improving sensitive areas and resources.

The Bodie Bowl has been the focus of considerable controversy due to potential impacts of mining on the town of Bodie. ACEC designation, a locatable mineral withdrawal, and other decisions affecting the Bowl were made to protect the integrity of the National Historic Landmark. The boundary of the National Historic Landmark will be determined by the Department of the Interior and include historic resources within the Bodie Bowl that are of national significance. The ACEC boundary (5,935 acres) covers the zone of influence on historic and associated visual resources which deserve special recognition and management. As a result of ACEC designation, this nationally significant resource will receive additional recognition and all mineral exploration activities will require a Plan of Operations. This gives BLM greater control over these activities. The entire ACEC will also be withdrawn from mineral entry to preclude the establishment of future mining claims within the Bodie Bowl and thereby help protect these important cultural, recreational and scenic values. With the exception of the withdrawal area, the management area as a whole will remain open to mining.

Yearlong Protection restrictions, desired plant community goals, and acquisition proposals were established to maintain and restore streams, riparian areas, meadows, aspen groves and other important wildlife habitats.

Intensive recreation management will be implemented to decrease adverse impacts in sensitive areas and enhance recreation opportunities throughout the Bodie Hills Management Area.

## ***Granite Mountain Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area contains 160,490 acres of Bureau land around the Mono Basin Scenic Area and in Adobe Valley (Figure 10). The area has important wildlife, wild horse, scenic, and recreational values. There is little locatable mineral potential. Geothermal potential is high in the Mono-Long Valley Known Geothermal Area.

### **Management Theme**

Protect and enhance wildlife habitat and scenic values. Provide opportunities for dispersed recreation while allowing mineral exploration and development.



## Decisions

Dispose of up to 80 acres near Mono City for residential expansion and community services.

Acquire up to 1,120 acres of private land to enhance recreation opportunities and protect scenic values. Acquire lands or scenic easements where private development would degrade scenery and violate visual resource management objectives for Mono Basin.

Enhance semi-primitive nonmotorized and motorized dispersed recreation opportunities in the Mono Basin, Granite Mountain and Cowtrack Mountain areas. Developed facilities for recreational purposes will be kept to a minimum and designed for resource protection.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM II - Mono Basin and Granite Mountain.
- VRM III - Adobe Valley.

Enhance habitat for sage grouse, mule deer and pronghorn.

- Use selective removal of decadent vegetation to improve migratory habitat for the Mono Lake deer herd.
- Prohibit grazing in the Frazier Canyon Allotment.

Enhance waterfowl habitat at Larkin, Antelope, Black and Adobe Lakes.

- Acquire up to 3,515 acres of private wetland.
- Reestablish the Larkin Lake Allotment. Livestock grazing will only be authorized to maintain waterfowl habitat quality.

Protect raptor nesting and roosting sites in the Dry Creek and Granite Mountain areas.

- Yearlong Protection of the Jeffrey pine at Dry Creek.

Stabilize and restore Adobe Creek to improve habitat conditions for the existing brown trout population.

- Improve channel water storage capacity to increase base flow by 30%.
- Do not allow the streambank artificial soil alteration rating to exceed 20%.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 8 acres (75%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 100% of the area's wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.

- Meet DPC goals on 25 acres (100%) of Jeffrey pine to maximize wildlife habitat diversity and ensure adequate forest regeneration.
- Meet DPC goals on 8,495 acres (50%) of pinyon-juniper to increase wildlife habitat diversity and improve mule deer habitat.
- Meet DPC goals on 8,570 acres (25%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer, pronghorn and sage grouse.

Manage habitat for the Montgomery Pass wild horse herd in accordance with the Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

Prohibit commercial timber harvesting of Jeffrey pine at Dry Creek. Allow commercial and non-commercial fuelwood harvesting of dead (down only) and live trees to improve wildlife habitat or meet desired plant community goals. Allow commercial and non-commercial Christmas tree harvesting of pinyon in Frazier Canyon to improve mule deer habitat.

### **Support Needs**

Develop an interpretive plan highlighting historic, wildlife, scenic and geologic values. Focus efforts in the Mono Basin and Bodie travel corridors.

Develop water sources in the Mono Basin and Granite Mountain areas for sage grouse, mule deer and pronghorn.

Inventory sage grouse wintering areas and strutting grounds.

Coordinate with private landowners at Conway Ranch to retain current fishery and wildlife habitat on Wilson Creek.

Develop a cooperative management agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game to improve and protect wetland and aquatic habitat in Adobe Valley.  
Fence the Larkin Lake Allotment along the California/Nevada border.

Fence the unnamed spring at Dutch Pete's and Indian Spring to prevent degradation.

Determine raptor nesting site protective zones and measures.

### **Rationale**

The Granite Mountain Management Area has a number of significant resources including habitat for mule deer, sage grouse and pronghorn, and an important visual background for the Mono Basin National Scenic Area. These decisions were selected because they will protect and improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions, enhance recreation opportunities, and protect visual resources near the Mono Basin National Scenic Area.

## ***Long Valley Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area consists of 18,210 acres of Bureau land around Crowley Lake (Figure 11). The area has numerous thermal springs and high geothermal potential. The area also has significant wildlife, wetland, and recreational values.

## **Management Theme**

Enhance recreation opportunities through the improvement of facilities. Protect and enhance wildlife and scenic values.

## **Decisions**

Land use authorizations within the Mammoth-June Lake Airport planning area will be consistent with safety mitigation specified in the airport plan. The airport plan restricts the height, lighting, and steam emissions from geothermal and other developments that would interfere with safe operation of the airport.

Provide for recreation opportunities such as mountain biking, off-highway vehicle touring, camping and interpretation of natural and geologic features.

Provide for recreational hot spring use while mitigating impacts to endangered, threatened and sensitive species, riparian areas and wet meadows.

Manage the entire area to conform to Visual Resource Management (VRM) II standards.

Protect crucial sage grouse and mule deer habitats with the following measures:

- Seasonal Protection and no snowmobile use in sage grouse wintering areas from 11/15 to 5/1.



