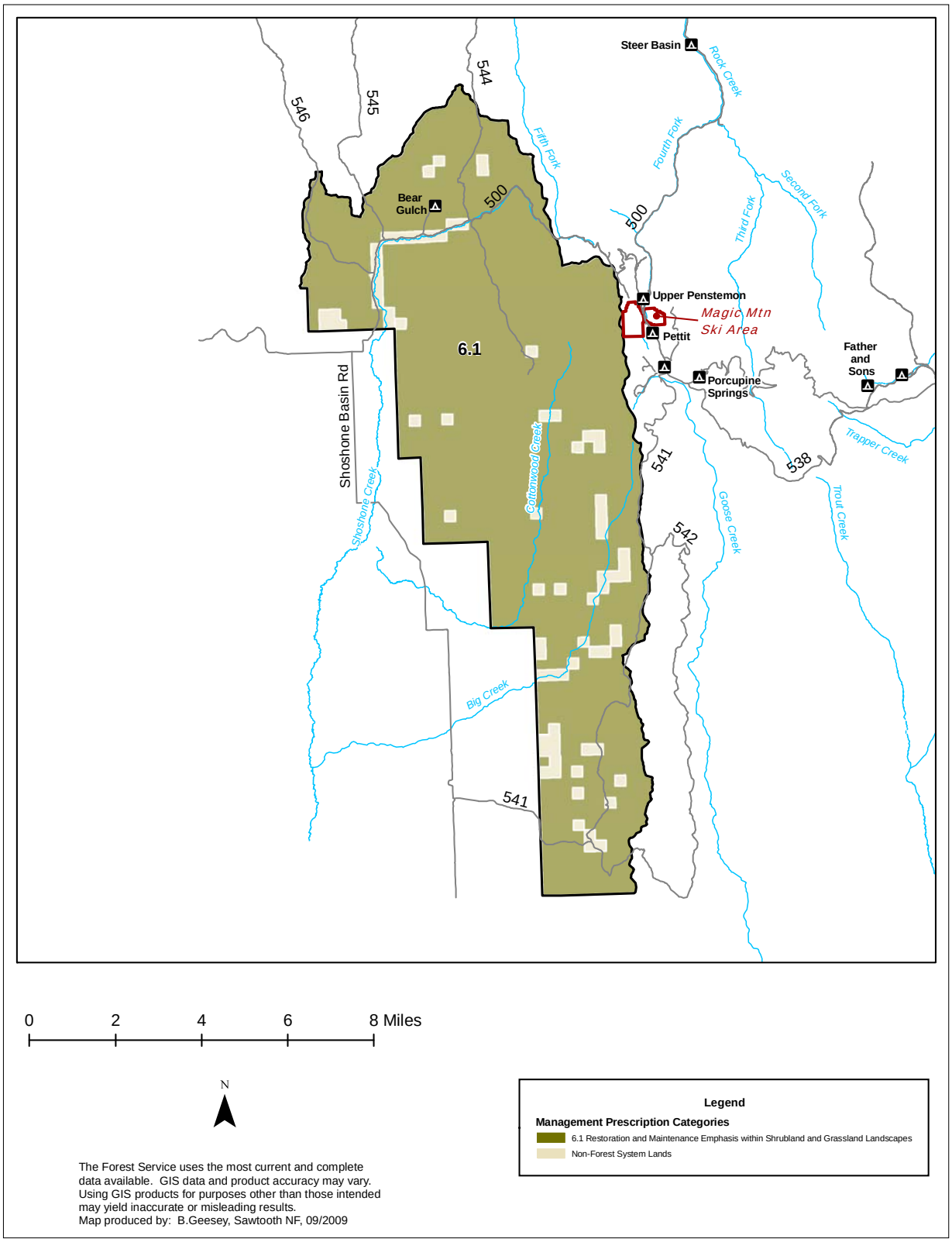

Management Area 14. Shoshone Creek Location Map

Management Area 14
Shoshone Creek

MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

Management Prescription - Management Area 14 has the following management prescription.

Management Prescription Category (MPC)	Percent of Mgt. Area
6.1 – Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland & Grassland Landscapes	100

General Location and Description - Management Area 14 is comprised of Forest Service administered lands on the western side of the Cassia Division on the Minidoka Ranger District (see map, preceding page). The entire area lies in Twin Falls County. The nearest large community is Twin Falls about 25 miles to the north. The management area is an estimated 47,400 acres, including many small private land inholdings that, together, make up about 7 percent of the area. The private land ownership pattern is directly related to historic water sources for livestock use. The area is bordered by the Sawtooth National Forest to the north and east, and by primarily private ranch lands to the west and south. The primary uses or activities in this area are livestock grazing, dispersed recreation, and timber management.

