

Montana / Dakotas Greater Sage-grouse Planning Efforts



- Forest Service



What is a Resource Management Plan?

- **An RMP:**
 - Describes broad multiple-use direction for BLM public lands that focuses on what resource conditions, uses and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time.
 - Establishes desired outcomes (goals and objectives) for resource management and includes Allocations; Management Actions and Allowable Uses to achieve the desired outcomes.
 - Provides the framework for subsequent implementation decisions carried-out through project specific or activity level plans.
- An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) accompanies the RMP evaluate and disclose the environmental issues and impacts for the alternatives analyzed in detail.



Range of Alternatives in the RMPs

- **BLM considers and analyzes a range of different management options**
- **Alternatives are different management options the BLM may choose to manage lands in the planning area.**



Range of Alternatives in the RMPs

- **Alternative Development:**
 - **The BLM studies current conditions,**
 - **Considers public scoping comments, and**
 - **Work with cooperating agencies & RACs to develop the range of alternatives**

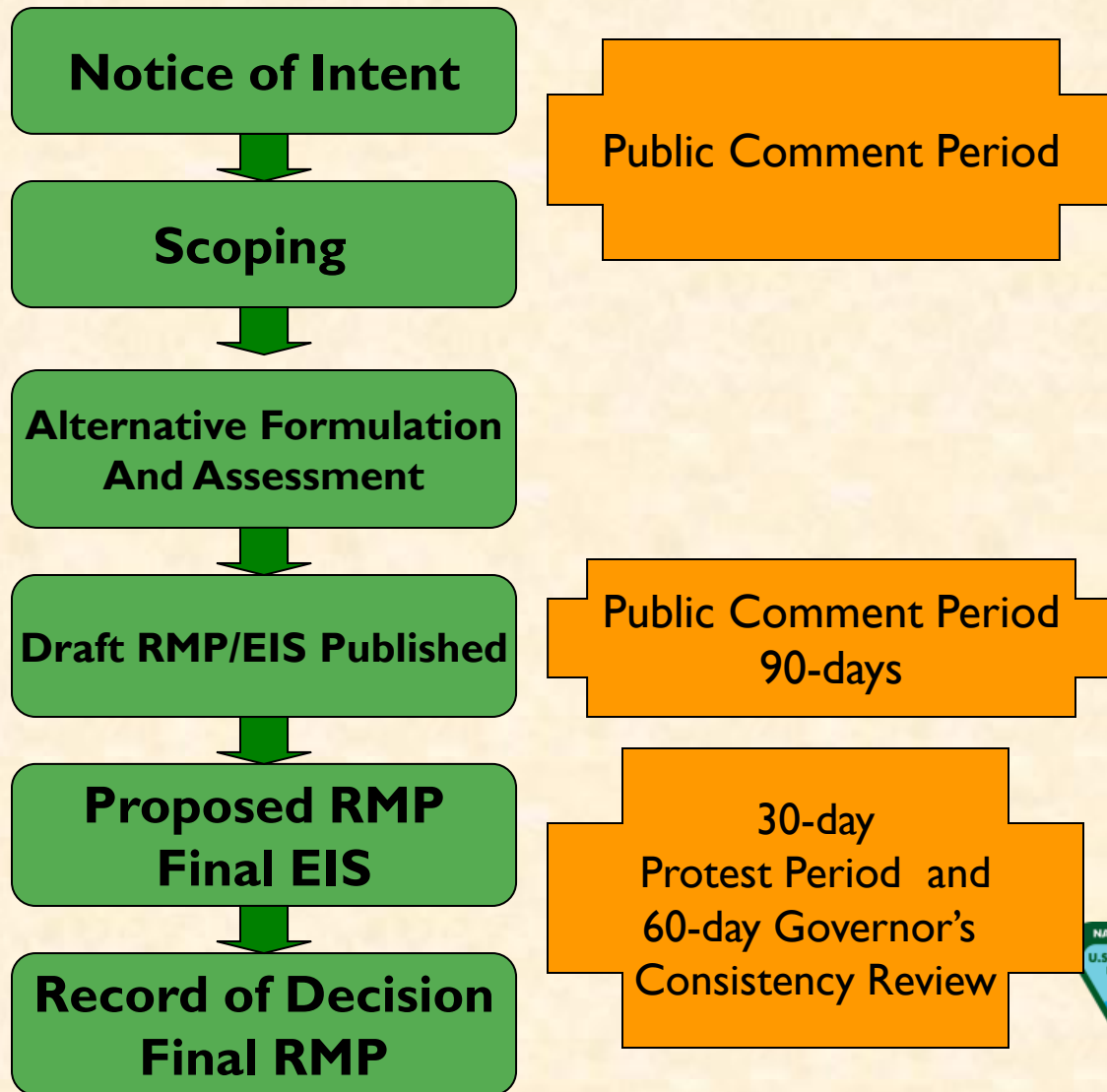


Range of Alternatives in the RMPs

- **Each alternative is analyzed to assess the impacts**
 - **A preferred alternative is then identified or developed.**
 - **The preferred alternative seeks to balance resource protection/production, in consideration of the economic reliance of local communities on public lands and the way of life provided by public lands.**



