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INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the Nevada State Legislature adopted Assembly Concurrent Resolution Number 46 (ACR 46). This resolution urged the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW) to prepare a statewide elk management plan for approval by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners. On February 8, 1997, the Board of Wildlife Commissioners adopted the Nevada Elk Species Management Plan (hereinafter referred to as the State Plan). The first goal of the State Plan was "To prepare sub-plans for all existing elk populations by the year 2000." One of the strategies listed under this goal was "Coordinate the preparation of sub-plans with land management agencies and affected interests."

At the same time the Division of Wildlife was preparing the statewide elk management plan, the White Pine/Lincoln County Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) Steering Committee established the Lincoln County Elk Management Technical Review Team (TRT). The TRT was assigned the task of preparing a plan for Lincoln County which would meet the requirements of an elk management sub-plan as referenced in ACR 46. Specifically the TRT would: 1) Conduct a general assessment of elk habitat and current elk populations in Lincoln County, and identify areas of high, moderate, low, and no potential populations. 2) Work with all interested groups to refine issues pertaining to elk management in Lincoln County. 3) Identify zones that define the interrelationships of habitat, populations, and issues, and prioritize these zones for goal-setting and strategy-development purposes. 4) Develop goals and objectives for elk management based on zones and/or groups of zones. 5) Develop strategies for achieving the goals and objectives. 6) Develop a timetable for revisiting and revising goals, objectives and strategies. The original members of the TRT and who they represented are found in Appendix A.

The TRT's goal was to "Prepare a management plan to guide the ***long-term*** management of elk in Lincoln County." Before the TRT started to write the plan, they identified seven objectives which they would try to meet through preparation of the plan. These objectives are:

* Manage for proper rangeland condition.
* Manage for a huntable population of elk in Lincoln County.
* Provide adequate habitat (i.e., food, water, cover, and space) for existing and future elk populations.
* No adverse impacts to livestock grazing due to elk.
* No adverse impacts to wild horses due to elk.
* No impacts to indigenous wildlife populations (i.e., deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, sage grouse, other mammals and birds, etc.) due to elk.
* Protect private property from elk depredation.

The plan was finalized and issued July, 1999.

The TRT reconvened and met monthly from July, 2003 through October 2005 to revise the existing plan and address new issues not adequately addressed in the first plan. Specifically, the plan needed to address the increased elk numbers in MA 24. The draft management plan was mailed to the public for review. The final management plan was provided to the Lincoln County CRM Steering Committee and was voted on and approved by the Lincoln County Commission.

The Steering Committee and the TRT recognize that NDOW is responsible for management of the wildlife and BLM for management of the land/habitat. Each agency will implement those actions/strategies they are responsible for within existing laws, regulations, and policies. Environmental analysis will be done by the agencies prior to implementation of specific actions/strategies.

BACKGROUND

DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

Lincoln County is the third largest county in Nevada, and encompasses about 10,650 square miles in the southeast portion of the state (Figure 1, Appendix B). Elevations range from less than 2,000 feet above sea level in the Tule Desert to over 9,000 feet in the Schell Creek Range, the Wilson Creek Range, and the White Rock Mountains.

Just less than 98 percent of Lincoln County is managed by the federal government with the BLM responsible for almost 9,000 square miles, or 82 percent of the area (Table 1). The Department of Defense and Department of Energy lands, which are located in the southwest portion of the County, include the Nellis Air Force Range Complex and the Nevada Test Site (Figure 2). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages the Desert National Wildlife Range and the Pahranagat National Wildlife Refuge. There are several state parks and wildlife management areas owned by the State of Nevada. Private lands are scattered throughout the County. The main towns within Lincoln County are Caliente, Pioche (the county seat), Panaca, Alamo, Hiko and Rachel.

Table 1. Land Status in Lincoln County.

Ownership	Acres *	Percent
Federal		
BLM	5,589,000	81.9
U.S. Forest Service	28,800	< .5
Department of Energy	33,500	< .5
Department of Defense	236,200	3.5
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	269,500	3.9
DOD and USFWS	503,900	7.4
State	6,700	< .1
County	2,000	< .1
Private	146,400	2.1
Total	6,816,000	100.0

- Acres are rounded to the nearest hundreds.

NDOW has divided the state into Management Areas (MA) and Hunt Units to aid in the management of big game populations. Lincoln County includes portions of Management Areas 11, 13, 22, 23, 24, 27 and 28 (Figure 3). Although part of Units 115, 221 and 222 are in Lincoln County, management of elk in these units is being addressed in the White Pine County Elk Management Plan because the majority of the elk habitat in those units is in that county.

There are 116 BLM grazing allotments all, or partially, within Lincoln County (Figure 4). These allotments vary in size from about 1,000 acres and less than 100 animal unit months (AUMs) to over 1,000,000 acres and 48,000 AUMs. Five allotments are managed by other districts. Most of the allotments are cattle only allotments, some are sheep only, and some are both cattle and sheep. In addition, there is one allotment that is horses only and five that are horses and cattle. These six allotments are outside of any wild horse herd management area. The season-of-use on these 116 allotments varies from a few months to yearlong.

There are 14 Wilderness Areas in Lincoln County and three Wilderness Study Areas. The three WSAs are located in the extreme northwest corner of the county with most of their acreage in the adjoining White Pine or Nye counties (Figure 5).

Wild horses are found throughout Lincoln County. There are 14 Herd Management Areas (HMAs) in the county and one Herd Area (HA) (Figure 6). The ***appropriate management level*** (AML) for horses is established for all 14 HMAs. Since the issuance of the Approved Caliente Management Framework Plan Amendment and Record of Decision for the Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat, the Mormon Mountains HMA lost its status as an HMA but is still maintained as a Herd Area. It occurs within an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) for desert tortoise. Horses will not be maintained in any ACECs. The AML for each HMA is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Herd Management Areas (HMAs) and Established AML

HMA Name	AML
Applewhite	1
Blue Nose Peak	1
Clover Creek	1 – 14
Clover Mountains	1 – 16
Deer Lodge Canyon	30 – 50
Delamar Mountains	51 – 85
Dry Lake Valley	94
Highland Peak	20 – 33
Little Mountain	9 – 15
Meadow Valley Mountains	0
Miller Flat	9 – 15
Rattlesnake	1
Seaman	159 (Approx. ½ Seaman HMA is in Lincoln County)
Wilson Creek	160

HISTORY OF ELK IN LINCOLN COUNTY

At the present time there is no recorded evidence that indicates elk were found in Lincoln County prior to 1979; however, elk were native to Nevada. Elk remains have been found at the Baker Site located near Baker, Nevada along the Nevada-Utah border just a few miles north of the

Lincoln County line (Hockett 1998). The Baker Site was occupied by the Fremont people about 800 years ago.

Elk remains were also recovered from the Smith Creek Cave on the east side of Mount Moriah in White Pine County, Nevada during excavations in 1968, 1971, and 1974 (Miller 1979). The following is a quote from the excavation report, "Cervus (elk) is not an unknown or unexpected component of Late Pleistocene-Holocene faunas; and is found in localities where its numbers have been reduced in historic times. It was formally thought to be widespread. Their disappearance in Nevada was due to reduction in numbers below viable population levels, although they were probably not abundant during prehistoric occupations."

James H. Simpson reported seeing an elk in Stevenson's Canyon (Schell Creek Range) and another one in Red Canyon (Snake Range) during his exploration of the Great Basin in 1859.

Mr. Elwin A. Robison (1985) of Reno, Nevada wrote a letter to NDOW describing the native wildlife that existed in Snake Valley and Spring Valley in White Pine County when his grandfather settled there in 1876. Mr. Robison's grandfather established a livestock business which was eventually passed on to his father. The ranch headquarters was located along Willard Creek in Spring Valley. Their range rights included much of the area on the east side of the Snake Range from Strawberry Creek south to Lexington Creek. Personal experiences and stories told to him by his grandfather and father provided an insight into the rise and fall of wildlife in the area. In his letter, Mr. Robison wrote, "Elk were native to the Snake Range and were observed most frequently on their winter range, south of Lexington on the Choke Cherry Bench. Their summer habitat was mostly the alpine meadows of Mt. Jeff Davis, now known as Mt. Wheeler." He also wrote, "It is sad to say that the elk were soon killed off at the hands of the early pioneers." By the end of the 19th century, elk were extirpated from Nevada.

According to historic documents, in 1916 the Lincoln County Commission prohibited the taking of elk for a 10-year period. There are numerous anecdotal reports of elk observations through the 20th century, however, written documentation is lacking. It is likely that elk were present in Lincoln County in low densities at different times in history, but were not documented. Pioneer diaries describe Lincoln County as somewhat grassland with pockets of pinyon and juniper trees. If this were close to accurate, the habitat probably would have been suitable for elk. Mule deer populations are documented to be extremely low in the mid to late 1800s.

In 1932 Nevada sportsmen reintroduced elk into Nevada. Thirty elk were transplanted from Yellowstone National Park to the Schell Creek Range in White Pine County. Nevada's elk population grew slowly until recently. In 1975 elk were sighted two miles north of Mt. Grafton in MA 22. During the 1980s elk sightings became more frequent in the Cave Valley portion of MA 22.

The first recorded sighting of elk in MA 23 occurred in the White Rock Mountains during the summer of 1979. Approximately 27 elk, mostly cows and calves, were observed by personnel from the BLM Cedar City District. These elk probably migrated from the Indian Peaks area in Utah. This area is only about five miles east of the White Rock Mountains. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources had been transplanting elk into this area for several years during the

1970s.

One of the wildlife objectives in the BLM Caliente Management Framework Plan (MFP), completed in February 1982, states, "Return native fauna to historic ranges or improve population numbers in current use areas...The establishment of the species should be consistent with Bureau policy (i.e., Habitat Management Plans, environmental assessments, and proper forage allocation)."

In 1982 the Draft Schell Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) identified as one of the major resource problems in the Schell Resource Area "A decline in historic wildlife numbers, and crucial habitat that is unprotected." The objective developed to eliminate this problem was "Attain and maintain habitat for reasonable numbers of wildlife, reestablish bighorn, pronghorn antelope, and elk on historic ranges, and protect crucial wildlife habitat." The decisions reached as a result of the Schell Grazing EIS were included in the Schell MFP which was completed in April 1983. One of the MFP Step III Decisions (WL-1.6) states, "Provide forage for elk introductions on Mt. Grafton and Mt. Wilson on a share basis with livestock and other wildlife when monitoring data indicates forage suitable to elk is available. Prepare HMPs on introduction proposals and consider elk habitat requirements in land treatment proposals. EAs are not necessary as they are addressed specifically as a categorical exclusion."

The Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners adopted the Lincoln County Policy Plan for Public Lands in December 1984. One of the measures says, "Public lands should be managed for the introduction of elk in Lincoln County. Suitable habitat has been identified in the Wilson Creek Range and the White Rock Mountains. These introductions should not conflict with livestock grazing."

NDOW proposed releasing elk on the Wilson Creek Range and the White Rock Mountains in 1987; however, the BLM requested these elk releases be delayed until suitable forage was documented. Because of this request and the fact elk had become established in the area naturally, no elk releases were ever done. The closest elk release to Lincoln County that has ever been done occurred in March 1992 when 50 elk were released along North Creek on the east side of Mt. Grafton in the White Pine County portion of MA 22.

CURRENT STATUS OF ELK IN LINCOLN COUNTY

Elk are presently found or have been observed in nearly every major mountain range in northern Lincoln County. Higher numbers can be found in the Egan and Schell Creek Ranges in Area 22 as well as the Wilson Creek and White Rock Ranges in Area 23. Elk appear to be expanding their range and can now commonly be observed in Muleshoe Valley, and on Grassy and Silver King Mountains in MA 22. Elk are now commonly observed in the Fortification Range and Panaca Summit area of MA 23.

Elk are also now present in MA 24. To date, they have mostly been observed near Crestline, Acoma, and Barclay in Unit 242, with additional recent observations near Beaver Dam State Park and on Elly Mountain. Elk are also present in the Delamar Mountains in Unit 241, with additional recent observations in the South Pahroc Range.

NDOW has conducted winter aerial surveys of the elk in MA 23 since 1992. The results of those surveys are included in Appendix C. The survey data are used to calculate bull/cow/calf ratios. Population estimates are then computed using a computer model. The population estimate for MA 23 in 2005 was 420 animals.

ELK TAG QUOTAS

Since 2000, NDOW has issued 1,955 elk tags that have resulted in a total of 693 harvested elk in MA 23. An average of 326 elk tags has been issued each year since 2000 in an effort to maintain the elk population at or near the population objective of 350 in MA 23. The average hunter success has been 30% for cows and 64% for bulls since the year 2000. NDOW believes that elk have migrated and will likely continue to migrate into MA 23 from both Utah and MA 22. Radio-telemetry indicated that movement back and forth across the Nevada-Utah state line was not uncommon for several cow elk collared in February 2002. Several large fires have occurred that have enhanced elk habitat in Nevada along the Nevada-Utah border and are probably the chief reason for elk to move across the state line. Large agricultural areas appear to be the reason for elk to move across from MA 22.

DEPREDATION

Elk depredation on private lands continues to be a challenge for NDOW. Elk continue to utilize private lands in Camp Valley, Little Spring Valley, and Lake Valley in MA 23. In MA 24, elk have been using private lands at Crestline, Acoma, and Barclay. NDOW uses fencing, hazing, elk damage compensation, depredation hunts, and elk incentive tags for elk depredation. Additional information on elk depredation can be found on page 21 of this document.

POTENTIAL FOR ELK IN LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln County has tremendous potential for elk (Figure 8). Less than half the ***potential habitat*** is currently occupied by elk. The eastern portion of Unit 223, within MA 22, and the eastern portion of Unit 241 and most of Unit 242, within MA 24, is moderate and low potential summer and yearlong habitat. Since 1997, over 121,000 acres of public lands dominated by pinyon/juniper have burned from wildfires, providing new potential habitat for elk mostly in MA 23 and MA 24 (see table below). Several factors exist that will keep elk from reaching their potential in these areas without adversely impacting existing uses. These factors include the lack of adequate forage and the poor distribution of water. When the Ely BLM Resource Management Plan is complete, the procedures for allocating additional forage (AUMs) may be changed. If adequate forage and water were available, elk could be allowed to expand into these areas, either through natural movement or through releases by NDOW.

Table 3. Acres of Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands or P-J Encroached Rangelands on BLM Managed Lands Burned by Wildfire Since 1997

FIRE NAME	FIRE NUMBER	YEAR	ACRES	MANAGEMENT UNIT
Buster	-	2002	3823	23
Coyote	Y061	2000	15719	23
Eagle	Y133	2002	8528	23
Nevermore	Y196	2000	239	23
Parsnip	Y225	2000	2052	23
Parsnip (on WR)		2002	1051	23
Pierson Summit	A49G	2004	274	23
Pioche	Y119	2002	947	23
Schoolmarm	Q764	1999	381	23
Table	Y044	1997	8416	23
Tunnel	Q695	2001	747	23
White Rock	Y020	2002	3015	23
TOTAL ACRES MA 23			**45,192**	
Ash	Y198	2002	188	24
Delamar	K239	1999	22521	24
Delamar	BWZ4	2005	36,000 estimated P-J (168,007 total burned)	24
Duzak	BVX1	2005	14,000 est. P-J (214,038 total burned)	24
Hollow	Y060	2000	1310	24
Islen	K092	2003	442	24
Kendall	Y042	2000	803	24
Riggs	BA5P	2004	1047	24
Stokes	A5BG	2004	266	24
TOTAL ACRES BURNED MA 24			**76,577**	
TOTAL FOR AREAS 23 AND 24 COMBINED			**121,769**	

ELK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Working from the "List of Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities for Nevada's Elk Species Management Plan" developed by the State Steering Committee, the TRT refined the list to include only those issues they felt were of concern in Lincoln County.

Issue(s)	Priority
Vegetation Monitoring, Range Damage, Forage Adjudication, Vegetative Carrying Capacity and Funding for all of these issues.	1
Population Monitoring, Goals and Objectives, Management Levels And Funding for all of these issues.	2
Competitive Interaction (with wildlife, livestock, wild horses)	3
Vegetation Manipulation and Funding for this issue	3
Habitat Management Objectives, Habitat Requirements and Water	3
Who is Accountable for What?	4
Increased Hunting Opportunities	4
Coordination with Affected Interests	4

ELK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

VEGETATION MONITORING, RANGE DAMAGE, FORAGE ADJUDICATION, AND VEGETATIVE CARRYING CAPACITY

The TRT's first objective is to "Manage for Proper Rangeland Condition." The TRT realizes this is the only way to maintain a healthy elk herd. Only through intensive monitoring will the BLM know if the rangeland is in the proper condition. If it is not in the proper condition, the BLM will need to be able to determine why, and then make the necessary adjustments to solve the problem. The following Actions/Strategies reiterate the evaluation process currently being used by the BLM. (Responsibilities are summarized in Appendix F.)

Action 1: Establish ***key areas*** in habitats that are suitable for elk, and identify ***key species***.

Strategies: This will be done by a team (minimum BLM, NDOW, and Permittee/County/Other). Any others who desire may be involved.

Key areas and key species will be determined by seasonal use patterns.

Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.

Note elk movement and establishment into other management areas.

Action 2: Determine ***ecological status*** at each key area and as ***state*** and transition models become available, apply ***state and transition models*** for range sites in each key area.

Strategies: This will be done by a team (minimum BLM, NDOW, and Permittee/County/Other). Any others who desire may be involved.

Use Rangeland Management Handbook and Technical Guide Range Site Descriptions.

Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.

Action 3: Identify desired state and phase for each key area.

Strategies: This will be done by a team (minimum BLM, NDOW, and Permittee/County/Other). Any others who desire may be involved.

Use Rangeland Management Handbook and Technical Guide Range Site Descriptions.

Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.

Action 4: Establish ***allowable use levels*** (AUL) where needed.

Strategies: This will be done by a team (minimum BLM, NDOW, and Permittee/County/Other). Any others who desire may be involved.

Use Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook as a minimum.

Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.

Action 5: Collect sufficient data to determine how much available forage is being consumed by each of the different users when conflict is apparent. (Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook as a minimum plus agency manuals and technical references)

Strategies: Prior to March 15th of each year, the TRT will have a meeting to discuss monitoring needs for the year.

Monitoring will be done by a team in key areas for elk use. The team may include BLM, NDOW, permittees, county, and other entities and any others who desire may be involved.

In areas identified by the team, collect utilization data prior to livestock turn out and immediately after livestock come off to differentiate use by livestock versus other users. In addition, collect utilization data at the end of the grazing season (including any rested pastures).

Under cooperative monitoring strategies, all verifiable data collected by other sources will be considered (i.e., other agencies, private consultants, etc.).

If necessary construct three-way exclosures to identify levels of use by different users.

Action 6: By March 15th of each year, review annual monitoring data as a team and set priorities for the following year's monitoring needs.

Strategies: Evaluation will be done by a team (minimum BLM, NDOW, and Permittee/County/Other). Any others who desire may be involved.

The review will be done in accordance with BLM Technical Reference 4400-7 and/or current methodologies as agreed to by the team.

Review monitoring data in Unit 223, MA 23 and 24 and Lincoln County portions of MA 13 every five years. (Note: Additional key areas for elk will be established as needed.)

Action 7: In the ***short-term***, identify problem areas and address the problem.

Strategies: If a problem is identified, the TRT will get together as soon as possible to review the situation and make recommendations to the appropriate party(ies) to correct the problem.

If possible, identify which elk herd/group is causing the problem (i.e., If elk are causing problems in the Meadow Valley Seedings), and implement management actions against those animals. These management actions may include, but are not limited to, hazing, trapping, and special hunts.

If it is anticipated that the allowable use level for elk will be exceeded prior to livestock turnout, implement management actions (i.e., early livestock turnout, grazing system adjustments, or other techniques to be researched) to prevent the problem from occurring and negatively impacting the livestock operator.

Develop new forage areas through all appropriate management techniques (i.e., improved water distribution, placement of mineral/salt blocks, etc.) to address concentration problems.

In the case of emergency situations, (e.g. drought), temporary adjustments to elk numbers through special hunts, hazing, and trapping, may be recommended by the TRT.