- Manage livestock use to enhance meadow habitat for sage grouse on the Hot Creek and Wilfred Creek allotments.
- Acquire up to 475 acres of private land to protect sage grouse habitat.
- Yearlong Protection of the mule deer migration corridor.
- Acquire up to 80 acres of private land to protect the mule deer migration corridor.

Maintain or enhance habitat for endangered, threatened and candidate species, and other species of management concern.

- Yearlong Protection of Great Basin springsnail and Owens speckled dace habitats.
- Develop new habitats for Owens tui chub and Owens speckled dace.
- Acquire up to 10 acres of private land to protect Owens speckled dace, Great Basin springsnail and diving beetle habitats.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 35 acres (100%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 50% of the area's wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 610 acres (75%) of Jeffrey pine to maximize wildlife habitat diversity and insure adequate forest regeneration.
- Meet DPC goals on 1,100 acres (25%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer, pronghorn and sage grouse.

Allow commercial and non-commercial fuelwood harvesting of dead (down only) trees.

### **Support Needs**

Prepare an activity plan for recreation management in the area. Include prescriptions for management of hot springs, interpretation of geologic and other natural features, consideration of mountain bike trails, and management of dispersed camping and other recreational activities.

Prepare a Habitat Management Plan for sage grouse in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, Inyo National Forest, and City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Coordinate with Mono County to protect sage grouse habitat.

Prepare a Habitat Management Plan for the Round Valley deer winter range and migration corridor in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, Inyo National Forest, and City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Construct ponds or related habitats for Owens tui chub and Owens speckled dace.

Coordinate with CalTrans to relinquish and rehabilitate selected mineral material pits.

Develop Allotment Management Plans for the Hot Creek and Wilfred Creek allotments.

### **Rationale**

The Long Valley Management Area contains crucial habitats for mule deer, sage grouse, and other wildlife. There is tremendous potential to enhance recreation opportunities and increase visitor use. While the potential for geothermal development exists, unless there is a major change in the world energy situation, development of geothermal resources on Bureau land appears unlikely in the near future.

These decisions will protect the integrity of the mule deer migration corridor and sage grouse leks. The decisions were also selected to enhance recreation opportunities and reduce the impacts of recreation and other activities on sensitive wildlife species.

## ***Benton Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area extends from Benton to Bishop and contains 178,220 acres of Bureau land (Figure 12). The area has a major wetland in the Fish Slough Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), endangered fish habitat, and important cultural and recreational values. Extensive mineral material deposits occur throughout the area.

### **Management Theme**

Provide for a variety of dispersed recreation opportunities. Enhance scenic and wildlife resources while providing for land disposals along U.S. Highway 6.

### **Decisions**

Dispose of up to 5,435 acres of Bureau land for agricultural use, residential expansion and community services.

Provide up to 200 acres adjacent to the Benton Indian Reservation for withdrawal to expand the reservation.

Enhance semi-primitive dispersed nonmotorized recreation opportunities in the south Tableland area. Provide opportunities for hiking, sightseeing and resource interpretation. Allow off-highway vehicle use in conformance with the High Desert Off-highway Vehicle Plan.

- Allow no new routes on the south Tableland except for those identified in the High Desert Off-highway Vehicle Plan.
- Prohibit mineral material sales on the south Tableland to protect scenic and recreational values.
- Acquire up to 640 acres on the south Tableland to protect scenic and recreational values.

Manage the northern Tableland and Blind Springs Hill areas for semi-primitive motorized recreation as per the High Desert Off-highway Vehicle Plan.

Manage the remainder of the area for semi-primitive nonmotorized and motorized recreation opportunities.



Paiute Creek, at the Hill Ranch in the N1/2 of the NE1/4 of section 5 near Lone Tree Creek and at the Devernois Ranch in the S1/2 of the SW1/4 of Section 20 near Willow Creek.

- Acquire up to 80 acres of private land near Marble Creek to protect Owens speckled dace habitat.
- Acquire up to 160 acres of private land at Willow Creek and the spring source north of Jeffrey Canyon for habitat protection and reintroduction of Owens pupfish and Owens speckled dace.
- Prohibit geothermal leasing and other activities affecting the aquifer of thermal water sources essential to any endangered, threatened or candidate species, or other species of management concern.

Stabilize and restore portions of Silver Creek and Marble Creek to improve riparian and aquatic habitat quality.

- Restore streambank stability and channel morphology.
- Improve riparian vegetation condition.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 20 acres (100%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 100% of the area's wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 1,111 acres (25%) of pinyon-juniper to increase wildlife habitat diversity and improve mule deer habitat.
- Meet DPC goals on 5,859 acres (25%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer and pronghorn. Manage the Volcanic Tableland Allotment to meet DPC goals for sagebrush-bitterbrush.

Fish Slough (see Special Management Areas Map) is retained as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to protect endangered fish and sensitive plant habitats, wetlands, cultural properties, geologic features and scenic values. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- Yearlong Protection of Zone 1 of the ACEC. Target resources are endangered fish and sensitive plant habitats, wetlands, cultural properties, geologic features and scenic values.
- Prohibit livestock grazing in the Fish Slough Allotment.

Allow commercial and non-commercial fuelwood harvesting to improve wildlife habitat or meet desired plant community goals.

## **Support Needs**

Develop an interpretive program that highlights Fish Slough ACEC, pronghorn, geologic values on the Volcanic Tableland, and cultural values (Petroglyph Loop, Carson-Colorado Railroad and other historic values).

Rehabilitate abandoned mineral material sites on the south Tableland.

Develop a Habitat Management Plan for the Casa Diablo mule deer winter range in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game and Inyo National Forest.

Construct ponds or related habitats for Owens pupfish, Owens tui chub and Owens speckled dace.

Develop an Allotment Management Plan for the Marble Creek Allotment to improve mule deer winter range and meet the goals of the Casa Diablo Deer Herd Management Plan.

## **Rationale**

These decisions were selected to handle the diverse demands in the Benton Management Area by setting aside some areas for protective management and providing other areas for intensive land use.

The proposed action makes several thousand acres available for community services, residential expansion, and agricultural use; and allows for intensive uses (such as mineral material sales) in portions of the management area.

