



File Code: 1920

Date: November 27, 2006

CORRECTION NO. 4
2003 UINTA NATIONAL FOREST
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Dear Uinta National Forest User:

The *Strategic Management Plan for Sage Grouse* (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, 2002) recommends limiting activities around sage grouse leks until June 1st. However, sage grouse habitat in the Strawberry Reservoir Management Area is higher, cooler and wetter than in many other parts of the State, and monitoring and research study observations on the Strawberry population indicate that sage grouse may still be utilizing breeding habitats into June. Considering this, biologists (including Forest Service, Utah Division of Wildlife Resource, and university staff) involved in these studies indicated that a June 15th date would be more appropriate for this population. The 2003 Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) intended to convey this; that is to limit activities around sage grouse leks in the Strawberry Reservoir Management Area until June 15th, and to limit activities around sage grouse leks elsewhere on the Forest (i.e., Vernon Management Area) until June 1st. However, the wording in the Forest Plan is unclear and inconsistent. Guideline WL&F-6 (Forest Plan; page 3-11) limits activities around sage grouse leks from March 1 to June 1, whereas guideline Veg-7 (Forest Plan; pages 3-17 to 3-18) and standard Graze-4 (Forest Plan; page 3-26) limit activities around sage grouse leks from March 1 to June 15. This has lead to some confusion in interpreting and implementing the Forest Plan.

My staff recently consulted with biologists from various universities and State and Federal agencies, including many associated with the Strawberry Sage Grouse Working Group, and they confirmed that June 15th is appropriate for the Strawberry population, and June 1st is appropriate for the other Uinta National Forest populations (i.e., Vernon). Therefore, I have decided to issue the enclosed errata to correct the inconsistencies in the Forest Plan. This errata clarifies that the June 1st date applies to the Vernon Management Area and the June 15th date applies to the Strawberry Management Area. Please replace pages 3-11, 3-17, 3-18 and 3-26 in your copy of the Forest Plan with the enclosed. If you have any questions regarding this correction please contact Reese Pope at the address and phone number listed above. Thank you for your interest in the Uinta National Forest.

Sincerely,

BRIAN FEREBEE
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

cc: Julie K. King, Pam Gardner, Doug Jones



MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES – BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

Management direction for the biological environment is found in numerous laws, regulations, executive orders, Forest Service policies, and additional guidance documents. These documents are listed in Appendix A. Additional specific management direction is provided in the following sections.

WILDLIFE AND FISH HABITAT MANAGEMENT

- WL&F-1** **Guideline:** In forested habitats where vegetation treatments exceed 40 acres, retain big game hiding cover (i.e., sufficient cover to conceal an animal) for a minimum of 200 feet from the treatment edges unless an insect infestation, disease, or other natural disaster would warrant treatment before the desired cover was established. (This guideline applies only to forested cover types.)
- WL&F-2** **Standard:** Provide wildlife escape ramps in all developed water sources.
- WL&F-3** **Guideline:** Provide for wildlife movement through and/or around structures or project sites such as fences, spring developments, guzzlers, roads, and ditches.
- WL&F-4** **Guideline:** In greater sage grouse nesting habitats in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas, avoid removing sagebrush within 300 yards of greater sage grouse foraging areas along riparian zones, meadows, lakebeds, and farmland, unless such removal is necessary to achieve greater sage grouse habitat management objectives.
- WL&F-5** **Guideline:** Avoid the use of highly toxic organophosphate and carbamate insecticides in greater sage grouse nesting habitats in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas during nesting periods.
- WL&F-6** **Guideline:** Adjust timing and location of management and public activities to minimize disturbance of greater sage grouse breeding sites in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas. Activities should not take place within sight distance or 0.5 mile of leks (whichever is less) annually from March 1 to June 1 in the Vernon Management Area and from March 1 to June 15 in the Strawberry Management Area. (Correction #4)
- WL&F-7** **Standard:** Protect known three-toed woodpecker nesting sites by prohibiting vegetative management activities from April 15 until September 1 annually in a 30 acre nest area.
- WL&F-8** **Guideline:** Provide northern goshawk nest areas that contain one active, two alternate, and three replacement nest sites. Each nest site should be

- Weeds-17** **Guideline:** To limit the spread of noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species through fecal material, domestic animals used to manipulate vegetation should not be grazed in an infested area during the period of plant seed production, and directly moved to another site.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