Action 8: In the long-term, when monitoring identifies elk causing the same problem three out of five years take appropriate management actions to correct the problem.

Strategies: Use range improvements (i.e., burning, seeding, fencing, etc.) to address long-term problems.

Adjust elk population levels, as necessary, by hunt unit.

Action 9: If there is a disagreement on monitoring data interpretation, initiate an informal outside review for alternative dispute resolution.

Strategies: This should occur within 60 days once the team realizes it cannot reach an agreement.

Action 10: When additional forage is made available (i.e., through maintenance of existing vegetation conversion projects, new vegetation conversion projects, other range improvements, management strategies, etc.), use will be allocated among the different users in accordance with the applicable BLM watershed assessment policy.

Strategies: Prior to any habitat enhancement project, all parties will be given the opportunity to participate in funding the project. This will be taken into

consideration during the allocation process.

On maintenance of existing vegetation conversion projects, any previous cooperative agreement or range improvement permit will be taken into consideration by the team when allocating additional forage

All users will be allowed to use new forage areas as long as short-term utilization objectives are being met.

POPULATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, POTENTIAL FOR ELK DISTRIBUTION, POPULATION MANAGEMENT LEVELS, AND ELK FREE ZONES

Based on the number of applications for elk tags in Nevada, there is a lot of interest in being able to hunt elk in the state. To meet this demand, the TRT set one of its objectives to "Manage for a huntable population of elk in Lincoln County." Figure 8 shows potential elk habitat in Lincoln County. Potential habitat is defined in terms of the number of elk per square mile if no other uses were occurring on the land. Population objectives are adjusted to accommodate those other uses. (Responsibilities are summarized in Appendix F.)

Action 1: In the short-term, manage tag quotas to maintain an objective of 350 adult head of elk in MA 23. Evaluate monitoring data in conjunction with the Wilson Creek Allotment Re-evaluation/Watershed Assessment to determine if this number is appropriate. The population will fluctuate due to several factors including hunter pressure, recruitment, weather and forage conditions, and seasonal movements.

In the short-term**,** monitor populations and minimize elk impacts in MA 24 until BLM watershed analyses are completed. While watershed analyses are conducted, implement habitat restoration projects in MA 24. Once the watershed analysis is complete, implement MA 24 population goals as identified in Action 3, increasing elk populations as habitat is improved.

Proposals for watershed assessments currently include most areas in Clover Creek Drainage and Upper Meadow Valley Wash are currently identified as priorities in the first groups of watersheds. Maintain these as top priorities in the Ely Field Office RMP.

Animals moving between MAs 222 and 231 to graze on private lands are not included in this population objective.

Strategies: Public hunting will be the preferred method to manage population numbers.

Population estimates will be derived from NDOW's most current method of population modeling. Harvest strategy will be designed to meet annual MA population targets post-hunt. Current survey techniques include helicopter counts in January, calculating hunter success rates, and using computer population model, which provides harvest objectives.

Action 2: Allow for population management based on emergency habitat conditions within a given year.

Strategies: Hold emergency depredation hunts, trap and transplant elk if sites are available.

Action 3: In the long-term, increase elk populations in Lincoln County to 1,850.

Strategies: Realizing that forage resources are limited, before elk will be allowed to increase over the short-term population objective or establish outside of currently occupied habitat (i.e., MA 22 and MA 23), monitoring must determine that extra forage is available for elk.

The long-term population objective for elk in Unit 223 of MA 22 is 150 animals. (Note: the White Pine County Elk Management Plan has proposed target population levels for Units 221 and 222 of MA 22 of 850 and 750 elk, respectively. These two units are partially in Lincoln County, but the target levels are not included in the long-term population objective.)

The long-term population objective for elk in MA 23 is 900 animals.

The long-term population objective for elk in MA 24 is 800 animals.

In accordance with the State Plan, maintain elk populations below carrying capacity.

Management practices to promote elk population growth in Units 133 and 245 will not be encouraged. These units are considered low potential winter habitat and the potential summer habitat the elk would use is in Nye County. In addition, the monetary return on management of elk in areas of low potential habitat is limiting.

Re-evaluate available habitat each time the plan is evaluated (every five years).

Action 4: Under present habitat conditions and concern for desert bighorn sheep, Units 243, 271, 281 - 284 and 287 will be considered ***Elk Free Zones***. In addition, the Nellis Air Force Range Complex and the Nevada Test Site will be Elk Free Zones. Refer to Figure 8.

Strategies: Elk Free Zone in Unit 243 is the Meadow Valley Mountains east of the Kane Springs Valley Road and south of Carp Pass. It does not include that part of the unit commonly known as the Schlarman Area.

The Desert National Wildlife Range will be managed as an Elk Free Zone.

If the team determines that repeated elk use is occurring in Elk Free Zones and that an elk herd may be establishing itself in the area, management actions will be taken to disburse, move, or remove the animals.

Evaluate Elk Free Zones every time this plan is reviewed.

Action 5: Management practices which could lead to establishment of elk in ***Incidental Use Areas*** will not actively be encouraged. Refer to Figure 8.

Strategies: Incidental Use Areas will not a) be managed for elk, b) have population objectives established, and c) have habitat improvements designed to attract elk installed.

Monitor these areas to determine the effects of elk use, if any, on rangelands.

If the team determines that repeated elk use is occurring in incidental use areas and that an elk herd may be establishing itself in the area, management actions will be taken to disburse, move, or remove the animals.

Action 6: Elk populations will be monitored using aerial surveys, radio telemetry, and ground counts.

Strategies: NDOW will fly a minimum of six hours in a helicopter during January or February of each year to monitor the existing elk herd in MA 23.

NDOW will fly a minimum of six hours in a helicopter during January or February of each year to monitor the existing elk herd in MA 24.

Whenever feasible, one representative appointed by the Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife will accompany NDOW on aerial surveys.

As a minimum, attach one radio collar to an elk for every 50 elk in the herd in MA 23 to help determine important use areas (i.e. calving grounds, winter range, etc.) and seasonal movement patterns.

As a minimum, attach one radio collar to an elk for every 10 elk in the herd in MA 24 to help determine use areas, seasonal movement patterns, and population estimates.

Fly a minimum of six to eight hours annually to monitor radio-collared elk in each management area.

Conduct ground surveys two or three times per month in problem areas.

Action 7: Use public hunting as the primary tool to manage elk populations to meet land use plan, and elk management plan goals and objectives.

Strategies: Although the State Plan states a ratio of 15 - 40 bulls per 100 cows, in order to meet current public demand for a quality elk hunt in Lincoln County, attempt to maintain a post season ratio no less than 25 bulls per 100 cows. High cow harvest numbers to maintain population objectives, result in artificially high bull ratios.

Action 8: Any other technique to manage elk populations will be available for use (e.g., trapping & transplanting).

Strategies: If monitoring indicates forage is available for elk in Unit 223 or in MA 24, elk may be released in accordance with Commission Policy Number 22 and Number 26.

Attach some kind of visual marking (e.g. colored ear tag or collar) on every elk released into an area. In addition, attach one radio ear tag to one bull elk for every 10 bulls released. Or attach one radio collar to one elk for every 10 elk released.

Conduct aerial surveys of radio-collared elk released into an area bi-monthly.

Action 9: In accordance with NRS 571, maintain Disease-Free Status of domestic and wild animal populations in Lincoln County.

Strategies: Implement all strategies listed in the State Plan (NDOW 1997) which states:

"The Division of Wildlife will observe all pertinent Nevada Revised Statutes and Administrative Codes, and Federal regulations concerning the importation and release of elk."

"The importation of wild trapped elk into the State will be certified brucellosis free by a federal or state accredited veterinarian."

"The State Division of Agriculture will be asked to notify the Division of Wildlife of areas where livestock tested positive for brucellosis. No release of elk will take place within areas where positive tests resulted."

In addition, when any elk are trapped for any purpose (e.g., transplanting, radio collaring, etc.) a blood sample will be collected and tested for communicable diseases such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, and West Nile

Virus.

If a communicable disease is detected in any elk, NDOW and the Nevada Department of Agriculture will immediately isolate, quarantine, or if necessary, eliminate the affected animal/herd.

If a communicable disease is detected in elk, deer or livestock, random samples will be taken in adjacent herds.

It is recommended that Nevada Department of Wildlife adopt a policy documenting Chronic Wasting Disease in Nevada. Upon adoption of a policy, the policy would be implemented in this plan.

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

One of the objectives of the TRT is to "Provide adequate habitat (i.e., food, water, cover, and space) for existing and future elk populations." If this objective can be met, several other objectives may also be met. Those other objectives include "No adverse impacts to livestock grazing due to elk; No adverse impacts to wild horses due to elk; No adverse impacts to indigenous wildlife populations (i.e., deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, sage grouse, other mammals and birds, etc.) due to elk."

Within Lincoln County there are large areas of dense pinyon and juniper trees and big sagebrush with almost no understory which provide very little forage for elk, livestock, wild horses, and other wildlife (Figure 9). Elk favor grasses, but will use forbs and browse. In the last fifty years there have been numerous projects done to reduce the amount of pinyon and juniper trees and big sagebrush in the overstory and increase the amount of grasses, forbs, and browse in the understory (Figure 10). The opportunity exists to do more of these kinds of projects. Habitat enhancement projects will focus on the eastern portion of Lincoln County within MA 22, MA 23, and MA 24 where there is high and moderate potential elk habitat. (Responsibilities are summarized in Appendix F.)

Action 1: Enhance habitat to create more diverse plant communities to meet multiple use objectives.

Strategies: Fire management options described in the current Ely Fire Management Plan will be used where appropriate. Seed these burned areas, where necessary to reduce soil loss and maintain site productivity.

Prioritize habitat enhancement projects first in those areas where there are livestock/elk conflicts and/or areas invaded by heavy pinyon-juniper. These areas include:

+ Spring Valley/Meadow Valley (entire)
+ Hamblin Valley (west side)
+ South Lake Valley/Patterson Wash
+ Panaca Summit north to Serviceberry Canyon

+ Clover Mountains

Second priority for habitat enhancement projects are those areas identified as potential elk habitat and where additional forage is needed. These areas are:
+ Panaca Summit south to Beaver Dam Road
+ Fairview Range from Bristol Summit to Grassy Mountain
+ Delamar Mountains
+ Woods-McCullough/Rosencrans Area

Use best available method for habitat enhancement projects given constraints for the identified area (i.e., prescribed natural fire, prescribed burning, wildland fire use, spraying, chaining, railing, chopping, etc.) including seeding the area if necessary.