Management decisions will protect scenery, and protect and enhance key wildlife habitat. They will also provide for a wide variety of dispersed semi-primitive recreation opportunities. The emphasis on semi-primitive non-motorized recreation management in the south Tableland is consistent with vehicle route designations recommended in the High Desert Off-Highway Vehicle Plan. The area's relatively few routes and semi-primitive values, and a strong interest in maintaining semi-primitive recreational activities in the area culminated in these final RMP prescriptions.

## ***Owens Valley Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area encompasses 153,750 acres of Bureau land in the Owens Valley between Bishop and Lone Pine (Figure 13). The area contains the scenic Alabama Hills, three developed campgrounds, and areas of dispersed recreation use. Important wildlife resources include mule deer winter range in Round Valley and on the alluvial fans of the Sierra Nevada, several springs and streams, and tule elk calving habitat. There is also demand for community expansion in an area and-locked by City of Los Angeles (Department of Water and Power) and federal lands.

### **Management Theme**

Manage for the full spectrum of uses. Emphasize recreational use and environmental education while providing for land disposals.



Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM II - Alabama Hills SRMA, Red Mountain and Crater Mountain.
- VRM IV - Poleta Canyon and Fish Springs Hill.
- VRM III - Remainder of the area.

Protect crucial mule deer and tule elk habitats with the following measures:

- Yearlong Protection of the Round Valley mule deer migration corridor.
- Seasonal Protection of the Round Valley, Goodale and Monache mule deer winter ranges from 11/1 to 4/30.
- Acquire up to 1,820 acres of private land to protect the Round Valley mule deer winter range and migration corridor.
- Prohibit grazing in the Sherwin, Round Valley, Keough, and Black Rock allotments.
- Eliminate grazing on the Wells Meadow allotment if the current operator transfers or relinquishes his grazing privileges.
- Maintain or enhance mule deer winter ranges to meet objectives of California Department of Fish and Game herd management plans.
- Manage deer winter ranges to provide at least 70% of the bitterbrush in mature or younger age classes, and to provide enough annual growth to support 5,400 deer on the Round Valley winter range, 4,000 deer on the Goodale winter range and 1,000 deer on the Monache winter range.
- Yearlong Protection of tule elk calving areas.

Maintain or enhance habitat for bald eagle, Pacific bigeared bat, Mount Lyell salamander, Owens Valley vole, ferruginous hawk and sensitive plants.

- Acquire up to 240 acres of private land at Lubkin Creek to protect Owens Valley vole, Great Basin springsnail and riparian habitats.

Maintain or enhance habitat for Owens pupfish, Owens tui chub, Great Basin springsnail and Owens speckled dace.

- Develop new habitats for Owens tui chub, Owens pupfish and Owens speckled dace.
- Yearlong Protection of Owens speckled dace and Great basin springsnail habitats.
- Acquire up to 160 acres of private land at Graham Ranch Spring to protect Great Basin springsnail habitat and reintroduce Owens pupfish.

Manage stream reaches in Horton Creek, Goodale and Tuttle Creek campgrounds to improve streambank stability and aquatic habitat quality.

- Remove campsites from riparian zones.
- Reinforce streambanks to prevent erosion.

Stabilize and restore selected stream reaches in Sawmill Creek, Symmes Creek, Taboose Creek, Goodale Creek, Independence Creek and Horton Creek to improve riparian and aquatic habitat quality and to preserve diverse wildlife and plant assemblages.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 115 acres (75%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 100% of the area's wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 4,071 acres (25%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer and tule elk.

5,735 acres surrounding Crater Mountain (see Special Management Areas Map) are designated as the Crater Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to protect scenic values, enhance recreation opportunities and provide for interpretation of geologic features.

- Acquire up to 140 acres of private land within the ACEC to protect recreational and scenic values.

Prohibit fuelwood harvesting.

### **Support Needs**

Develop a visitor services program for the Alabama Hills to reduce vandalism and trash.

Develop an interpretive program to address wildlife, historic (Carson-Colorado Railroad), geologic (lava flows, Crater Mountain and Alabama Hills) and recreational values.

Coordinate mutual recreation interests with the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and Inyo County.

Coordinate Scenic Byway designations with Inyo National Forest, CalTrans, Inyo County and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Prepare a Habitat Management Plan for the Round Valley mule deer winter range and migration corridor in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, Inyo National Forest, and City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Develop a cooperative agreement with the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to maintain and improve mule deer winter ranges.

Construct ponds or related habitats for Owens tui chub, Owens pupfish and Owens speckled dace.

Inventory riparian habitats for presence and abundance of the least Bell's vireo and yellow billed cuckoo. Evaluate riparian areas for habitat suitability for both species.

Develop an activity plan for the Crater Mountain ACEC.

Develop an Allotment Management Plan for the Alabama Hills Allotment.

### **Rationale**

By protecting key wildlife areas and providing other lands for development, these decisions will meet the conflicting demands placed on public lands in the Owens Valley.

Over 2,000 acres of Bureau land will be available for community service needs, agricultural use and residential expansion.

This decision was made to provide an exchange base for acquisition of sensitive lands in the resource area so that there will be no net loss to the local tax base.

Several damaged streams will be restored and stabilized. Habitat will be protected and expanded for tule elk, mule deer, Owens tui chub, Owens pupfish, and other wildlife.

The environmental education center will provide visitors and local residents an opportunity to learn about the resource values of the public lands and proper use ethics, thus improving BLM's ability to manage and protect those resources.

## ***South Inyo Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area consists of 65,000 acres of Bureau land in the southern end of the Inyo Mountain Range (Figure 14). Approximately 28,000 acres are being recommended to Congress for wilderness designation. There is important wildlife habitat, including potential bighorn sheep habitat. The area also contains the Saline Valley Salt Tram and small stands of bristlecone pine.

### **Management Theme**

Manage to protect wilderness, wildlife, visual and cultural values and to enhance recreation opportunities.

### **Decisions**

Dispose of up to 82 acres for agricultural use.

Manage for primitive recreation opportunities in the proposed Southern Inyo Wilderness Area. Provide for semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation opportunities in the remainder of the area.