Key Milestones

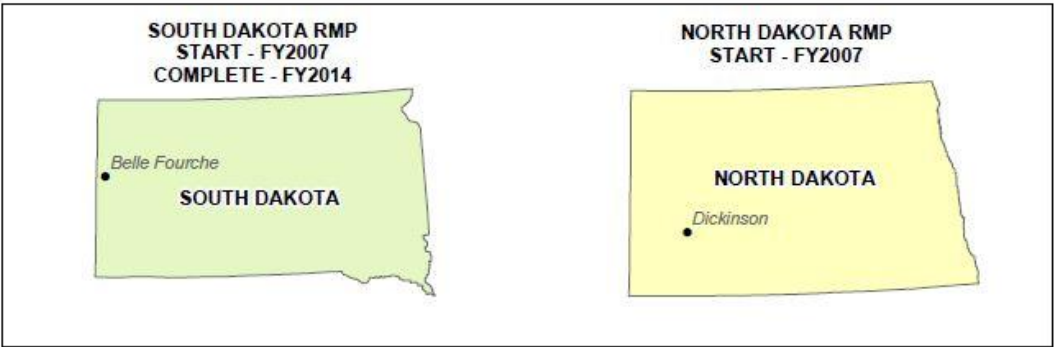
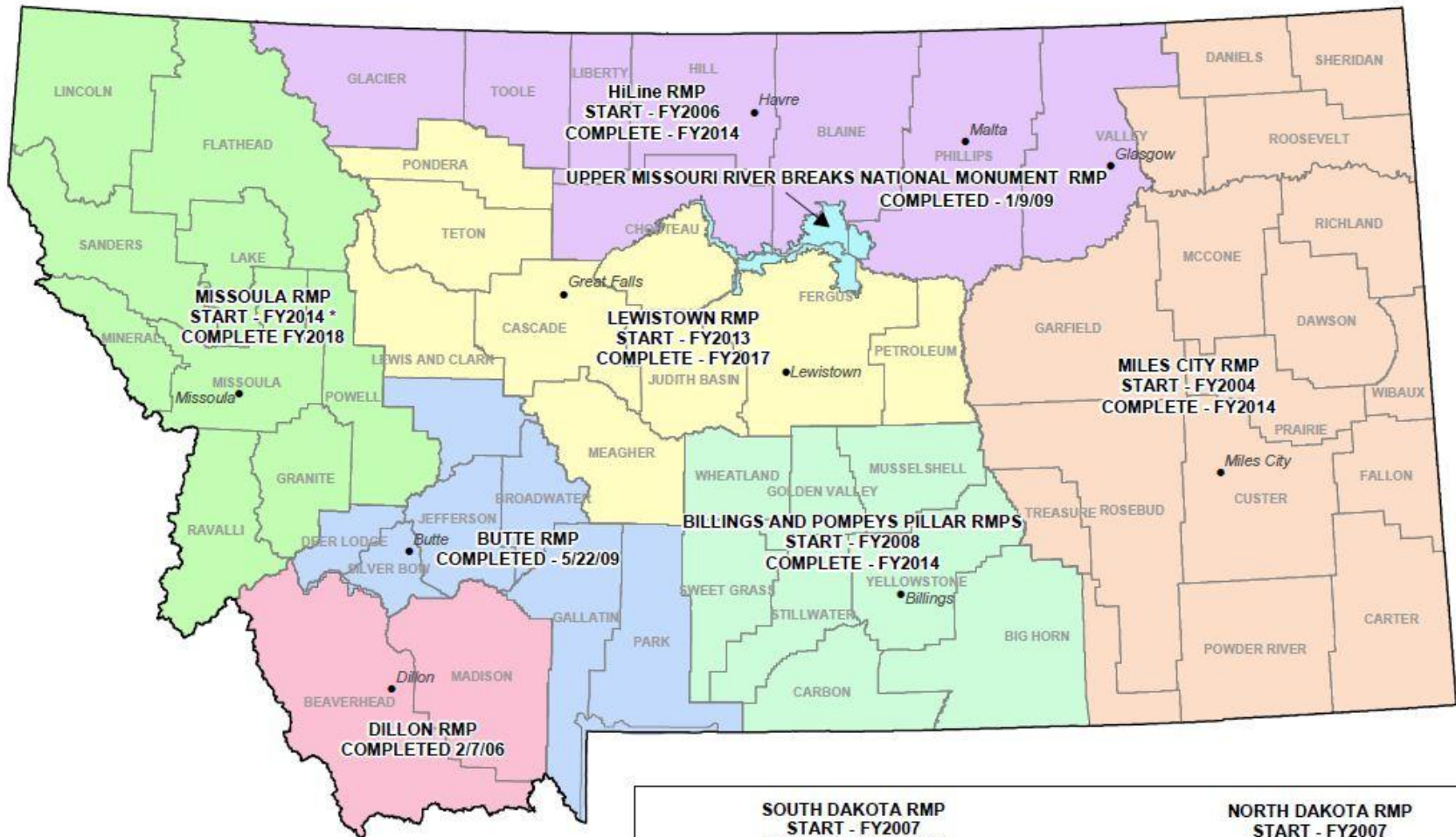