See Action 10 under Vegetation Monitoring, Range Damage, Forage Adjudication, and Vegetative Carrying Capacity for allocation of additional forage.

Action 2: In any seeding project (i.e., maintenance of an existing project, new project, fire rehabilitation, etc.) recommend use of native species except when other species would better help attain desired plant communities.

Strategies: Investigate a solution to facilitate seeding managed natural fires that can not be seeded with federal monies through Ely BLM Fire Plan. (Warehouse seed, MOU, etc)

Consider availability of seed so we aren't limited to expensive native seed. For burned areas not seeded by BLM, the TRT should review these and determine if seeding projects should take place. Consider other existing plans relating to seed mixtures.

Action 3: TRT should participate on any fire rehabilitation team reviewing any fire affecting identified elk habitat.

Strategies: Evaluate the success of fire rehabilitation efforts on an annual basis and if possible, plan for additional multi-species habitat enhancement.

Action 4: The desired goal for multi-species habitat enhancement projects (maintenance of existing projects, new projects, fire rehabilitation projects, etc.) is a minimum of 5,000 acres per year by all methods. This will be dependent on funding, manpower, etc.

Use best available method for maintenance of existing projects given constraints for the identified area (i.e., prescribed natural fire, prescribed burning, herbicide application, chaining, railing, chopping, etc.) including seeding the project area again if necessary
Strategies: A sub-committee will be formed to:

1. Sub-Committee will evaluate and prioritize all existing vegetation conversion projects for maintenance needs.
2. Look at existing treatments and determine needs for maintenance or improvement as a priority.
3. Evaluate potential to expand existing treatments.
4. Identify areas with best potential for new treatments.
5. Identify long-term and short term goals.
6. Prioritize projects based on feasibility and overall benefit of project considering:
    - Watershed functionality
    - Multi-species and uses
    - Multiple funding sources
    - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
7. Evaluate research possibilities
8. Schedule, organize and oversee the implementation of projects
9. Develop a database of funding sources and contact information. Identify the funding specifics for private organizations (deadlines, applications, etc.)
10. Provide recommendation reports for projects to the TRT

Suggested participants of this subcommittee are:

- BLM (records search, compilation of project info for sub-committee, etc.)
- NDOW
- Sportsmen Interest
- Conservation Interest
- Livestock Interest

Fire as a range improvement or a rehabilitation tool is recognized as a viable solution in some stages of habitat restoration.

The TRT should review and provide subsequent direction following BLM directed fire rehabilitation.

Action 5: At least annually the TRT will review this plan and the sub-committee recommendations and forward them to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will take the recommendations to the appropriate agencies.

Action 6: The TRT should consider making recommendations for seed mixes for vegetation treatments (prescribed burns, fire rehabilitation, restoration etc.).

WATER DEVELOPMENT

One of the components of the objective "Provide adequate habitat (i.e., food, water, cover, and space) for existing and future elk populations" is water. Some people consider water to be the most limiting factor preventing elk from occupying all potential habitat. There are numerous water sources throughout Lincoln County, but there are also large areas without any available water (Figure 11). The TRT has identified Actions/Strategies to meet this objective.

(Responsibilities are summarized in Appendix F.)

Action 1: Ensure adequate water is available yearlong for desired distribution of elk.

Strategies: Evaluate existing water availability and prioritize need for development based on habitat potential (i.e., strategically placement of water systems to facilitate management of livestock and wildlife through the use of water).

Develop, maintain, and improve availability and distribution of water through all possible means (i.e., natural springs, developed springs, pipelines, wells, reservoirs, guzzlers, etc.).

Develop partnerships between governmental agencies, permittees, and others for existing water development projects to provide water for elk and other wildlife on a case by case basis.

Develop, redevelop, or move water locations to further along achievement of rangeland health. Solicit from livestock operators' information regarding existing water sources that would benefit all parties.

Evaluate options and develop solutions to secure adequate monies to outsource BLM NEPA clearances for water developments.

Assure BLM addresses mitigation in EISs to mitigate direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to elk habitat from land development, changes in land tenure, water development, etc.

Action 2: Recognize the value of private water rights and do not undertake any activity that would interfere with those rights.

Strategies: Evaluate where elk use is conflicting with privately held water rights.

Where appropriate, develop agreements with private water right holders for development and use of those waters where conflicts exist.

Develop agreements, where possible, with private water right holders prior to elk becoming established in other areas.

Action 3: Comply with all applicable federal and state laws and policies in development of new waters on public land.

Action 4: Comply with all applicable state water laws in development of water on private lands.

Action 5: Take a proactive approach in the management of livestock, wildlife, and horses to maintain riparian areas in accordance to BLM's ***proper functioning condition*** (PFC). Take

action on a case-by-case basis depending on the identified user.

ELK DEPREDATION

Although private lands comprise less than two percent of the total acres within Lincoln County, elk depredation on private lands, especially those being cultivated, is a major concern. The TRT has identified as one of its objectives "Protect private property from elk depredation." Several laws and regulations already exist that address this issue. In addition, Elk Damage Management is discussed in the State Plan (NDOW 1997) (Appendix B). Since the State Plan was written, regulations have been passed by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners regarding the issuance of special incentive elk tags.

Elk depredation on private lands continues to be a challenge for NDOW. Elk continue to utilize private lands in Camp Valley, Little Spring Valley, and Lake Valley in MA 23. In MA 24, elk have been using private lands at Crestline, Acoma, and Barclay. NDOW uses fencing, hazing, elk damage compensation, depredation hunts, and elk incentive tags for elk depredation. In 2004 in Lincoln County, NDOW employed a full-time seasonal employee to haze elk, built three fences on private land, paid over $37,000.00 in damage claims, and issued three elk incentive tags.

Elk damage on private lands has been an issue in Lincoln County since the first complaint in the fall of 1989. Since that time, a total of $116,281 has been issued to landowners for damage caused by elk on private lands. Additionally, over $117,000 has been spent on installation of elk-proof fences in various locations in Lincoln County. Since the Elk Incentive Tag Program was initiated, a total of 24 tags have been issued to private landowners in Lincoln County. (Responsibilities are summarized in Appendix F.)

Action 1: NDOW will work with the Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife to insure those strategies regarding Elk Damage Management listed in the State Plan are implemented locally.

Action 2: Make the two brochures prepared by NDOW, one explaining the Elk Damage Compensation Program (Appendix D), and the other describing the Special Incentive Elk Tags (Appendix E), available to private landowners in Lincoln County.

PLAN REVIEW

The Lincoln County Elk Management Plan is meant to be a working document. It is recommended the TRT remain active and meet at least once a year to review the plan, and make recommendations to BLM and NDOW regarding monitoring needs, potential problems, and project proposals for that year. In addition, laws and regulations governing management of public lands by the BLM or management of wildlife species by NDOW are subject to change. These changes could affect whether the actions and strategies identified in the plan can be implemented or not. When changes in the laws and regulations occur, the TRT will review those changes at their annual meeting and decide if the plan needs to be modified to comply with the new law or regulation. Finally, as situations change on-the-ground through implementation of

the actions and strategies identified in the plan, the plan will be evaluated by the TRT and revised, if necessary.

On February 11, 2006, the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners adopted a new policy for the creation of new elk sub-plans and revisions of existing plans. The Elk Species Management Plan Committee Elk Sub-Plan Initiation and Elk Sub-Plan Revision Process document is found in Appendix G of this document.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM MEMBER LIST

Bevan Lister (Chairman)	Lincoln County Public Lands Committee	Pioche
Paul Podborny (Secretary)	BLM - Wildlife Management	Ely
Kraig Beckstrand	Nevada Division of Wildlife	Panaca
Frank Cheeney, Jr.	Pioche Rod & Gun Club	Pioche
Pete Tony Delmue	Livestock Permittees	Pioche
Merlin Flake	Livestock Permittees	Ely
Rey Flake	Farm Bureau	Caliente
Bryan Fuell	BLM - Range Management	Ely
Pat Gloeckner	Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife	Pioche
Roger Hatch	Lincoln County Conservation District	Alamo
Linda Lytle	Livestock Permittees	Pioche
Delbert Matson	Wild Horses	Panaca
Richard Orr	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Caliente
Shawn Smith	BLM - Range Management	Caliente
Kyle Teel	BLM - Wildlife Management	Caliente
Phil Trousdale	Hunting Guides	Pioche

2003 REVISION TEAM MEMBER LIST

NAME	REPRESENTING
Brent Hafen (Chairman)	Land Owners
Clint Bentley	Nevada Game Board
Mike Scott	Nevada Department of Wildlife
William Smith	Bureau of Land Management, Wildlife
Shirley Johnson (TRT Secretary)	BLM - Range Management
Richard A. Orr	BLM - Management
Vikki Riddle	Nevada Wildlife Federation
Danny Riddle	Nevada Wildlife Federation
Tarva Lee	Nevada Wildlife Federation
Ron Zimmerman	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
James Potts (Facilitator)	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pat Gloeckner	Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
Frank Cheeney, Jr.	Pioche Rod and Gun Club
Cory D. Lytle	Wild Horses
Pete Tony Delmue, Rancher	Livestock Interests
Ronda Hornbeck,	Lincoln County Commission, land owner
George T. Rowe	Lincoln County Commission
Andy and Laura Lytle	Citizens

APPENDIX B
FIGURES (MAPS)

