

Attachment A

3.51B BIGHORN SHEEP HABITAT WITH NON-FEDERAL MINERAL OWNERSHIP

The following bighorn sheep habitat areas have non-federal mineral ownership within them: Icebox Canyon, Buckhorn Creek, Dry Creek and Wannagan. Because of the non-federal mineral ownership, development could occur at any time. These areas are managed to provide quality forage, cover, escape terrain, and solitude for bighorn sheep while accounting for the development of the non-federal mineral ownership (see Preface for an explanation of existing mineral rights). These areas would also allow petroleum resource development on federal minerals with appropriate protections through Controlled Surface Use (CSU) and Timing Limitations (TL) stipulations.

Desired Conditions

Bighorn sheep habitat provides an abundant supply of food and cover. Other resource

management activities are modified as needed to maintain high habitat suitability levels and acceptable levels of solitude. To achieve population objectives, the integrity of breeding, lambing and other important habitat features (e.g. escape terrain) in occupied and unoccupied habitat will be protected.

Coordinate with other federal and state agencies and private landowners to manage habitat and monitor herd size of existing bands of bighorn sheep. In conjunction with North Dakota Department of Game and Fish, consider augmenting existing populations with additional sheep introductions.

Mineral operations will occur in a manner that minimizes effects on bighorn sheep and their habitat.

Standards and Guidelines

General

1. Maintain bighorn sheep habitat while allowing activities that do not significantly degrade the characteristics for which the area was designated.
Standard

2. Implement habitat enhancement projects that improve sheep foraging habitat and provide connectivity of foraging areas with escape terrain.
Guideline

contribute to bighorn sheep management objectives. **Guideline**

3. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section D, for additional minerals and energy resources direction.*

Fire

1. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section G, for additional fire management direction.*

Minerals and Energy Resources

1. Allow oil and gas leasing with surface occupancy using CSU and TL stipulations as necessary to prevent significant adverse impact to bighorn sheep. Subsequent surface operations may be modified or moved to minimize the additional impacts on bighorn sheep habitat. **Standard**
2. Identify and implement surface and mineral estate land exchanges that

Livestock Grazing

1. Do not convert existing livestock allotments to domestic sheep or goat allotments in or adjoining this management area. **Standard**
2. Limit livestock forage allocation based on bighorn sheep needs. **Guideline**
3. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section L and Chapter 2 (Geographic Area Direction) for additional livestock management direction.*

Invasive Species

1. Domestic sheep may be permitted as part of an integrated pest management (IPM) control program if they do not conflict with bighorn sheep management objectives. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department will be consulted if such a program is considered. **Guideline**
2. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section J, for additional invasive species direction.*

Recreation

1. Snowmobile use is prohibited in the management area. **Standard**
2. Restrict travel to protect sheep concentrations during breeding, lambing and winter use, except for administrative use. **Guideline**
3. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section K, for additional recreation direction*

Heritage Resources

1. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section N, for additional heritage resource direction.*

Scenery Management

1. Manage area to encompass the spectrum of Scenic Integrity Objectives. **Guideline**
2. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section L, Chapter 2 (Geographic Area Direction) for Scenic Integrity Objectives map and Appendix G (Glossary) for definition of terms.*

Special Uses

1. Allow construction of new utility corridors only if they do not degrade the characteristics for which the area was designated. **Standard**

2. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section P, for additional special uses direction.*

Infrastructure

1. Restrict construction of new travel routes across bighorn sheep habitat, however, allow for valid existing rights such as oil and gas leases. **Guideline**
2. *Refer to Chapter 1 (Grassland-wide Direction), Section Q and Chapter 2 (Geographic Area Direction) for additional infrastructure direction.*

Record of Decision
Dakota Prairie Grasslands – Land and Resource Management Plan – July, 2002