- Manage the suitable portion of the Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area as wilderness.
- Acquire easements for hiking access to the Long John Canyon, Pat Keyes, Union Wash and Forgotten Pass trails.
- Yearlong Protection of the proposed wilderness. Target resources include all wilderness values.

Designate Owenyo Road as a Scenic Byway.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM I - Proposed wilderness area.



- Meet DPC goals on 5,120 acres (25%) of pinyon-juniper to increase habitat diversity and improve mule deer habitat.
- Meet DPC goals on 219 acres (75%) of sagebrush-bitterbrush to provide cover and forage for mule deer.

2,220 acres that includes 1,200 acres of bristlecone pine on the Inyo crest (see Special Management Areas Map) are designated as the Keynot Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The goals of the ACEC are to protect the scientific and aesthetic values of the bristlecone pine-limber pine stands. The following management prescriptions apply to actions occurring within the ACEC:

- Yearlong Protection of the ACEC. Target resources are the bristlecone pine-limber pine plant communities.
- Allow the removal of wood under permit only. Permits will be issued only for research or museum purposes.
- Prohibit campfires.
- Manage the ACEC to meet wilderness guidelines.

Propose a 1/8 mile wide corridor along the Pat Keyes trail for withdrawal from locatable mineral exploration and development.

Prohibit geothermal exploration and development when it conflicts with habitat for endangered, threatened or candidate species, or other species of management concern.

Protect, stabilize and interpret the Salt Tram.

Prohibit livestock grazing to protect soils, vegetation, and wilderness and scenic values.

Allow commercial and non-commercial fuelwood harvesting outside of the proposed wilderness area to improve wildlife habitat or meet desired plant community goals.

### **Support Needs**

Provide interpretive facilities at the Pat Keyes trailhead.

Develop an activity plan for the proposed Southern Inyo Wilderness Area immediately after designation.

Coordinate with Inyo County and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to designate Owenyo Road as a Scenic Byway.

Develop a Wildlife Habitat Management Plan for the entire area.

Develop water sources for mule deer, bighorn sheep and quail in the Inyo Mountains.

## **Rationale**

The Southern Inyo Wilderness Study Area has been recommended as suitable for Wilderness designation in a decision separate from the RMP process.

The decision not to allow livestock grazing is carried through because there is not enough forage in this area for grazing to be practical.

Over 2,000 acres of Bureau land were considered for disposal for agricultural use under other alternatives. Only 82 acres are included in the proposed action because increased well pumping for agricultural use in this area could harm habitat for threatened species around Owens Lake.

Habitat for important species such as mule deer, bighorn sheep, quail, and the Great Basin springsnail will be maintained and enhanced.

A 1/8 mile corridor is proposed for withdrawal from mineral entry along the Pat Keyes trail to protect important recreation opportunities. A withdrawal was considered to protect visual resources and primitive recreation opportunities in the foothills of the Inyo Mountains. This withdrawal has not been adopted because the small amount of mineral development anticipated will have minor impacts on those resources, while any mineral development would provide some benefit to the local economy.

## ***Owens Lake Management Area***

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### **Description**

This area contains 15,790 acres of Bureau land near Owens Lake (Figure 15). The area includes important tule elk calving grounds and habitat for several wildlife species listed as candidates for threatened and endangered status. The area also has important scenic qualities and cultural resources, and some geothermal potential.

### **Management Theme**

Manage to protect and enhance wildlife habitat.

### **Decisions**

Provide direction and financial support to the InterAgency Visitor Center.

Manage the area to conform to the following Visual Resource Management (VRM) standards:

- VRM III - East of Owens Lake.
- VRM IV - West of Owens Lake.

Maintain and enhance habitat for mule deer and tule elk.

- Yearlong Protection of tule elk calving areas.

Maintain and enhance habitat for Owens pupfish, Owens tui chub, western snowy plover, Owens Valley vole and Owens sand dune snout beetle.

- Acquire up to 160 acres of private land near Swansea to protect Owens sand dune snout beetle habitat.

- Acquire up to 424 acres of private land south of Owens Lake to protect western snowy plover habitat.

Improve trout habitat on Braley Creek, Cottonwood Creek and Cartago Creek.

Manage Ash Creek as a riparian comparison area.

Enhance wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with the following Desired Plant Community (DPC) prescriptions:

- Meet DPC goals on 7 acres (100%) of riparian habitat to increase wildlife habitat diversity, provide high quality fish habitat and control erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 100% of the area's wet meadows to increase habitat diversity and reduce erosion.
- Meet DPC goals on 3,214 acres (75%) of dune habitat to maintain habitat for the Owens sand dune snout beetle.

Prohibit geothermal exploration and development when it conflicts with habitat for endangered, threatened and candidate species, or other species of management concern.

Incorporate dust abatement measures in all discretionary actions.

Prohibit fuelwood harvesting.

### **Support Needs**

Expand the InterAgency Visitor Center to include a repository for scientific collections and interpretive displays



Develop cooperative management agreements to enhance habitat of endangered and threatened species on private land.

Coordinate with the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to provide trout habitat in Cottonwood Creek.

Fence Braley Creek, Cottonwood Creek and Cartago Creek to exclude livestock. Provide offstream water developments for livestock.

Maintain the livestock enclosure on Ash Creek.

### **Rationale**

Much of the periphery of Owens Dry Lake provides habitat for threatened species and other wildlife. BLM acquisition is proposed for many of these locations so that habitat can be protected and enhanced.

Over 5,000 acres of Bureau land was considered for disposal for agricultural use. No disposals are included in these decisions because increased water pumping for agricultural use in this area could harm habitat for threatened species; and soil disturbance from agricultural use would increase dust problems.

## **East-West Transmission Line Corridor Decision**

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Four alternatives for the designation of an east-west transmission line corridor were considered: the No East-West Corridor Alternative, the Pizona Corridor Alternative, the Queen Valley Corridor Alternative and the Soldier Canyon Corridor Alternative. The 3 corridor study areas included both Bureau and National Forest System lands in the vicinity of Montgomery Pass and Westgard Pass (Figure 16). Resources of concern in these areas include wild horses, mule deer, pronghorn, threatened and endangered species, and cultural and visual resources.