Access - The main access to the area from Twin Falls is by State Highway 93 south to Shoshone Basin, then north on the Shoshone Basin Road, which turns into Forest Road 500, a well-maintained gravel road. Most of the other roads in the area are native-surfaced, rough, and better suited for motorbikes and ATVs than full-sized vehicles. The density of classified roads is an estimated 2.0 miles per square mile, with a fairly even distribution of roads and trails throughout the area. Total road density for area subwatersheds ranges from 1.8 to 2.6 miles per square mile.

Special Features - Deadline Ridge is the dominant geographical feature in the central and southern portions of the management area. Forest Road 500 is a scenic road corridor from Oakley to Rogerson. The Shoshone Wildlife Pond provides wildlife viewing opportunities.

Air Quality - This management area lies within Montana/Idaho Airshed ID-25 and Twin Falls County. Particulate matter is the primary pollutant of concern related to Forest management. The closest ambient air monitor is located in the community of Twin Falls. It is used to obtain current background levels, trends, and seasonal patterns of particulate matter. The Jarbidge Wilderness in Nevada is the only Class I area within 100 kilometers. The IMPROVE monitoring site has been in operation since 1988 and provides trend and visibility data for this Class I area.

Between 1995 and 1999, emission trends in Twin Falls County improved for PM 10 and PM 2.5. The most common source of particulate matter within the counties was fugitive dust from unpaved roads and agricultural activities such as tilling. In addition to Forest management

activities, crop residue and ditch burning may contribute to particulate matter emissions. The amount of agricultural-related burning was moderately high in County (an estimated 15,000 acres). Twin Falls County did have point sources located near the community of Twin Falls.

Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources - Elevations range from around 4,300 feet at the Forest boundary to over 7,500 feet on Deadline Ridge. Management Area 14 is predominantly in the Humboldt River High Plateau subsection, and the dominant landforms are fluvial mountains, plateaus and escarpments, and depositional lands. Slope gradients range from 40 to 70 percent on the fluvial mountains, to 0 to 30 percent on the plateaus and depositional lands, to near vertical on the escarpments. Surface geology is a mix of volcanic basalts and sedimentary materials. Soils generally have low to moderate surface erosion potential, and moderate productivity. Subwatershed vulnerability ratings in this area are all low (see table below). Geomorphic Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds are all moderate (functioning at risk) (see table below). Many areas have impacts from roads, livestock grazing, and dispersed recreation. These localized impacts include accelerated erosion, upland compaction, and stream bank and channel modification.

The management area is comprised of portions of the Upper Shoshone Creek and Horse-Hot-Shoshone Watersheds that drain south and west into the Salmon Falls Creek Subbasin, which drains north into the Snake River Basin. The main streams in the area are Shoshone Creek and its tributaries; South Fork Shoshone Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Big Creek, and Horse Creek. Water Quality Integrity ratings for the subwatersheds vary from moderate (functioning at risk) to low (not functioning appropriately), with the majority being low (see table below). Many areas have depleted stream flows from irrigation uses, and accelerated sediment and nutrients from roads, livestock grazing, and dispersed recreation. Three of the nine subwatersheds in this area have water bodies that were listed as impaired under Section 303 (d) under the Clean Water Act in 2000. These subwatersheds are Cottonwood Creek, Horse Creek, and North Fork Shoshone Creek. Pollutants of concern were dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and sediment. There are currently no TMDL-assigned subwatersheds associated with this management area.

Subwatershed Vulnerability			Geomorphic Integrity			Water Quality Integrity			No. 303(d) Subs	No. Subs With TMDLs	No. Public Water System Subs
High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low	High	Mod.	Low			
0	0	9	0	9	0	0	2	7	3	0	0

Although this area historically had chinook salmon and steelhead, these species currently do not occur in Management Area 14 due to dams along the Snake River. Bull trout have not been documented in this area. Redband trout can be found in the Upper Shoshone Basin, North Fork Shoshone-Hooper, and South Fork Shoshone Creek subwatersheds. Brown trout were stocked in the past but have been extirpated due to extensive stream dewatering for irrigation. Stream conditions have been degraded from off-Forest irrigation and grazing impacts, including head cuts and intermittent flows in some areas. Aquatic habitat is not functioning properly in some areas due to localized sedimentation impacts from livestock grazing, roads, and dispersed recreation, and extensive off-Forest dewatering from irrigation.

