

APPENDIX A
***THUNDER BASIN NATIONAL GRASSLAND
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
2001 REVISION***

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION
USDA FOREST SERVICE**

AMENDMENT 2006-01

**MODIFICATION OF MANAGEMENT DIRECTION TO AUTHORIZE
CONSTRUCTION OF A 69 kV POWER LINE ON THUNDER BASIN NATIONAL
GRASSLAND**

Digest: Modifies Management Direction to authorize power line construction, operation and maintenance for the Teckla to Antelope Mine 69kV power line on Thunder Basin National Grassland, Wyoming

Reason for Amendment

This amendment to the *Thunder Basin National Grassland Land and Resource Management Plan, 2001 Revision*, would allow construction of an overhead 69kV power line within the minimum standard of ¼ mile of an active raptor nest. This is a non-significant site specific amendment.

The transmission line will traverse **Management Areas 8.4-Mineral Production and Development** for approximately 5,454 feet affecting approximately 3.13 acres for construction, operation and maintenance.

Standards to be Amended

This amendment to Plan Standards is made only for those lands identified in the Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Teckla to Antelope Mine 69kV Power line. Lands not analyzed must undergo analysis following guidelines set forth in 36 CFR 228.102 prior to any additional authorizations.

“Standards are actions that must be followed or are required limits to activities in order to achieve Grassland objectives. Site-specific deviations from standards must be analyzed and documented in management plan amendments.” Grassland Plan page 1-9.

Chapter 1, Standards and Guidelines

One (1) Grassland-wide Standard is amended by waiving the Standard entirely to allow for construction of the power line parallel to the existing power lines.

F. Fish, Wildlife, Rare Plants, (raptors) page 1-20

73. To help prevent abandonment, reproductive failure or nest destruction, prohibit development of new facilities within the minimum distances.

Species and Habitat	Minimum Distance (miles)
Bald Eagle Nest	1.0
Bald Eagle Winter Roost Area	1.0
Golden Eagle Nest	0.25
Merlin Nest	0.25
Ferruginous Hawk Nest	0.25
Swainson's Hawk Nest	0.25
Burrowing Owl Nest	0.25
Nests of Other Raptors	0.125

Standard

Need for Waiver

A waiver to standard #73 is needed due to a raptor nest located in the adjacent power line.

Mitigation

No mitigation was developed to satisfy the raptors identified in this Standard.

Applicability of Amendment

This amendment is applicable to those areas within and adjacent to the corridor, which are or may be occupied and/or impacted by 69kV power line authorized by authorizations or special use permits. This specific, relatively small area is, or may become, primarily occupied for purposes other than renewable resource production. Although these lands are included in management areas that may differ along the length of the authorization, the authorization will be managed for complementary resource objectives, where conditions permit. Where the authorization is inconsistent with existing management area standards and guidelines, mitigation will be developed, to the extent practicable, to minimize impacts and effect compliance with the *Thunder Basin National Grassland Land and Resource Management Plan, 2001 Revision*, and all other applicable laws. Those lands not impacted by the authorization shall continue to be managed under the existing management prescriptions, standards and guidelines.

NEPA Evaluation and Plan Amendment Significance Determination Process

The NEPA evaluation of this proposed amendment, as called for by 36 C.F.R. Part 219, Section 219.10(f), has been performed as part of the Environmental Assessment for the Teckla to Antelope Mine 69kV power line. As part of the proposed plan amendment evaluation, a determination as to whether the proposed amendment is a significant or non-significant amendment to the current plan has been made and is documented in the project file.

This amendment is consistent with the *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*, 40 CFR parts 1500 to 1508, and Chapters 10 and 20 of FSH 1909.15 (09/21/92). In addition, it has been determined that this amendment is a non-significant amendment under the criteria of the *National Forest Management Act* and in accordance with Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, Section 25.4.

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Forest Supervisor

Date