### **Decision**

The No East-West Corridor alternative has been selected. No east-west corridor will be designated at this time. Under this alternative, a future east-west corridor designation could be considered anywhere in the resource area. Prior to any such designation, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be completed.

### **Rationale**

The impact analysis did not present data that justify designating a corridor in any one study area in preference to the others, or eliminating any area from further consideration. There are significant resource concerns in each of the three areas; further information is required to determine if corridor designation would be appropriate. The more detailed study involved in a comprehensive EIS would provide this information.

### **Conditions**

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required for any proposed transmission line. The first applicant for a project will be responsible for financing studies (part of the EIS) to determine the number of transmission lines a designated east-west corridor could support, and the mitigation that would be required.

Any transmission line within a designated east-west corridor will be subject to the following mitigation measures:

1. The EIS must include a visual analysis and surveys for cultural resources and sensitive plants. Appropriate mitigation to protect these resources will be developed based upon the results of these analyses



2. All development must conform to Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines, Prescription Area and Management Area specific direction of the Inyo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.
3. All development must conform to Standard Operating Procedures, Area-wide and Management Area specific direction of the Bishop Resource Management Plan.
4. Road construction will not be permitted in Forest Service Prescription Area 17 or other areas where road construction would have an unacceptable impact on sensitive resources such as mule deer or cultural resources.
5. Non-specular conductors and dull-toned towers will be required.
6. The Inyo National Forest landscape architect will participate in developing alternatives for the design and location of transmission lines. All feasible means of reducing visual impacts will be used, particularly at highway crossings.
7. Tower and line construction will adhere to BLM and Forest Service standards and guidelines for the prevention of raptor electrocution.
8. Construction will be authorized to occur at a time and in a manner as prescribed by the BLM and Forest Service to prevent displacement of elk, pronghorn and deer from crucial habitats.
9. Right-of-way clearing will be limited to the minimum needed to safely construct the line. Vegetation under the line that does not constitute a direct hazard will be left in place. All disturbed areas, cuts and fills will be restored and revegetated. Road widths will be limited to the minimum required for line maintenance.
10. The right-of-way will be maintained in conformance with the Power Line Fire Prevention Field Guide developed by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and California Department of Forestry.
11. Use structures that are most suitable for a given site without requiring extensive site modifications, especially grading.
12. Colors for structures will be chosen after a thorough visual analysis. Colors may have to vary depending on site conditions.
13. Support facilities needed as part of the main system will be designed to limit their land disturbing impact.
14. Corridor width will be limited to 1/2 mile and will extend for 1/4 mile on both sides of the first transmission line constructed

## **Livestock Grazing Decisions**

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In the initial planning stages of the RMP, the Bishop Resource Area, Bakersfield District and California State offices considered whether livestock grazing should be analyzed in detail. It was determined that grazing decisions analyzed in the Benton-Owens Valley (1981) and Bodie-Coleville (1982) Grazing EISs were still valid and meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). This determination was based on review of federal grazing regulations, BLM rangeland monitoring policy, and rangeland inventory and monitoring data collected in the resource area.

Current federal grazing regulations and BLM rangeland monitoring policy provide for adjustments in livestock grazing use when monitoring shows a change is warranted. In the Benton-Owens Valley EIS area, inventory data collected in the early 1980s indicated that adjustments in grazing preference or season of use were needed. These adjustments were made in the mid-1980s and have been validated by monitoring. In the Bodie-Coleville EIS area, inventory and monitoring data collected throughout the 1980s indicate that on most allotments changes in grazing management and development of range improvement projects are the appropriate actions. These changes and projects are being developed in Allotment Management Plans.

As a result, most of the existing livestock grazing decisions are incorporated into this Record of Decision. While there are some decisions in the RMP regarding grazing (for example, allotment status and utilization standards), the RMP does not address stocking levels, seasons of use, or other details of livestock management. If monitoring shows that resource condition objectives established in the RMP are not being met, changes in livestock management practices will be made at the activity plan level to achieve those objectives.

Appendix 1 of the final RMP, Summary of Grazing Decisions from the MFPs, is reproduced as Appendix 4 of this document. This appendix also describes criteria for categorization of allotments as Maintain (M), Improve (I), or Custodial (C).

### ***Guidelines for Implementing the Livestock Grazing Program***

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#### **Grazing Systems**

1. Plant phenology of key forage species for livestock and wildlife requirements will determine treatment schedules.
2. Considerations for wildlife habitat and watershed resource needs will be met in grazing system design.
3. Average annual livestock grazing utilization of key forage species on meadows will be limited to 60% for any meadow grazed.

#### **Grazing Management Practices**

1. Locations for salting and supplement feeding will be at least 1/4 mile away from riparian zones, aspen groves, and meadows. Rotation of use areas will be achieved wherever practicable. Watering facilities will be developed sufficient distances from these areas to prevent livestock concentration on them.
2. Sheep will be herded.

3. Sheep bedding grounds will be designated and will not be located within 1/4 mile of riparian zones, aspen groves, meadows, or on sage grouse strutting grounds and sites that are highly susceptible to soil erosion.
4. Trailing use will be authorized and controlled. Trailing routes will be identified.
5. Emphasis will be given to ensure adherence to authorized grazing use areas.
6. Livestock will be excluded from grazing use on the Mono Lake related lands.