BLM in Montana

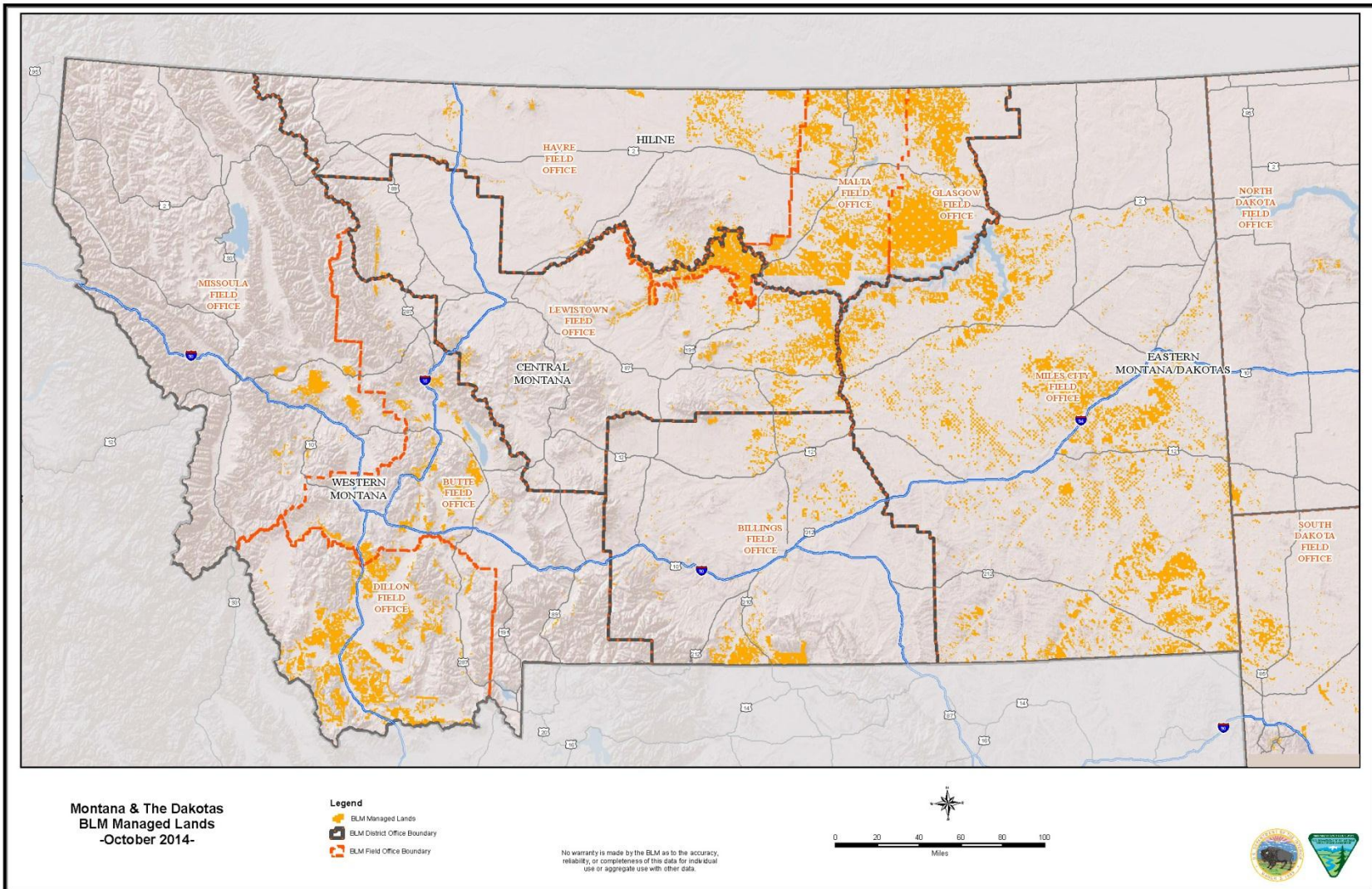
- **BLM is one of the larger land management agencies in Montana:**
 - **7.97 million surface acres (10% of the total land surface)**
 - **37.79 million acres of subsurface minerals (almost 25% of the total subsurface minerals)**