Vegetation - Vegetation is naturally patchy in much of the management area, with islands of coniferous and aspen forest surrounded by sagebrush/grass communities. Lower and mid-

elevations feature sagebrush/grass communities. North and east aspects support aspen and lodgepole pine communities. Shrublands and aspen dominate at mid to high elevations.

An estimated 80 percent of the management area is non-forested, or covered by grasslands, shrublands, meadows, rock, or water. Much of this area is comprised of the Mountain Big Sagebrush, Basin Big Sage, and Low Sage vegetation groups. The dominant forested vegetation groups are Aspen (6 percent) and Persistent Lodgepole Pine (14 percent).

The Low Sage group is functioning properly, although the herbaceous component could be increased to enhance diversity and maintain historic fire return intervals. The Mountain Big Sagebrush group and the Basin Big Sage Group are functioning at risk due to fire exclusion, past insect mortality, and livestock grazing impacts, which have altered structure and species composition. Fire exclusion and grazing have allowed the canopy cover to increase, which has reduced the understory herbaceous cover. The bitterbrush component in the Basin Big Sage group is being replaced by cheatgrass and other introduced species. Large areas have been seeded with non-native grasses.

The Aspen group is not functioning properly in some areas because many stands are dying out or being replaced by conifers. Older aspen stands are not regenerating. The Persistent Lodgepole Pine group is functioning at risk due to fire exclusion. Fire hazard is increasing in unmanaged lodgepole stands due to increasing mortality from insect and disease infestations.

Riparian vegetation is not functioning properly in localized areas due to localized impacts from grazing, irrigation dewatering, dispersed recreation, and fire exclusion. In some areas, introduced grasses and noxious weeds are replacing native plants. Willow communities are becoming old and decadent, and are not regenerating due to fire exclusion, livestock use, and lack of water. Snag levels are likely below historic levels in many areas due to fuelwood gathering.

Botanical Resources - Currently, no known populations of Region 4 Sensitive species occur within this management area. No federally listed or proposed plant species are known to occur in the area, but potential habitat exists for Ute ladies'-tresses. Ute ladies'-tresses, a Threatened species, may have moderate potential habitat in riparian/wetland areas from 1,000 to 7,000 feet.

Non-native Plants – A number of noxious weeds and exotic plants, including diffuse knapweed and musk thistle, have been introduced into the management area, especially along main travel corridors and in areas of high activity. The main weed of concern is diffuse knapweed, which currently occurs in small, scattered populations. An estimated 45 percent of the management area is highly susceptible to noxious weed and exotic plant establishment and spread.

Wildlife Resources (**Updated** as part of the 2012 WCS amendment) - Low-elevation sagebrush/grassland communities provide habitat for greater sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, antelope, Swainson's hawk, ferruginous hawk and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and winter range for mule deer. Columbia sharp-tailed grouse may be wintering near the Forest boundary. Nesting and foraging habitats for other Region 4 Sensitive species, including goshawk, flammulated owl and Townsend's big-eared bat are found in the mid-elevation forests. High-

elevation forests provide mule deer summer range and habitat for south hills crossbill. Montane and alpine lakes, ponds and wetlands provide habitat for Columbian spotted frog. Other species present throughout the area include migratory landbirds, mountain lion, beaver, ruffed grouse, golden eagle, and a small population of elk. Ruffed grouse and Columbia sharp-tailed grouse have been recently introduced. This area is within the Central Idaho Wolf Recovery Area, but wolves are not currently known to occur here.

Terrestrial habitat is functioning at risk in some areas due primarily to human-caused disturbance, introduction of invasive species, grazing impacts, changes in the fire cycle and high road densities. Increasing recreation has increased disturbance to wildlife populations year-round. Frequent human-caused fires and the spread of cheat grass are reducing the amount and quality of sage grouse and deer habitat, especially winter range. As a result, sage grouse populations remain in decline. Fire exclusion is impacting other terrestrial habitats, including aspen. Current livestock grazing in some areas is not allowing localized areas of historic grazing impacts to recover. Habitat fragmentation from roads, development, and fire is moderate to high.

The area is not within any of the five Canada lynx geographic areas, as identified in the Canada Lynx Conservation and Strategy (2000); and therefore LAUs and lynx habitat mapping were not developed for the area. Consultation for Canada lynx on the Sawtooth NF was completed in 2003 and the US Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the Forest's findings for lynx. Forest-wide management direction relative to the lynx does not apply in this management area.