Figure 1: General Location of Lincoln County

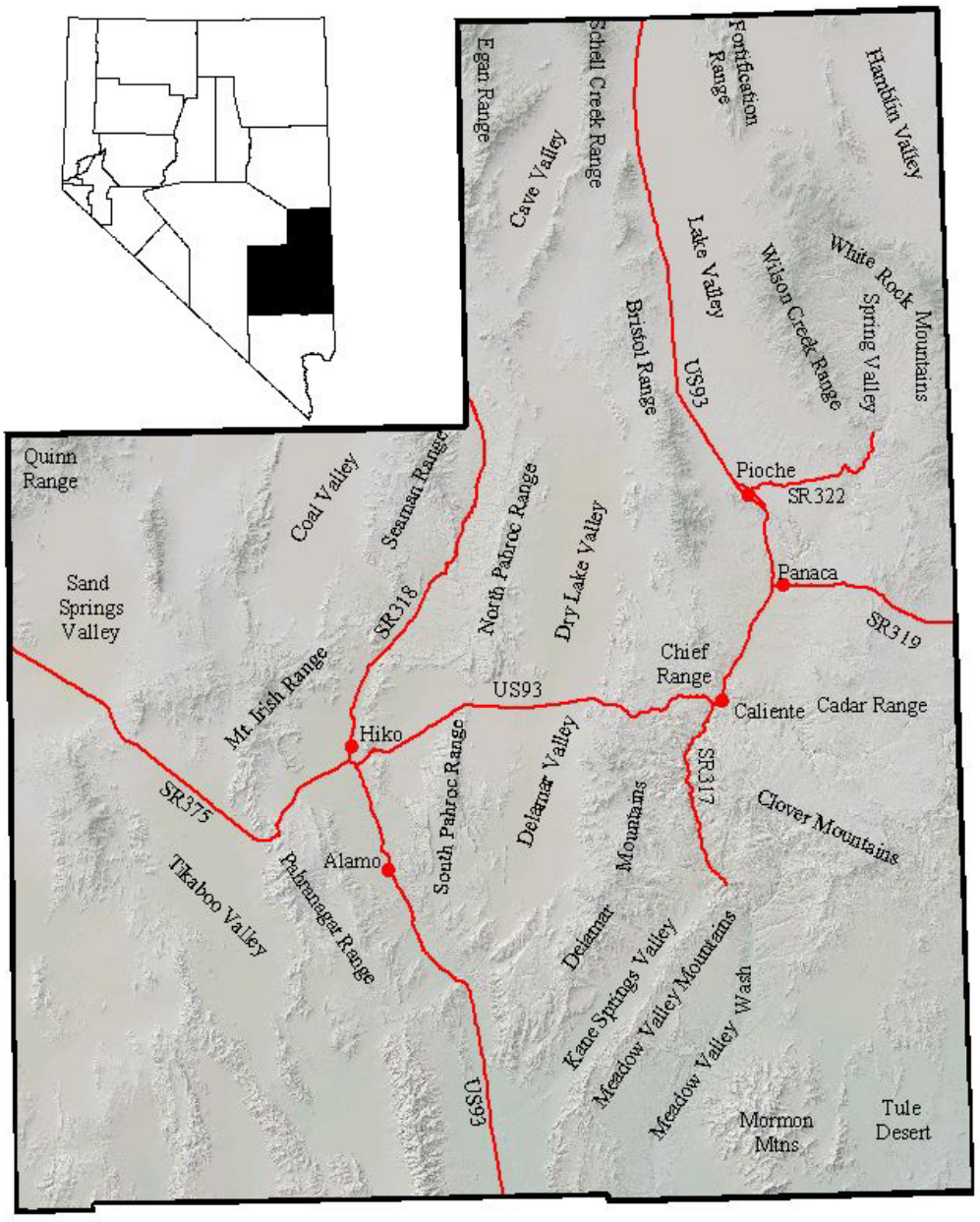

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Figure 2: Land Status within Lincoln County

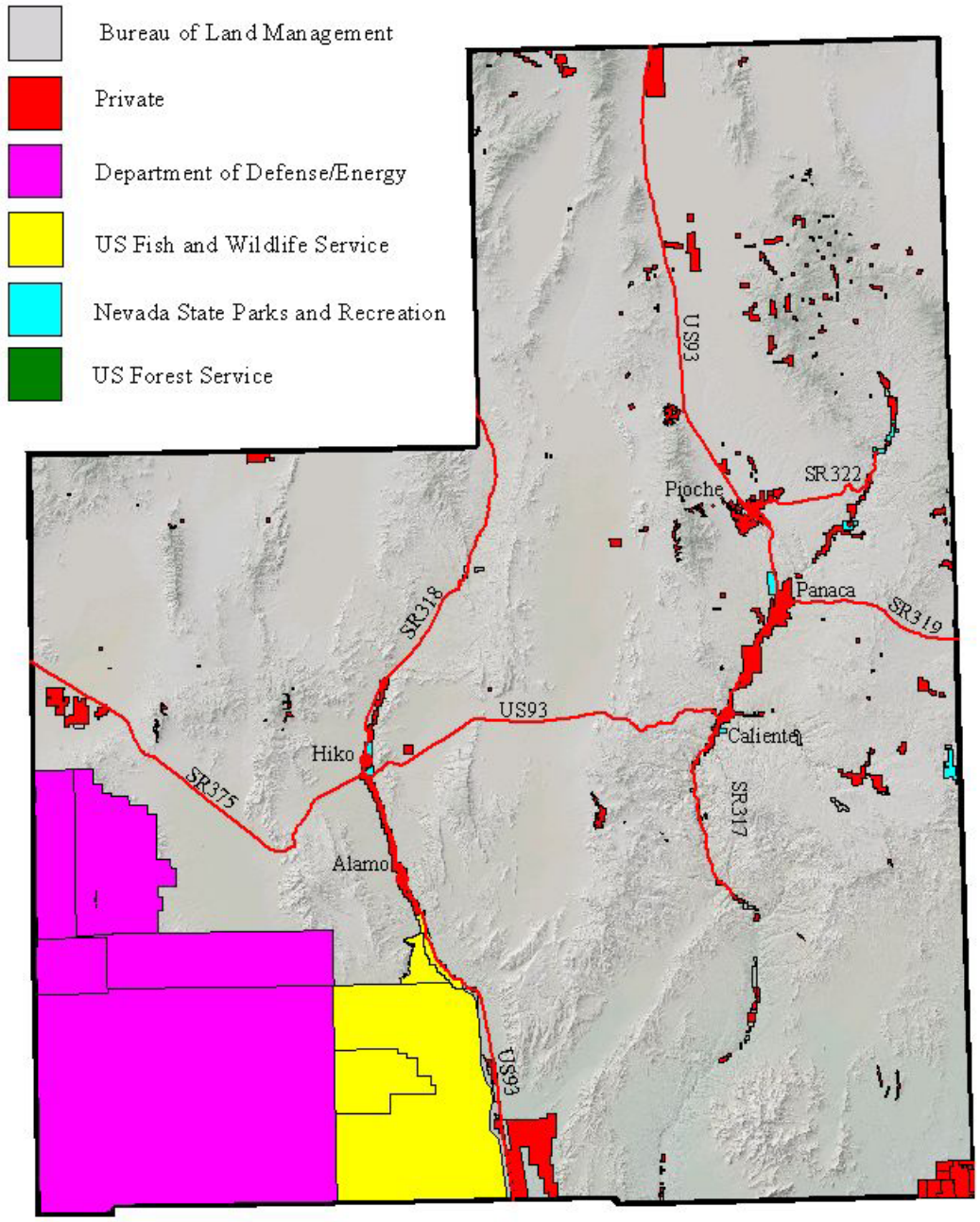

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Figure 3: Big Game Management Units within Lincoln County