### ***Coleville Management Area***

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1. Livestock grazing will continue to be authorized in the Koenig Ranch, Aristro Ranch, and Sarman Ranch allotments. Allocation levels and conditions are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4. The management goal for these allotments is to maintain a maximum sustained yield of livestock forage on public lands with a minimum amount of management concern (Class C).
2. The Topaz Allotment range program will be developed by the Carson City BLM office in conjunction with the portion of the allotment in Nevada.
3. No further grazing will be authorized in the previously allotted Wild Oat Allotment except in conjunction with sheep trailing purposes. A two-day maximum time period can be permitted for trailing through the area.
4. No further grazing will be authorized in the previously allotted Chichester Allotment.
5. No grazing will be authorized in any areas previously unallotted.
6. Livestock grazing will continue to be authorized in the Dry Canyon and Slinkard Valley allotments. Allocation levels and conditions are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4.
  - a. The management goal for the Dry Canyon Allotment is to maintain a maximum sustained yield of livestock forage on public lands with a minimum amount of management concern (Class C). An ultimate goal is to make arrangements with the California Department of Fish and Game to convert this grazing use to state-owned lands in Slinkard Valley. This action would enhance mule deer habitat on public lands within the existing allotment; and
  - b. The management goal for the Slinkard Valley Allotment is to maintain a maximum sustained yield of livestock forage on public lands with a moderate amount of management concern (Class I). An ultimate goal is to make arrangements with the California Department of Fish Game to convert this grazing use to state-owned lands in Slinkard Valley. This action would enhance mule deer habitat on public lands within the existing allotment. Until this arrangement has been made, grazing use will continue on public lands within traditional sheep and cattle grazing use areas.
7. Livestock use will be limited to trailing purposes only along the east side of Antelope Valley and will be controlled by the following requirements:
  - a. Only one day trailing time each way will be allowed on public lands for each band of sheep or herd of cattle;
  - b. Livestock will be retained along Eastside Road and within 100 yards of the roadway; and

- c. All trailing permits will be coordinated with the U.S. Forest Service.

### ***Bridgeport Valley Management Area***

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1. The management goals for the Dog Creek and Green Creek allotments are to maintain a maximum sustained yield of livestock forage as well as to improve wildlife habitat (sage grouse and mule deer) by reducing season of use conflicts. A deferred grazing system will be applied as part of a moderate amount of management concern (Class M). Allocation goals and conditions are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4.
2. Emphasis will be placed on the Dog Creek Allotment to defer grazing at the higher elevations until later in the season.
3. The western boundary of the Green Creek Allotment is adjusted to follow the Summers Creek Road.
4. The management goals for the West Reservoir and Walters Ranch allotments are to maintain a maximum sustained yield of livestock forage on public lands with a minimum amount of management concern (Class C). The West Reservoir Allotment is to be administered by the USDA, Forest Service and incorporated with the Mount Jackson Allotment on the Toiyabe National Forest. Allocation levels and conditions are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4.
5. The remaining areas of public lands will remain unallocated. Livestock trailing can be permitted across public lands adjacent to the east side of Highway 182.

### ***Bodie Hills Management Area***

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1. Grazing allocation levels and conditions for the Aurora Canyon, Travertine Hills, Potato Peak, Bodie Mountain, Mormon Ranch, and Little Mormon allotments are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4.
2. The management goals for the Travertine Hills Allotment are to maintain the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and to improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with a moderate amount of management concern (Class M). Measures to accomplish these needs include:
  - a. Activate a deferred rotation grazing system; and
  - b. Exclusion of livestock use from Clark Canyon, Aurora Canyon, Travertine Hot Springs, Hot Springs Canyon and meadow areas.
3. The management goals for the Aurora Canyon Allotment are to improve the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and to improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with an intensive amount of management concern (Class I). A deferred grazing system will be activated to meet these needs. This allotment is the traditional cattle use area (north portion) of the previously known Potato Peak Allotment.
4. The management goals for the Potato Peak Allotment are to improve the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and to improve wildlife habitat with an intensive amount of management concern (Class I). A deferred grazing system will be activated to meet these

needs. This allotment now includes only the traditional sheep use area (south portion) of the previously known Potato Peak Allotment.

5. The management goals for the Mormon Ranch and Mono Settlement allotments are to maintain the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and to improve wildlife habitat with a moderate amount of management concern (Class M). A deferred grazing system will be activated to meet these needs.
6. The management goals for the Bodie Mountain Allotment are to improve the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and to improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with an intensive amount of management concern (Class I). A rest-rotation grazing system will be activated to meet these needs.
7. Grazing allocation levels and conditions for the Rancheria Gulch, Mormon Ranch, Copper Mountain, and Mono Settlement allotments are identified in Table 4, Appendix 4.
8. The management goals for the Copper Mountain, Little Mormon, and Rancheria Gulch allotments are to maintain the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage and improve wildlife habitat and watershed conditions with a moderate amount of management concern (Class M). A deferred-rotation grazing system will be required for all these allotments to achieve these goals.
9. No grazing will be authorized in the previously recognized Larkin Lake Allotment (California portion) in order to protect and enhance wetland habitat. A fence will need to be constructed along the state boundary to effectively exclude livestock grazing.

### ***Granite Mountain Management Area***

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1. Designate grazing system type, season of use and forage allocation on the following allotments as shown in Table 2, Appendix 4:
  - a. Frazier Canyon (6003);
  - b. Mathieu (6026);
  - c. Adobe Valley (6027);
  - d. Black Lake (6028);
  - e. Granite Mountain (6034);
  - f. Adobe Lake (6036);
  - g. Symons (6037);
  - h. Mono Lake (6054); and
  - i. Mono Mills (6055).
2. Combine all of the Granite Basin Allotment (6035) with the Granite Mountain Allotment (6034).
3. Coordinate with the Inyo National Forest to institute the following administrative changes:
  - a. Coordinate the grazing use in allotment 6034 with grazing in the Forest Service Dexter Creek Allotment;
  - b. Coordinate grazing on allotment 6037 with adjacent allotments on the Inyo National Forest; and
  - c. Allotment 6026 is to be administered by the Forest Service in conjunction with the Black Canyon Allotment.