Idaho's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) was completed in 2005 and provides a framework for conserving 'Species of Greatest Conservation Need' (SGCN), designated by the State, and the habitats upon which they depend. The Forest assisted the State in identifying focal areas, or areas known to be important for SGCN. The Management Area falls within the South Hills designated focal area, or biologically important area. This designation was given to the area due to its exceptional diversity of SGCN based on species' richness models and is identified as core habitat for terrestrial wildlife species including sage grouse and south hills crossbill.

Recreation Resources - Management Area 14 has one developed campground, Bear Gulch, with 10 individual sites and 1 group site available. The rest of the area offers dispersed recreation opportunities, primarily hunting, camping, off-road vehicle use, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and fishing. Most use is concentrated along Shoshone Creek and the South Fork of Shoshone Creek. Most users come from the Magic Valley (Twin Falls, Rupert, Burley). Most of the trails in the area are open to some form of motorized use. The area is in Idaho Fish and Game Management Unit 54. There is one special use authorization in the area for a mountain lion hunting outfitter and guide operation.

Cultural Resources – The primary cultural theme in this area is prehistoric. Lithic tool sources are represented in a fairly high site density due to proximity to past anadromous fish runs in the Snake River and Salmon Falls Creek. Tools from these sites indicate at least 2,000 years of use by Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and their ancestors.

Timberland Resources - Of the estimated 6,000 tentatively suited acres in this management area, 5,400 acres have been identified as being suited timberlands, or appropriate for timber

production. This represents about 4 percent of the Forest's suited timberland acres. The suited timberland acres are found in MPC 6.1, as shown on the map displaying the MPCs for this management area. Forest management practices include small commercial sales, precommercial thinning, and reforestation. Forest products such as fuelwood, posts, poles, and ornamentals are also collected in designated areas. Roads were constructed for fuelwood program access in the late 1980s. Several small timber sales have occurred.

Rangeland Resources - The area contains all or portions of three cattle allotments, and provides an estimated 35,300 acres of capable rangeland, which represents about 7 percent of capable rangeland on the Forest. Range improvements include fencing and an extensive system of water developments.

Mineral Resources - Current mining activity is low and consists mainly of recreational rock collecting. The potential for additional mineral development is considered low.

Fire Management - No large fires have occurred within the management area in the last 15 years, although there have been several fires on adjacent BLM administered lands. There are no National Fire Plan communities or wildland-urban interface subwatersheds in the area. Historical fire regimes for the area are estimated to be 6 percent lethal and 94 percent mixed1 or 2. None of the area regimes has vegetation conditions that are highly departed from their historical range. However, 29 percent of the area regimes have vegetation conditions that are moderately departed from their historical range. Wildfire in these areas may result in larger patch sizes of high intensity or severity.

Lands and Special Uses – See the Recreation Resources section for recreational special uses.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

In addition to Forest-wide Goals, Objectives, Standards, and Guidelines that provide direction for all management areas, the following direction has been developed specifically for this area.

Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
MPC 6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes	Vegetation Standard	1423	For commercial salvage sales, retain at least the maximum number of snags depicted in Table A-6 within each size class where available. Where large snags (>20 inches dbh) are unavailable, retain additional snags ≥10 inches dbh where available to meet at least the maximum total number of snags per acre depicted in Table A-6.[1] (**Added** as part of the 2012 WCS amendment)
	Vegetation Guideline	1401	The full range of vegetation treatment activities may be used to restore or maintain desired vegetation and fuel conditions. The available vegetation treatment activities include wildland fire. Salvage harvest may also occur. (**Modified** as part of the 2012 WCS amendment)

[1] This standard shall not apply to activities that an authorized officer determines are needed for the protection of life and property during an emergency event, to reasonably address other human health and safety concerns, to meet hazardous fuel reduction objectives within WUIs, or to allow reserved or outstanding rights, tribal rights or statutes to be reasonably exercised or complied with.