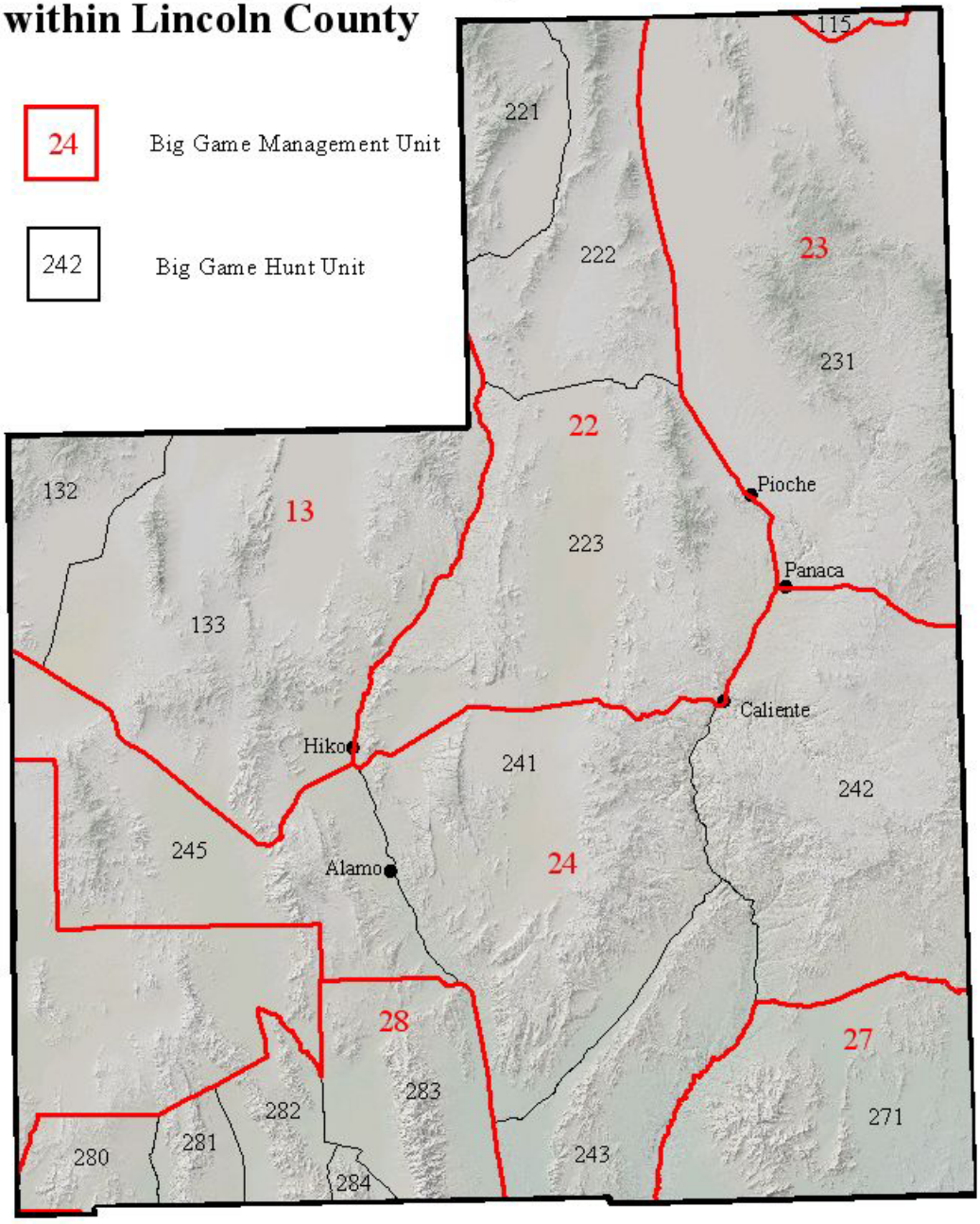

Figure 4: Grazing Allotments within Lincoln County

1 - Hardy Spring
2 - Shingle Pass
3 - Haggferty Wash
4 - Cave Valley Seeding
5 - Cave Valley Ranch
6 - Geyser Ranch
7 - South Spring Valley
8 - Cottonwood
9 - Hamlin Valley
10 - Chokecherry
11 - Wilson Creek
12 - Sunnyside
13 - Fox Mountain
14 - Red Bluff
15 - USFS
16 - Cottonwood
17 - Pine Creek
18 - Coal Valley Lake
19 - West Timber Mtn
20 - Timber Mountain
21 - Sand Springs
22 - Mc Cutcheon Spr
23 - Shadow Wells
24 - Worthington Mtn
25 - Murphey Gap
26 - South Coal Valley
27 - Black Bluff
28 - Black Horse
29 - Irish Mountain
30 - Cresent N4
31 - Cresent N5
32 - Bald Mountain
33 - Naquinta Spring
34 - Wildhorse
35 - Pine Cone
36 - Crystal Springs
37 - Pahranagat West
38 - Lower Lake West
39 - Simpson
40 - Ely Springs Sheep
41 - Pioche
42 - N4
43 - Narrows
44 - Rattlesnake
45 - Ely Springs
46 - Black Canyon
47 - Highland Peak
48 - Condor Canyon
49 - Deer Lodge
50 - Mahogany Peak
51 - Mc Guffy Spring
52 - Rabbit Spring
53 - Panaca
54 - Black Hills
55 - Warm Springs
56 - Roadside
57 - Comet
58 - White Hills
59 - Panaca Cattle
60 - Uvada
61 - Sheep Spring
62 - Buckboard
63 - Little Mountain
64 - Peck
65 - Rocky Hill
66 - Bennet Spring
67 - Klondike
68 - Cliff Spring
69 - Oak Springs
70 - Mustang
71 - White River
72 - Pahroc
73 - South Hiko
74 - Six Mile
75 - Pahranagat East
76 - Lower Lake East
78 - Enterprise
79 - Crestline
80 - Oak Wells
81 - Clover Creek
82 - Sawmill Canyon
83 - Applewhite
84 - Sand Hills
85 - Mustang Flat
86 - Closed
87 - Barclay
88 - Haypress
89 - Sheep Flat
90 - Cottonwood
91 - Pennsylvania
92 - Meadow valley Wash
93 - Ash Flat
94 - Delamar
95 - Elgin
96 - Schlarman
97 - Lime Mtn
98 - Garden Springs
99 - Henrie Complex
100 - Boulder Spring
101 - Grapevine
102 - Breedlove
103 - Rox-Tule
104 - Mormon Peak
105 - White Rock
106 - Snow Spring
107 - Terry
108 - Summit Spring
109 - Gourd Spring
110 - Beacon
111 - Sand Hollow
112 - Jackrabbit
113 - Pulsipher Wash
114 - Flat Top Mesa
115 - Highway
116 - Caliente
117 - Crossroads
118 - Rainbow

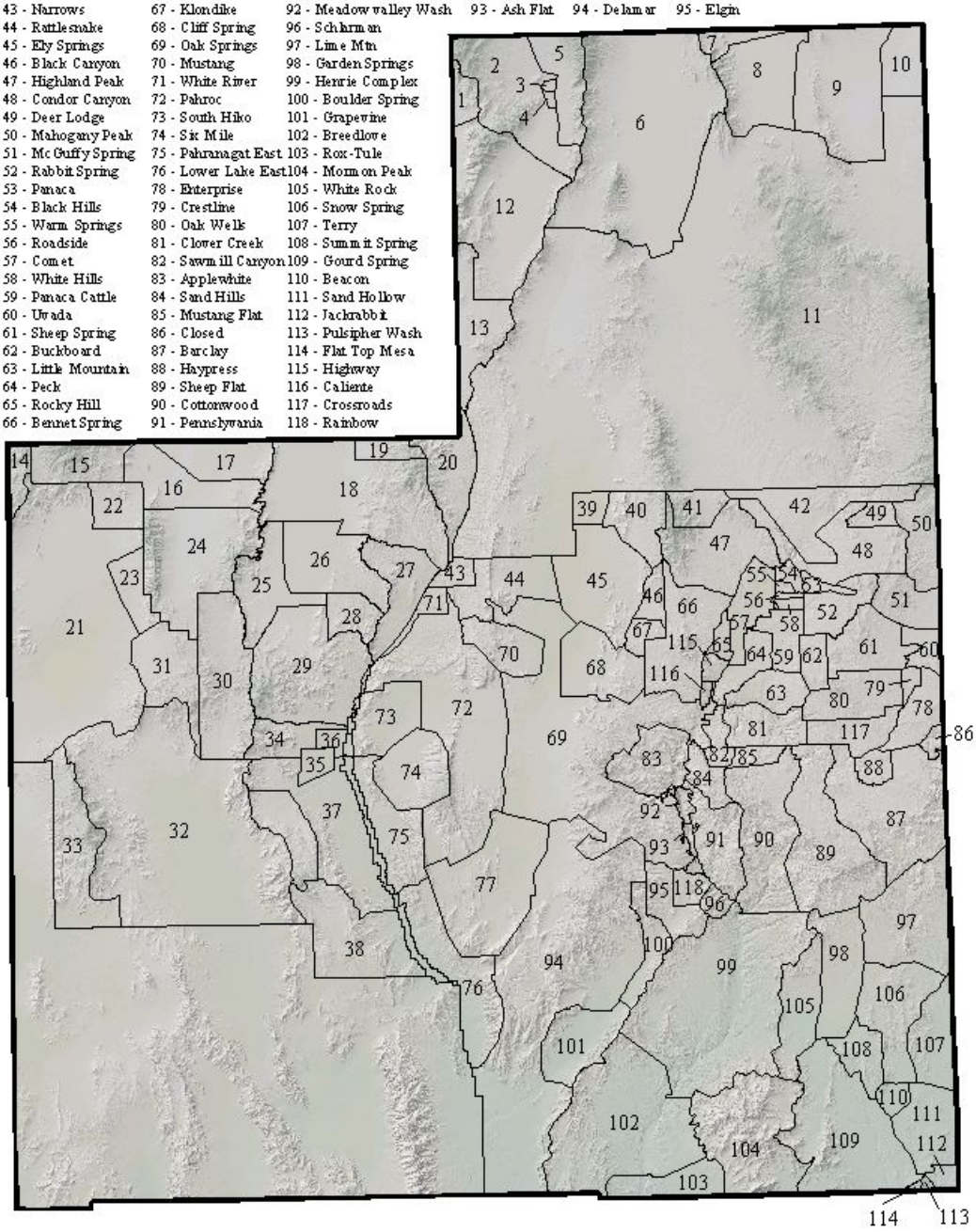

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Figure 5: Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas within Lincoln County