4. Revise the Allotment Management Plan for allotment 6027, and work with the operator of allotment 6034 to determine the grazing system to be implemented.
5. Conduct the following vegetative treatments:
  - a. Chemically control 3,760 acres of sagebrush on the Adobe Valley Allotment (6027); and
  - b. Prescribe burn 3,000 acres previously burned and reseed with Indian ricegrass, and chemically treat 2,500 acres of sagebrush on allotment 6034.
6. In allotment 6027, improve water distribution from existing wells and develop new livestock water facilities west of Highway 120 in pastures 4 and 5.
7. Provide for continued livestock trailing through the area.
8. Designate the grazing system type, season of use, forage allocation and management category of the Mono Mills Allotment (6055) as follows:
  - a. The management category will be "M" with the specific grazing system to be determined jointly with the operator (vegetative treatments and proposed range improvements will not be initiated until the grazing system has been developed); and
  - b. The forage allocation will be 2,812 AUMs for sheep only and 52 AUMs for mule deer; the season of use will be from July 1 - October 15 of each year.
9. Coordinate grazing administration of allotment 6055 with the adjacent sheep allotment on the Inyo National Forest.
10. Develop a grazing system for the Mono Mills Allotment (6055) with the operator.
11. Conduct the following vegetative treatments only after implementation of a grazing system:
  - a. Prescribe burn 6,000 acres previously burned only from November 1 to March 31. In the Mono Mills Allotment (6055) no burning in drainage bottoms.
  - b. An additional 2,000 acres may be burned within the Mono Lake Allotment (6054) and Mono Mills Allotment (6055) if compatible with land use planning direction.
12. Implement the identified fence projects and water developments as indicated on the project overlay and in the Grazing EIS.
13. The management goals for the Mono Sand Flat Allotment are to improve the maximum sustained yield of livestock forage, improve wildlife habitat and recreation values, and provide habitat for use by the equivalent of 30 head of wild horses for a six-month period. This will be done with an intensive amount of management concern (Class I). Designate the grazing system type, season of use, forage allocation and management category as found in Table 4, Appendix 4. The Mono Lake relicted land boundary will be fenced to exclude livestock grazing and additional livestock water sources will be sought to replace those no longer available on the relicted lands.

## ***Long Valley Management Area***

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1. Designate the grazing system type, season of use and forage allocation on the following allotments as shown in Table 2, Appendix 4.
  - a. Hot Creek (6018);
  - b. Little Round Valley (6020);
  - c. Wilfred Creek (6022);
  - d. Long Valley (6044);
  - e. Tobacco Flat (6045); and
  - f. Casa Diablo (6081).
  
2. The following allotment boundary adjustments will be made:
  - a. Combine allotments 6017 and 6018 into a single allotment (6018 Hot Creek);
  - b. Include the previous Little Round Valley Unallotted area into the existing allotment boundary of 6020;
  - c. Exclude that portion of allotment 6044 east of Crowley Lake to the Forest Service boundary (This portion will create the new Casa Diablo Allotment 6081); and
  - d. The entire allotment boundary of 6081 will be created from the portion of allotment 6044 which is on the east shore of Crowley Lake.
  
3. The following administrative changes will be implemented:
  - a. The new Hot Creek Allotment (6018) will be administered by the U.S. Forest Service with the Antelope Allotment on the Inyo National Forest;
  - b. Grazing use on allotment 6020 will be coordinated with the use of the McGee Mountain Allotment on the Inyo National Forest;
  - c. The Forest Service will administer the grazing on allotment 6045 in conjunction with the Tobacco Flat Allotment on the Inyo National Forest; and
  - d. Grazing administration and management of allotment 6081 is to be done by the Forest Service in conjunction with grazing use of the Casa Diablo Allotment on the Inyo National Forest.
  
4. The U.S. Forest Service will manage grazing on allotment 6018 to meet the following vegetative goals:
  - a. Improve the riparian vegetation within Hot Creek meadow to a good ecological condition;
  - b. Prevent any decline of the grass and forb composition in sagebrush stands and meadows;
  - c. Prevent any further invasion of sagebrush or rabbitbrush in meadow vegetation zones; and
  - d. Succulent plants will be adequately available to sage grouse during the brood rearing period June 15 - July 31.
  
5. Sustain existing forage production on the Long Valley (6044), Tobacco Flat (6045) and Little Round Valley (6020) allotments.

6. Manage allotment 6022 to obtain a good ecological condition of meadows for sage grouse habitat; defer grazing of public lands in this allotment until June 1 of each year.
7. Coordinate the development of a grazing system for allotment 6018 (the specific grazing system to be determined by the Forest Service) and develop a grazing system for allotment 6022.
8. Implement the following range improvements in support of the range program:
  - a. Remove the allotment boundary fence along the eastern boundary of allotment 6018; and
  - b. Modify and improve the Convict Creek fence.
9. Provide for continued livestock trailing use through the area.

### ***Benton Management Area***

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1. Designate the grazing system type, season of use and forage allocation on the following allotments as shown in Table 2, Appendix 4:
  - a. Bramlette (6038);
  - b. Volcanic Tablelands (6007);
  - c. Hammil Valley (6024);
  - d. Marble Creek (6025);
  - e. Chalfant Valley (6030);
  - f. Laws (6040);
  - g. Jeffrey (6041);
  - h. Chalk Bluff (6043);
  - i. Lone Tree (6053); and
  - j. Blind Springs (6080).
2. The following boundary adjustments will be made:
  - a. Adjust the southwest boundary of allotment 6007 to the Owens River Gorge to include the unallotted area.
  - b. Establish the southwest boundary for 6080 by incorporating portions of the Benton Range Unallotted area and portions of the Marble Creek Allotment (6025) west of Highway 6.
  - c. Exclude lands west of Highway 6 from allotment 6025 (lands to be incorporated into new allotment 6080).
  - d. Modify the northeast boundary of allotment 6024 to include the presently unallotted area (modification will establish north boundary line to the ridge of Blind Springs Hill).
  - e. If the operator of allotment 6043 chooses not to develop needed fences, then the allotment will be adjusted to present area of cattle use.
3. The following administrative changes will be implemented:
  - a. The BLM will assume grazing administration of the Birch Creek Allotment on the Inyo National Forest in conjunction with grazing management of allotment 6025;

