

BLM STUDY REVIEW of HELLS CANYON COMPLEX STUDIES

Influences of Land Management Practices of IPC-Owned Lands on Terrestrial Resources

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Jack Melland
Wildlife Biologist
Baker Resource Area

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1. INTRODUCTION

Activities on IPC lands that could impact terrestrial resources are; employee livestock grazing, accessory grazing, motor vehicle use, permit grazing, agriculture and communication lines, and unauthorized uses. The largest impact is grazing (controlled and uncontrolled) upon riparian vegetation and with uncontrolled vehicle use also creating vegetation and erosion problems.

2. CONCLUSION

"IPC land management practices have very limited effects on terrestrial resources." I question this statement as riparian vegetation on the west end of the Powder River could be improved with livestock control. "A list of management recommendations were made:"

- A) sanitary and waste conditions at impromptu recreation areas
- B) General recreation including private vehicle use
- C) Grazing residential accessory use
- D) Potential damage to sensitive species
- E) Presence of noxious weeds

A good monitoring program is needed to determine if these conditions are being met.

3. STUDY ADEQUACY

The study is fairly complete but riparian areas could be enlarged on the west end of the Powder River arm. "Continuing to manage unauthorized uses". What does this mean? Will unauthorized use continue? Or will these uses become managed? Some uses may be appropriate if authorized seasonally, but not annually, i.e. boat docks.

4. BLM CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

IPC recognizes very little responsibility for any threats to threatened or endangered species, Bald Eagle. The proposed transmission line from Oxbow to Brownlee Dam may cause perch trees to be removed and the transmission line would cross near an eagle nest. Roads have impacted riparian on all three reservoirs and unrestricted cattle grazing has eliminated or prevents riparian from becoming established on the south shore of the Powder River arm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Fence the south shore of the Powder River arm and replant native riparian vegetation. Fence along roads to prevent vehicles from driving through riparian areas. Do not cut any large trees along the reservoirs and seek an aggressive tree planting program for future eagle perch and nest trees.

A more controlled grazing program may be necessary to improve riparian vegetation, control upland erosion and noxious weeds.

Implementation of a monitoring program is needed before management changes are made.