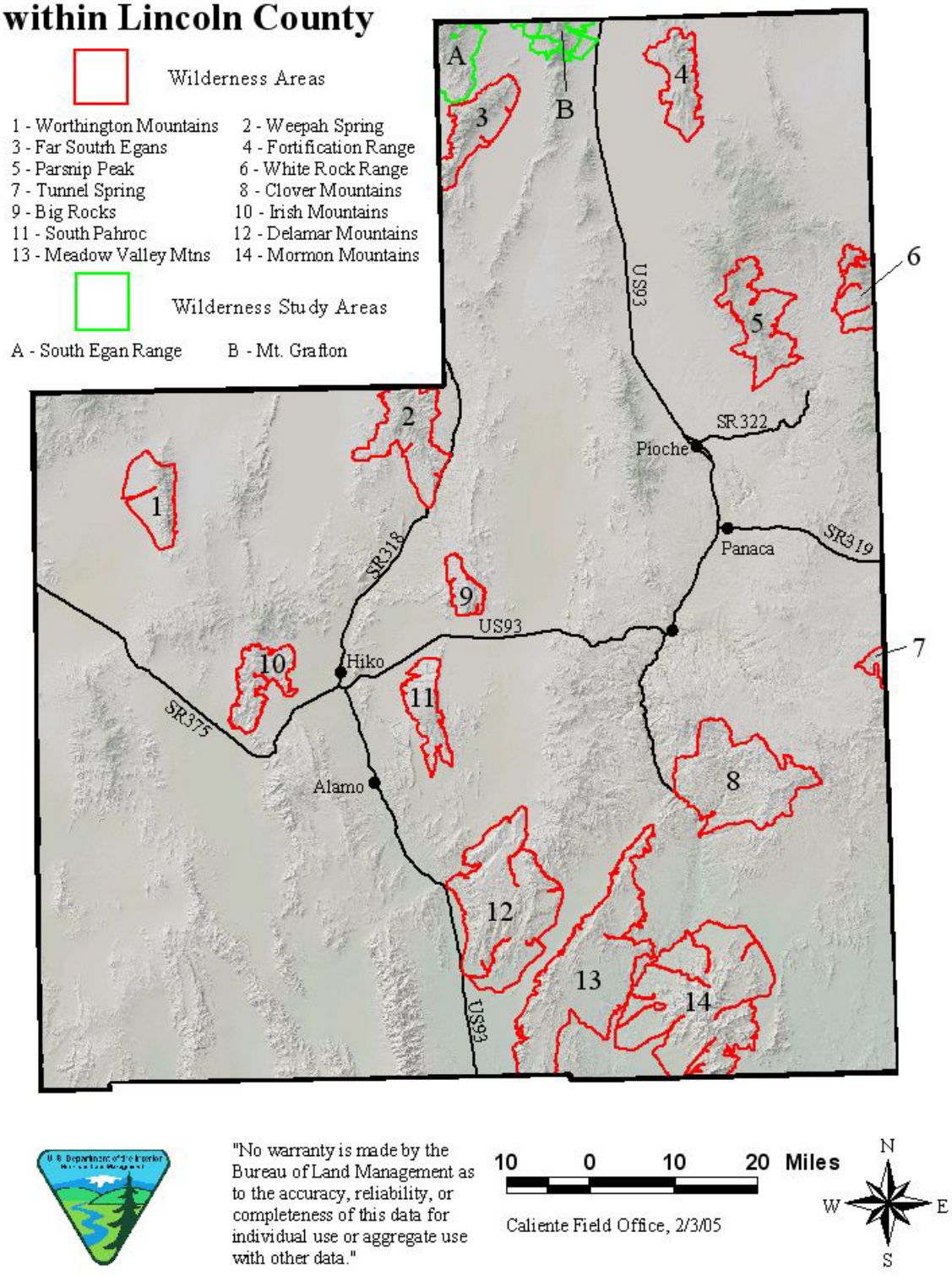

Figure 6: Wild Horse Herd Management Areas within Lincoln County

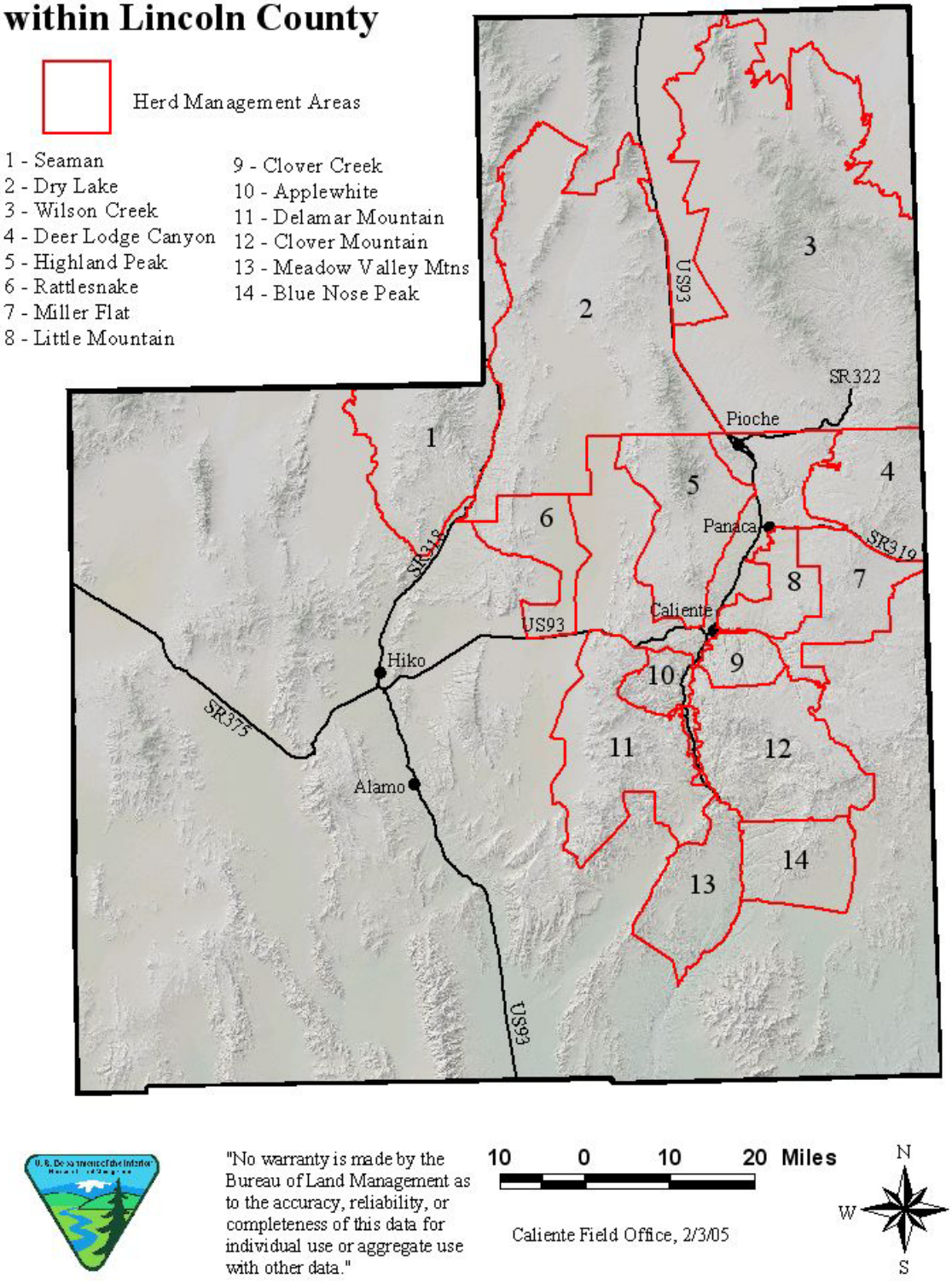

Figure 7: Distribution of Elk within Lincoln County

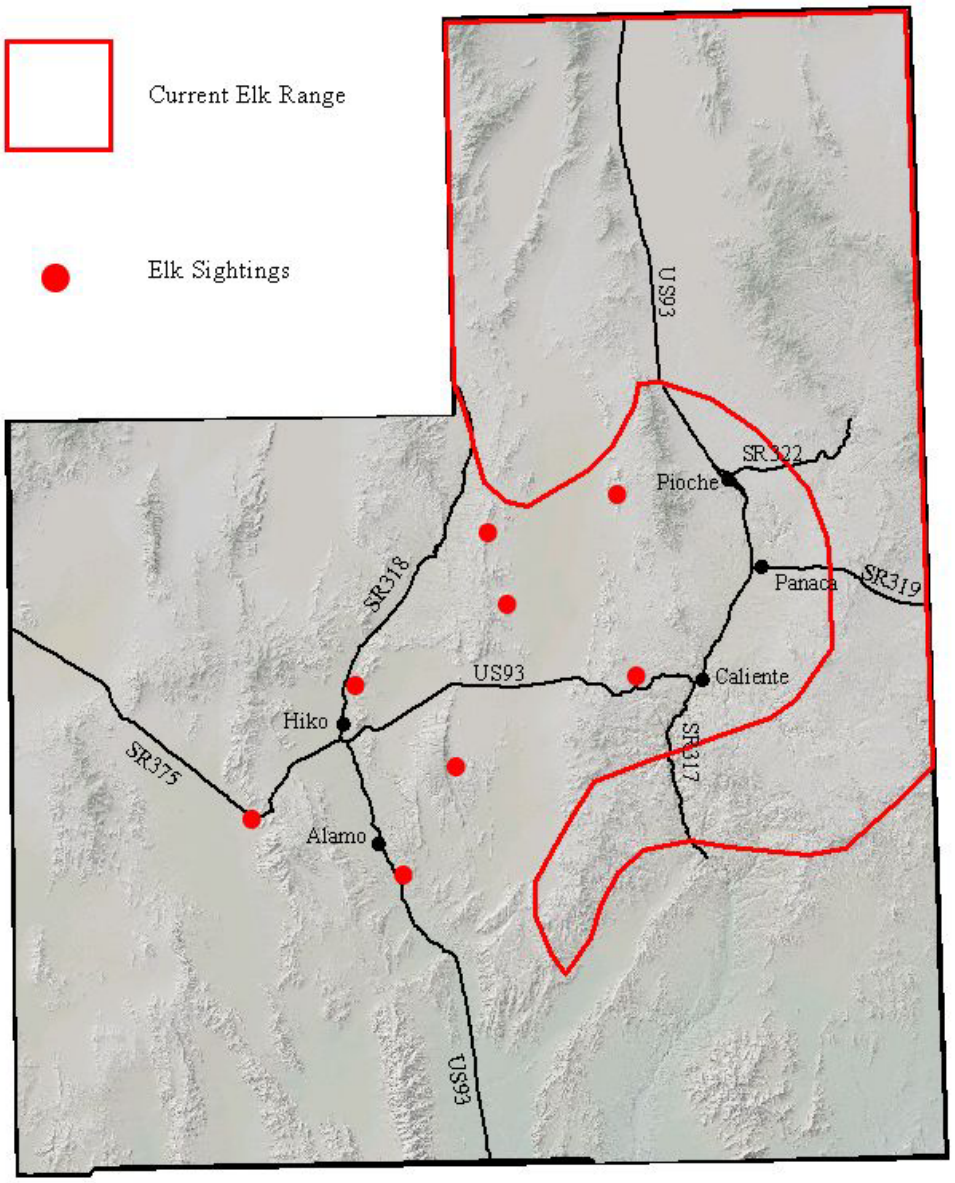

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Figure 8: Potential Elk Habitat within Lincoln County