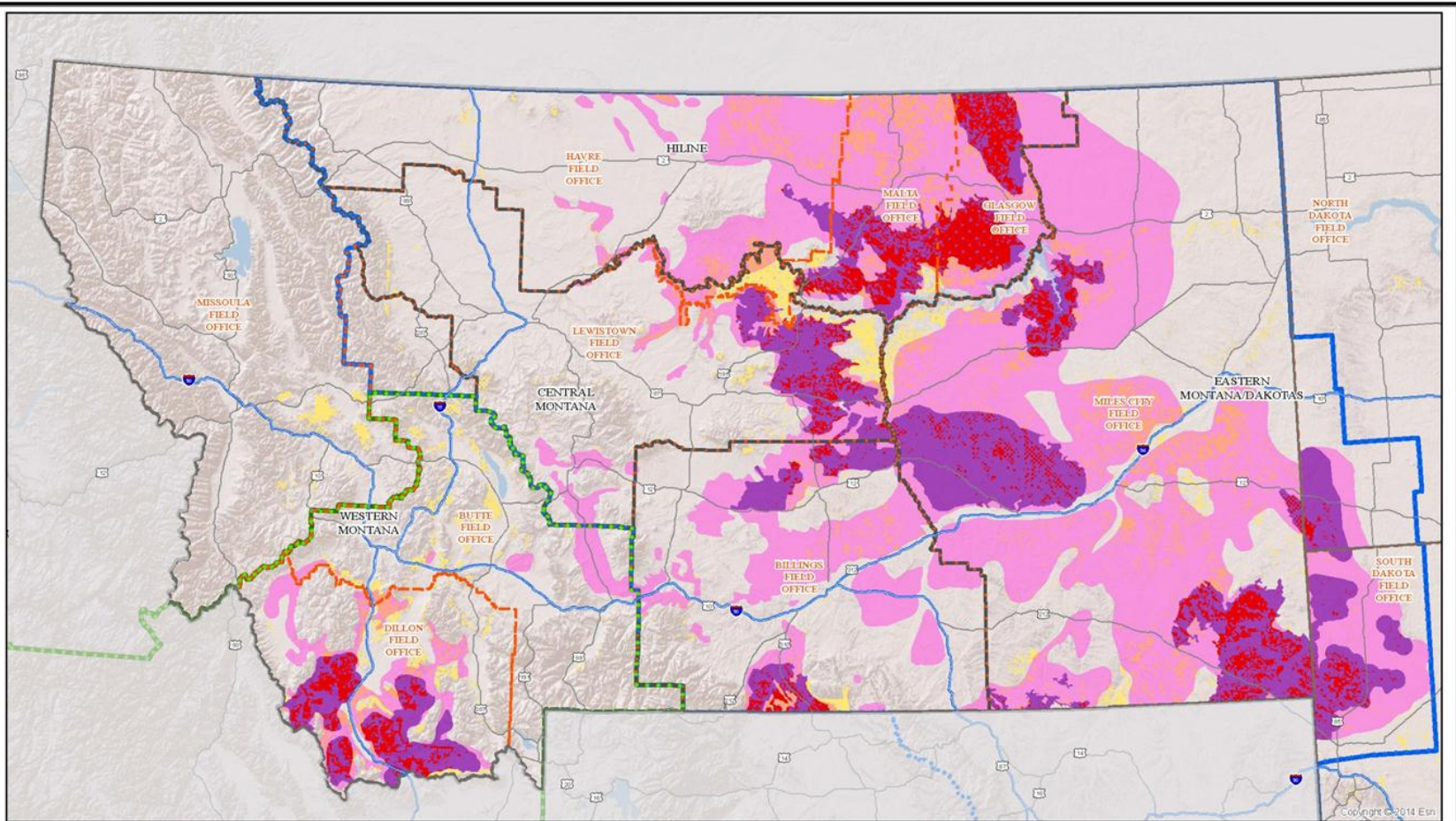
ONGOING & FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING BOUNDARIES MONTANA/DAKOTAS