- b. BLM will assume administration of the adjacent Inyo National Forest allotment in conjunction with grazing management of allotment 6053; and
  - c. BLM will coordinate area of use determinations into the adjacent National Forest with the U.S. Forest Service on allotments 6053, 6041, 6040, 6030, 6024 and 6025.
4. Develop grazing systems in consultation with the operators of allotments 6080, 6024, and 6025.
  5. Develop needed fences and water facilities on allotments 6024 and 6080 to facilitate grazing system implementation.
  6. Develop identified water facilities north of Marble Creek on allotment 6025, fence both sides of Marble Creek for a distance of three miles, and build three miles of pasture division fence.
  7. Develop additional water facilities on allotment 6030 to improve livestock distribution.
  8. Require the permittee to develop needed fencing (boundary) and additional water development for improved livestock distribution if cattle are continued to be grazed on allotment 6043.
  9. Fence a portion of Silver Creek to protect the riparian habitat in allotment 6040.
  10. Work with operators on allotments 6080 and 6024 to develop a grazing system which will afford protection to bitterbrush during critical winter deer use.
  11. Provide for continued livestock trailing use through the area; however, ensure that sheep bedding areas are rotated to prevent continued surface deterioration.
  12. Forage allocation and management direction for the Bramlette Allotment (6038):
    - a. The management category for allotment 6038 is "I", with the grazing system to be developed in consultation with the operator;
    - b. Forage allocation is 738 AUMs for livestock use (cattle) from October 1 to May 31, 12 AUMs for mule deer and 50 AUMs for wild horses;
    - c. Adjust the southwest boundary to run south along the ridgeline to Blind Spring Hill;
    - d. Coordinate possible area of use limits with the adjacent Inyo National Forest;
    - e. Develop a grazing system in conjunction with the operator which will afford protection of bitterbrush during critical winter deer use;
    - f. Reseed 720 acres previously treated; if successful, reseed 14,000 acres in rangesite D-29-50 with Indian ricegrass and preferred wildlife forage species; and
    - g. Construct required water facilities and six miles of boundary fence.

## ***Owens Valley Management Area***

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1. Designate the grazing system type, season of use and forage allocation on the following allotments as shown in Table 2, Appendix 4:
  - a. Shannon/Baker Creek (6021); and
  - b. Wells Meadow (6051).
2. The following boundary adjustments will be made:
  - a. Coordinate with allotment 6021 permittees and the U.S. Forest Service to determine where the appropriate separation of allotment boundaries should be between the Forest Service's Shannon Canyon and Baker Creek allotments.
3. The following administrative changes will be implemented:
  - a. Area of use determinations into adjacent National Forest lands associated with use of allotment 6051 will be coordinated with the Inyo National Forest;
  - b. Consider having the Inyo National Forest administer grazing use of public lands within allotment 6021 in conjunction with allotments on the National Forest;
  - c. BLM will assume grazing administration on all of the Independence Allotment (6014) on the adjacent National Forest;
  - d. BLM will assume grazing administration on all of the Alabama Hills Allotment (6046) on the adjacent National Forest; and
  - e. Grazing administration of allotment 6082 will be performed by the Inyo National Forest.
4. Designate the grazing system type, season of use and forage allocation on the following allotments as shown in Table 2, Appendix 4:
  - a. Zurich (6012);
  - b. Owens Valley (6013);
  - c. Independence (6014);
  - d. Sawmill Creek (6015);
  - e. Owens Valley Common (6016);
  - f. West Crater Mountain (6019);
  - g. Black Mine (6023);
  - h. Poleta (6031);
  - i. Tinemaha (6033);
  - j. Alabama Hills (6046);
  - k. Red Mountain (6047);
  - l. West Santa Rita (6048);
  - m. Aberdeen (6049);
  - n. Poverty Hills (6050);
  - o. East Crater Mountain (6079); and
  - p. George Creek (6082).

5. The following boundary adjustments will be made:
  - a. Move the north boundary of allotment 6013 about 1/2 mile further south to the next unnamed canyon. This will deduct 264 acres from this allotment, and add 182 acres (4 AUMs) into the allotments which were previously unallotted;
  - b. Move the southern boundary of 6031 about 1/2 mile further south to the unnamed canyon. This will add about 264 acres (4 AUMs) to this allotment from 6013;
  - c. Omit 440 acres of public land from allotment 6048 in section 34 considered unsuitable for grazing;
  - d. Separate the existing Crater Mountain Allotment into two allotments, 6019 and 6079;
  - e. Incorporate portions of the presently unallotted area, between Bairs Creek and Shepherd Creek, into the Independence Allotment (6014);
  - f. Separate the public land west of the Cline Drift Fence into the George Creek Allotment (6082); and
  - g. Incorporate the public land west of the Cline Drift Fence into the National Forest allotment (George Creek) for grazing administrative purposes.
6. Area of use determinations into adjacent National Forest allotments from allotments 6012, 6013, 6016, 6019, 6023, 6031, 6033, 6047, 6048, and 6049 will be coordinated with the U.S. Forest Service. 7. Monitor the impacts of livestock grazing on critical tule elk calving areas in allotments 6012, 6049 and 6050; develop grazing systems if impacts so warrant.
8. Construct the following range improvements:
  - a. Build 1/2 mile of allotment boundary fence between allotments 6013 and 6031 as identified;
  - b. Develop additional water facilities in allotment 6047 to improve livestock grazing distribution;
  - c. Construct a boundary fence between allotments 6019 and 6079, as needed, to control livestock movement between allotments; and
  - d. Develop additional water facilities on allotments 6019 and 6079 to improve livestock distribution.
9. Provide for livestock trailing through the area.

### **Owens Lake Management Area**

1. Forage allocation and management direction for the Ash Creek Allotment (6042) is as follows:
  - a. The Management category will be "C" with a deferred grazing system developed cooperatively with the U.S. Forest Service and the operator; and
  - b. Forage allocation will be 130 AUMs for cattle use between February 1 - May 31 of each year.

2. Transfer the grazing administration of allotment 6042 to the Inyo National Forest.
3. Develop an Allotment Management Plan for the Ash Creek Allotment (6042) in coordination with the Inyo National Forest.
4. Improve the vegetative condition in the Ash Creek Allotment (6042) to a good ecological condition within 25 years. A portion of the creek will be fenced to exclude grazing along the riparian vegetation zone.
5. Construct the following range improvements on allotment 6042:
  - a. Develop internal pasture fences and additional boundary fences as needed to implement the deferred system (permittee to assist in development); and
  - b. Develop additional watering facilities as needed to implement the proposed grazing system.
6. Allow continued use of the livestock trail through the area.