- Veg-1** **Standard:** Permits for the collection of federally-listed threatened or endangered plant species may only be issued for scientific and education purposes, and then only if a *Recovery Permit* has been issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Veg-2** **Standard:** Permits for the collection of Forest Service sensitive plant species may only be issued for Forest Service-approved research or scientific purposes, and then only if collection is not likely to adversely impact population viability or have negative ecological effects.
- Veg-3** **Guideline:** Permits for the collection of seeds or plant cuttings of species that are not federally-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate plants, or Forest Service sensitive plants, may be issued if collection is not likely to adversely impact population viability or have negative ecological effects.
- Veg-4** **Standard:** Only hand-carried tools may be used to harvest seed.
- Veg-5** **Standard:** Except for Forest Service approved scientific projects, restoration projects, or cultural uses, no seeds or plants may be collected in Research Natural Areas, locations where threatened or endangered plant species are known to occur, designated wilderness areas, areas recommended for wilderness designation, or developed recreation sites.
- Veg-6** **Guideline:** Permits may be issued to collect plants for bioprospecting purposes.
- Veg-7** **Guideline:** Manage approximately 80 percent of potential greater sage grouse breeding and winter habitat areas in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas to support the percentages and heights of canopy cover listed in the table below. Breeding habitat should retain the given height levels of grasses and a diversity of forbs annually through ~~June 15~~ June 1 in the Vernon Management Area and June 15 in the Strawberry Reservoir Management Area. Vegetation should be maintained in a mosaic of openings and shrubs. (Correction #4)

Table 3-4. Vegetation Requirements in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas

Vegetation Type	Minimum % Canopy Cover	Minimum Height Canopy Cover ¹	
		Vernon Management Area	Strawberry Reservoir Management Area
Greater Sage Grouse Breeding Habitat (Maintain through June 15 – Strawberry) (Correction #4) (Vernon – Maintain through June 1)			
Sagebrush	15-25%	16-32 inches	16-32 inches
Grasses	≥ 15%	≥ 6 inches	≥ 7 inches
Forbs	≥ 10%	≥ 6 inches	≥ 7 inches
Greater Sage Grouse Winter Habitat			
Sagebrush	10-30% ²	10-14 inches ²	10-14 inches ²
Grasses	N/A	N/A	N/A
Forbs	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ Minimum height is measured as droop height, the highest naturally growing portion of the plant.

² Above snow.

N/A There are no minimum percent canopy cover or minimum height requirements for greater sage grouse winter habitat in grasses or forbs.

- Veg-8** **Guideline:** Forest vegetative manipulation within active, alternative, and replacement northern goshawk nest sites should be designed to maintain or improve desired nest area habitat. See the glossary for definitions of these sites.
- Veg-9** **Guideline:** Revegetation should be initiated as promptly as practical. Seed only where natural regeneration of desirable species is unlikely or is expected to be slow. Select low nutrient demanding native species to reduce the need for fertilization. Spot re-seed as necessary.
- Veg-10** **Guideline:** Use management areas as the analysis areas in evaluating contributions to vegetative Desired Future Conditions (DFCs).
- Veg-11** **Guideline:** Manage for at least 30 percent of aspen and aspen/conifer forest cover types, and at least 40 percent of Douglas-fir, white fir, mixed conifer, spruce/fir, and lodgepole pine forest cover types in mature and old structural stages. (This guideline applies only to forested cover types.)
- Veg-12** **Guideline:** Silvicultural practices may be used to maintain or improve old growth and late successional stage characteristics. (This guideline applies only to forested cover types.)
- Veg-13** **Guideline:** All vegetation management activities should mimic the natural pattern, structure, and composition of vegetation on the landscape (within the historic range of variability).

Table 3-9. Utilization Standards by RHCA Class

RHCA Class	Minimum Percent of Stream Length	Utilization Standard by Season of Use			
		Very Early – Early		Mid – Late Seral	
		Early	Late	Early	Late
Minimum Greenline Stubble Height ¹					
Class I	90%	5"	6"	4"	5"
Class II	80%	4"	5"	3"	4"
Class III	70%	3"	4"	2"	3"
Forage Utilization Limits ²					
Class I	90%	45%	35%	55%	45%
Class II	80%	50%	40%	60%	50%
Class III	70%	60%	50%	65%	55%
Willow Utilization ²					
Class I	90%	N/A	35%	N/A	50%
Class II	80%	N/A	35%	N/A	50%
Class III	70%	N/A	35%	N/A	50%

Note: There are no willow utilization standards for early season use.

¹ Height of key species (palatable, hydrophytic species indicative of mid to late seral riparian plant communities, or as indicated in the site-specific Allotment Management Plan). If acceptable "key species" are absent from a site, only utilization standards shall be used.

² Percent of total average annual growth.

Graze-4 **Standard:** Limit grazing to meet the following utilization levels on non-riparian vegetation types based on the annual average of the current year's growth. However, through June 15 **at Strawberry Reservoir Management Area and through June 1 at Vernon Management Area**, minimum canopy cover and height requirements for greater sage grouse habitat in the Vernon and Strawberry Reservoir Management Areas (as shown in the table in Veg-7 on page 3-17) take precedence over the forage utilization standards in the following table. **(Correction #4)**

Table 3-10. Forage Utilization Standards

Vegetation Type	Forage Utilization	
	Very Early – Early Seral	Mid – Late Seral
General Uplands and Winter Range		
Upland shrublands (sagebrush, snowberry, mountain mahogany species, cliffrose, bitterbrush, saltbrush, and mountain brush)	40%	60%
Grasslands	45%	65%
Forest-wide		
Sub-alpine shrublands	25%	35%
Sub-alpine grasslands	40%	45%