BLM Surface Ownership



Priority Habitat Management Areas and General Habitat Management Areas



Montana & The Dakotas
Greater Sage-Grouse
Preliminary Priority
Habitat, Preliminary
General Habitat and
BLM Managed Lands
-October 2014-

- Legend**
- Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH)
 - Preliminary General Habitat (PGH)
 - PPH on BLM Managed Lands
 - PGH on BLM Managed Lands
 - BLM Managed Lands
 - BLM District Office Boundary
 - BLM Field Office Boundary
 - Rocky Mountain S3 Planning Region
 - Rocky Mountain S3 Planning Sub-Regions
 - Great Basin S3 Planning Region
 - Great Basin S3 Planning Sub-Regions

Data Sources

PPH: FINAL DRAFT, Developed by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and reviewed by Montana BLM.
 PGH: FINAL DRAFT, Distribution of Sage-Grouse in North America. Schroeder et al., 2004.
 Montana Conservation Easements: Montana Base Map Service Center, Montana Natural Heritage Program - 2019
 Montana Wildlife Management Areas (WMA): Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks - 2012

BLM Sage-Grouse Planning Regions and Sub-Regions
Sage-Grouse Planning Team



No warranty is made by the BLM as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



RMP Revisions

Billings Planning Area - 10.8 million acres in south-central Montana.

- BLM Surface - 430,000 acres (4% of total surface; 20% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface - 963,000 acres (9% of total mineral estate; 26% of total PPH)

HiLine Planning Area - 15.9 million acres in north-central Montana.

- BLM Surface - 2.4 million acres (15% of total surface; 55% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface - 3.8 million acres (21% of total mineral estate; 65% of total PPH)

Miles City Planning Area - 25.8 million acres in eastern Montana.

- BLM Surface - 2.8 million acres (11% of total surface; 20% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface - 10.9 million acres (42% of total mineral estate; 37% of total PPH)

South Dakota Planning Area - 49 million acres in South Dakota (entire state).

- BLM Surface – 274,000 acres (<1% of total surface; 24% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface – 1.7 million acres (3.5% of total surface; 47% of total PPH)



RMP Sage Grouse Amendments

Dillon Planning Area - 5.8 million acres in southwest Montana.

- BLM Surface - 886,000 acres (15% of total surface; 34% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface - 1.36 million acres (23% of total mineral estate; 48% of total PPH)
- Dillon RMP revised in 2006

Lewistown Planning Area - 11.6 million acres in central Montana.

- BLM Surface - 430,000 acres (6% of total surface; 19% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface - 452,000 acres (4% of total mineral estate; 31% of total PPH)
- Current RMPs: Headwaters (1984), Judith (1994)

North Dakota Planning Area – 963,017 acres in western North Dakota.

- BLM Surface – 33,030 acres (3% of total surface; 7% of total PPH)
- BLM Subsurface – 396,053 acres (41% of total mineral estate; 36% of total PPH)
- Current RMP: North Dakota (1988)



USFWS Identified Factors for GRSG BLM Could Address

- Inadequate regulatory mechanisms for BLM identified as a major factor in “warranted but precluded” finding
- Principal regulatory mechanism for BLM is conservation measures in ***Resource Management Plans (RMPs)***
- Consistent application of conservation measures across the range



BLM Planning Considerations

- **Collaborative Planning**
- **Greater Sage-Grouse**
- **Scattered land patterns**
- **Energy development**
- **Special Areas / Designations**
- **Social and Economic Impacts**
- **Travel Management and Access**
- **Valid Existing Rights**
- **Lands with Wilderness Characteristics**



Greater Sage-Grouse Timelines

- 1/2005: USFWS issued 12-month “not warranted” finding
- 12/2007: District Court remanded USFWS decision
- 2/2010: USFWS Issued “warranted but precluded” finding making the greater sage-grouse a “candidate” for listing
- FY2015: GRSG final listing decision



Summary

- BLM is preparing three RMP Revisions and two Sage Grouse Amendments in Montana and one revision in South Dakota and one amendment in North Dakota.
- BLM manages less than 50% of Priority Sage Grouse Habitat in MT/DK.
- Three RMP revision drafts were released to the public in March 2013.
- One RMP Amendment released to the public in September 2013.
- One RMP Amendment released to the public in November 2013.



Questions?