Resource/Program	Direction	Number	Management Direction Description
MPC 6.1 Restoration and Maintenance Emphasis within Shrubland and Grassland Landscapes	Fire Guideline	1402	The full range of fire suppression strategies may be used to suppress wildfires. Emphasize strategies and tactics that minimize impacts to habitats, developments, and investments.
	Road Guideline	1403	Road construction or reconstruction may occur where needed: a) To provide access related to reserved or outstanding rights, or b) To respond to statute or treaty, or c) To achieve restoration and maintenance objectives for vegetation, water quality, aquatic habitat, or terrestrial habitat; or d) To meet access and travel management objectives.
	Road Guideline	1424	Public motorized use should be restricted on new roads built to implement vegetation management projects. Effective closures should be provided in road design. When the project is over, these roads should be reclaimed or decommissioned, if not needed to meet future management objectives. (**Added** as part of the 2012 WCS amendment)
Soil, Water, Riparian, and Aquatic Resources	Objective	1404	Work with DEQ and EPA to validate the authenticity and cause(s) for listing Cottonwood Creek, Horse Creek, and North Fork Shoshone Creek as subwatersheds with impaired 303(d) water bodies, and to determine any Forest Service management activities that may be contributing to the listings.
Vegetation	Objective	1405	Maintain and restore the early seral aspen and lodgepole pine components within the Persistent Lodgepole Pine vegetation group, as described in Appendix A.
	Objective	1406	Restore and maintain desired size class structure and diversity in the Aspen vegetation group, as described in Appendix A, by promoting regeneration.
	Objective	1407	Restore or maintain managed lodgepole pine stands, creating a mosaic pattern of stands to achieve the desired conditions for species composition, tree size classes, and stand structure, as described in Appendix A.
	Objective	1408	Restore and maintain sagebrush and bitterbrush composition, age class, and canopy cover components (as described in Appendix A) in the Low Sage, Basin Big Sage, and Mountain Big Sagebrush vegetation groups, with emphasis on improving wildlife winter ranges and sage grouse habitat near the Forest Service boundary.
	Objective	1409	Restore composition, structure, and function of riparian vegetation in Shoshone and South Fork Shoshone Creeks.
Botanical Resources	Guideline	1410	Coordinate grassland/shrubland restoration, prescribed fire, and non-native plant eradication efforts with a Forest botanist to minimize impacts to threatened, proposed, or sensitive plant species, potential habitat, and pollinators of these species.
Non-native Plants	Objective	1411	Reduce diffuse knapweed and musk thistle infestations, and non-native grasses.
Wildlife Resources	Objective	1412	Restore habitat for Columbian sharp-tailed grouse in Tunnel Hill, Big Creek, and Langford Flat areas.
	Objective	1425	Reduce impacts on wildlife habitat from roads through re-location, reduction of redundant routes, and removal and rehabilitation. (**Added** as part of the 2012 WCS amendment)

<table>
<tr><th>Resource/Program</th><th>Direction</th><th>Number</th><th>Management Direction Description</th></tr>
<tr><td>Wildlife Resources</td><td>Guideline</td><td>1413</td><td>Management actions in sage grouse habitat should be designed to meet the desired conditions for sagebrush, as described in Appendix A. Where greater than 40 percent of the sage grouse habitat in the management area has less than 10 percent canopy cover, management actions should be designed to maintain or restore canopy cover conditions.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Recreation Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>1414</td><td>Develop more ATV trail opportunities and curtail inappropriate ATV use of single-track trails to provide motorized recreation opportunities while reducing ATV impacts on other resources.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>1415</td><td>Achieve or maintain the following ROS strategy:

<table><tr><th rowspan="2">ROS Class</th><th colspan="2">Percent of Mgt. Area</th></tr><tr><th>Summer</th><th>Winter</th></tr><tr><td>Semi-Primitive Motorized</td><td>26%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Roaded Natural</td><td>19%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Roaded Modified</td><td>55%</td><td>0%</td></tr></table>
The above numbers reflect current travel regulations. These numbers may change as a result of future travel regulation planning</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Timberland Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>1416</td><td>Designate firewood-gathering areas in order to maintain snag and large woody debris components for wildlife and aquatic habitat, and soil productivity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Objective</td><td>1417</td><td>Provide for commercial harvest opportunities associated with restoration activities in the eastern half of the management area.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Rangeland Resources</td><td>Objective</td><td>1418</td><td>Whenever possible, modify developed springs and other water sources to restore natural free-flowing water and wet meadows in sage grouse habitat.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Guideline</td><td>1419</td><td>When constructing or reconstructing fences, design or relocate them to avoid potential sage grouse mortality near leks.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Fire Management</td><td>Objective</td><td>1420</td><td>Identify areas appropriate for wildland fire to restore or maintain vegetative desired conditions and to reduce fuel loadings. (Modified as part of the 2012 WCS amendment)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Guideline</td><td>1421</td><td>The full range of fire suppression strategies may be used to suppress wildfires. Emphasize full suppression adjacent to other ownerships, areas with lodgepole pine plantations, and in areas where cheatgrass is extensively established.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lands and Special Uses</td><td>Objective</td><td>1422</td><td>Pursue land consolidation opportunities throughout the management area to improve management efficiency.</td></tr>
</table>

Aspen and Hills