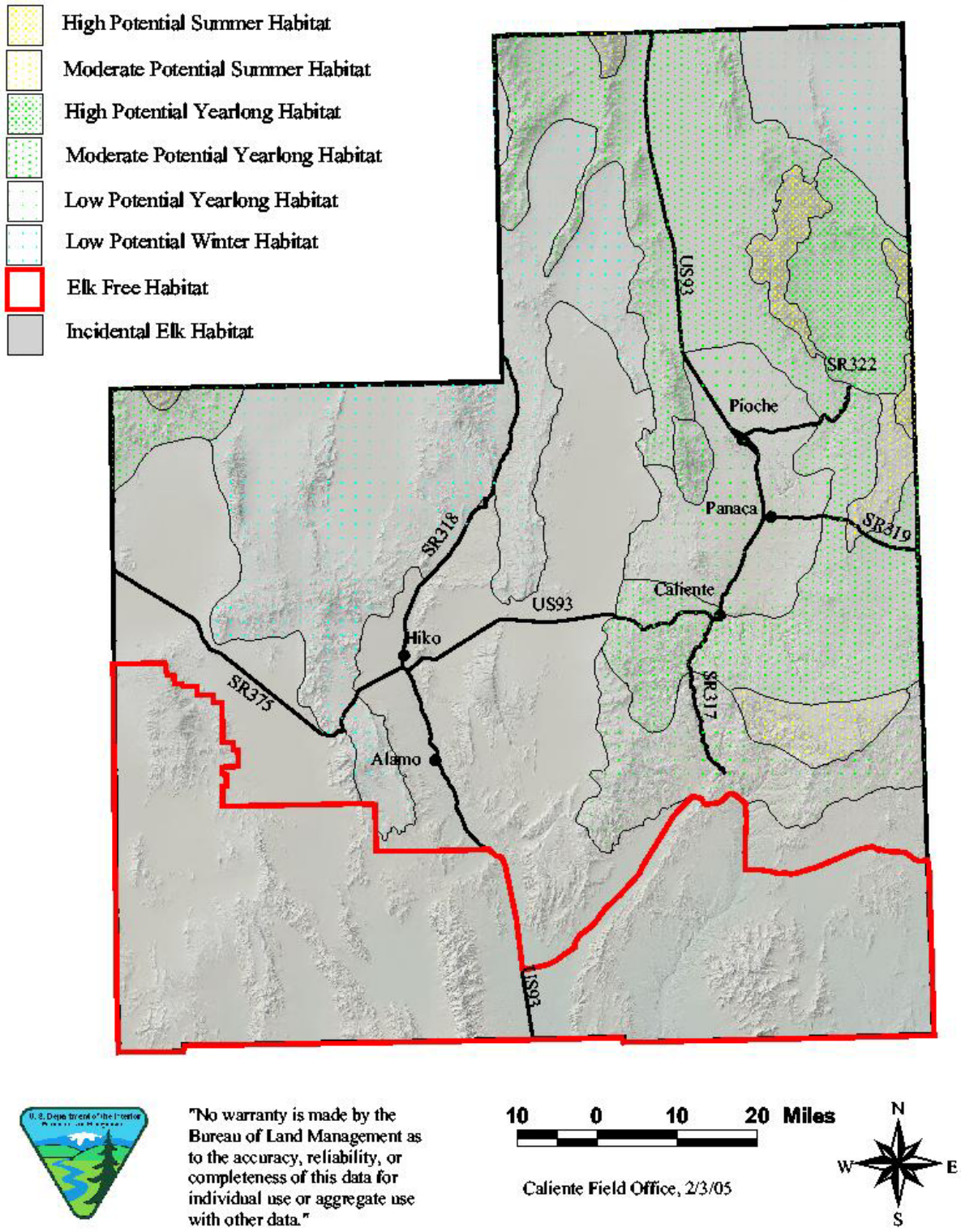


Figure 9: Pinyon/Juniper and Sagebrush Vegetation Types within Lincoln County

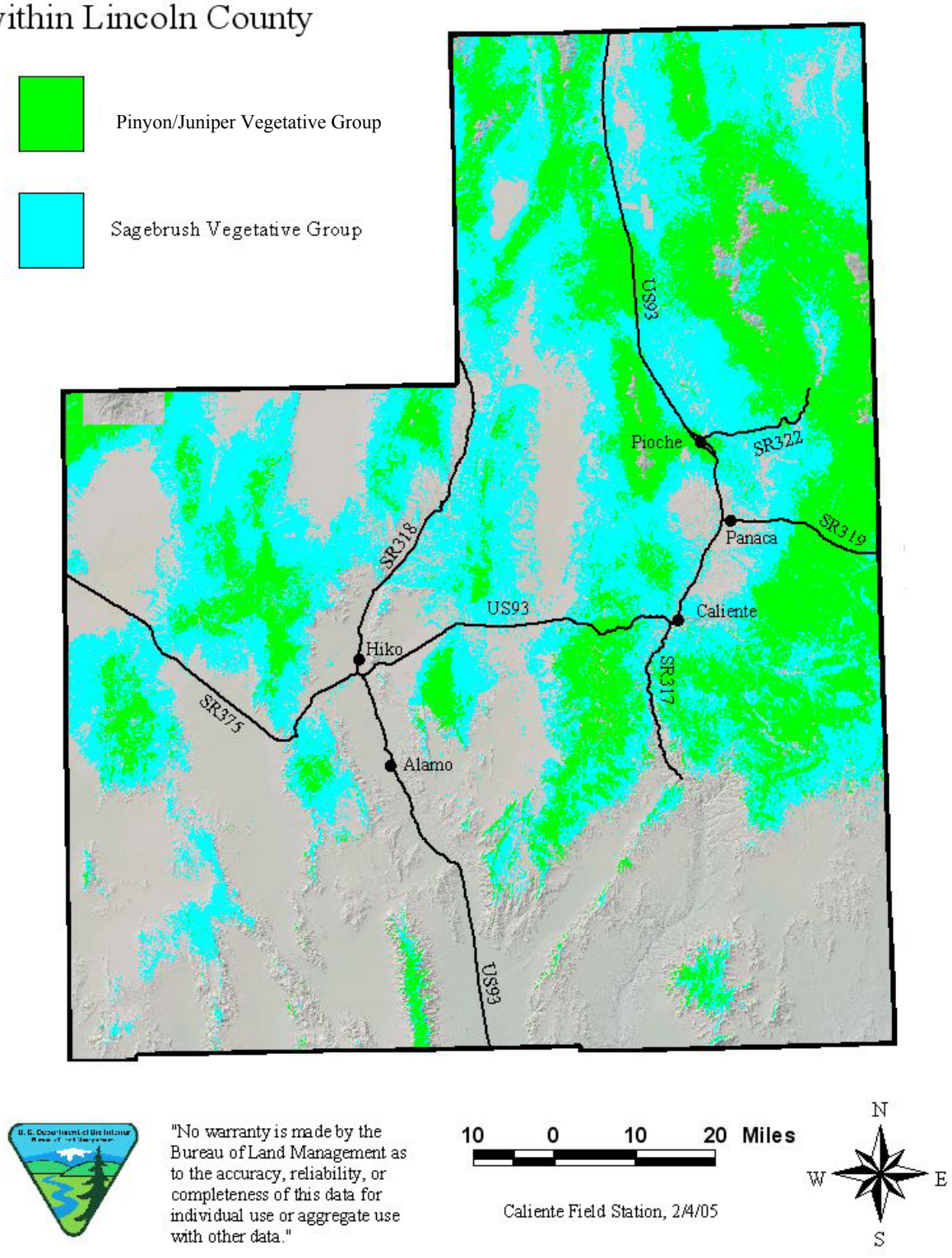
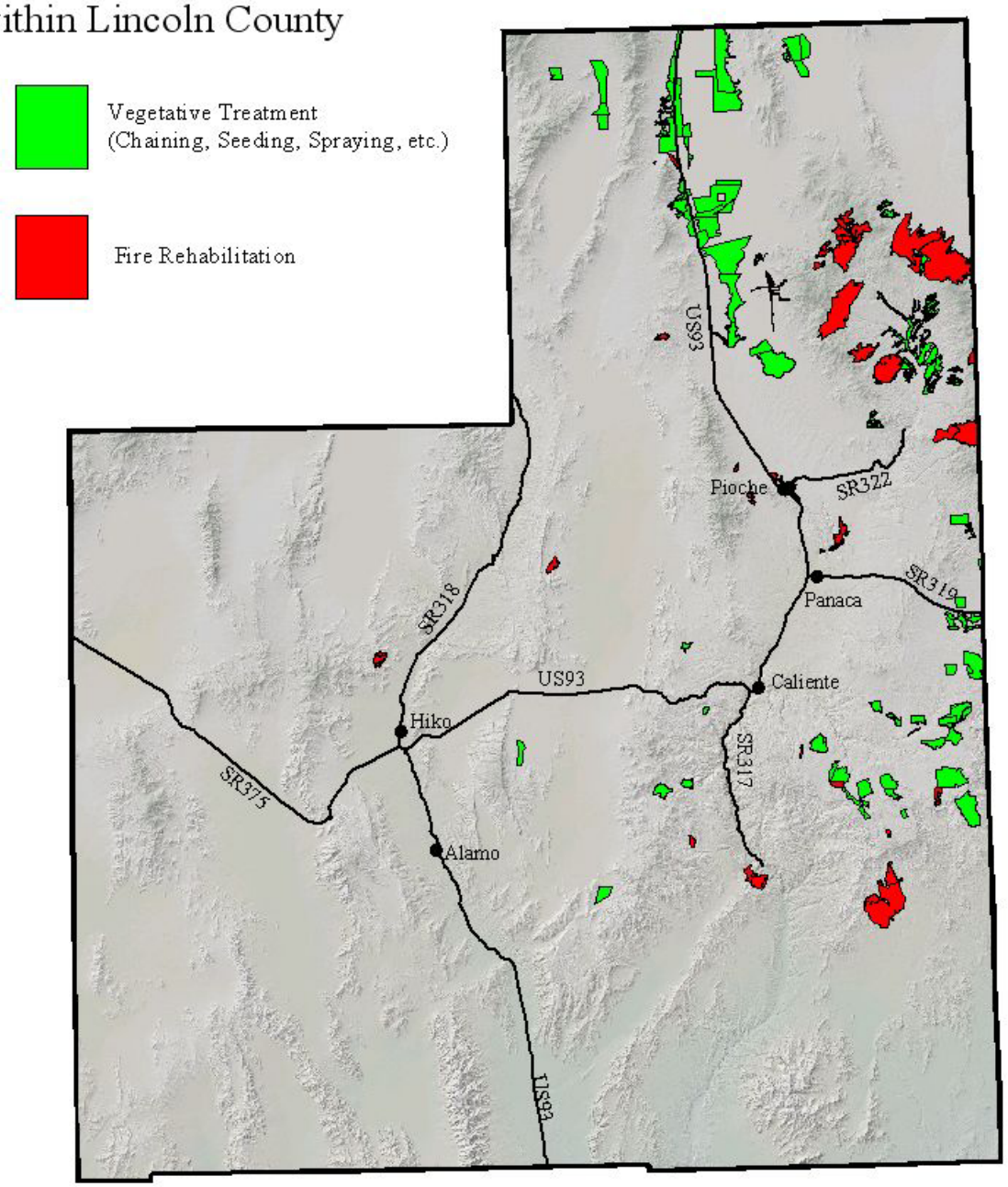


Figure 10: Existing Vegetation Treatment Projects within Lincoln County



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Caliente Field Station, 2/4/05

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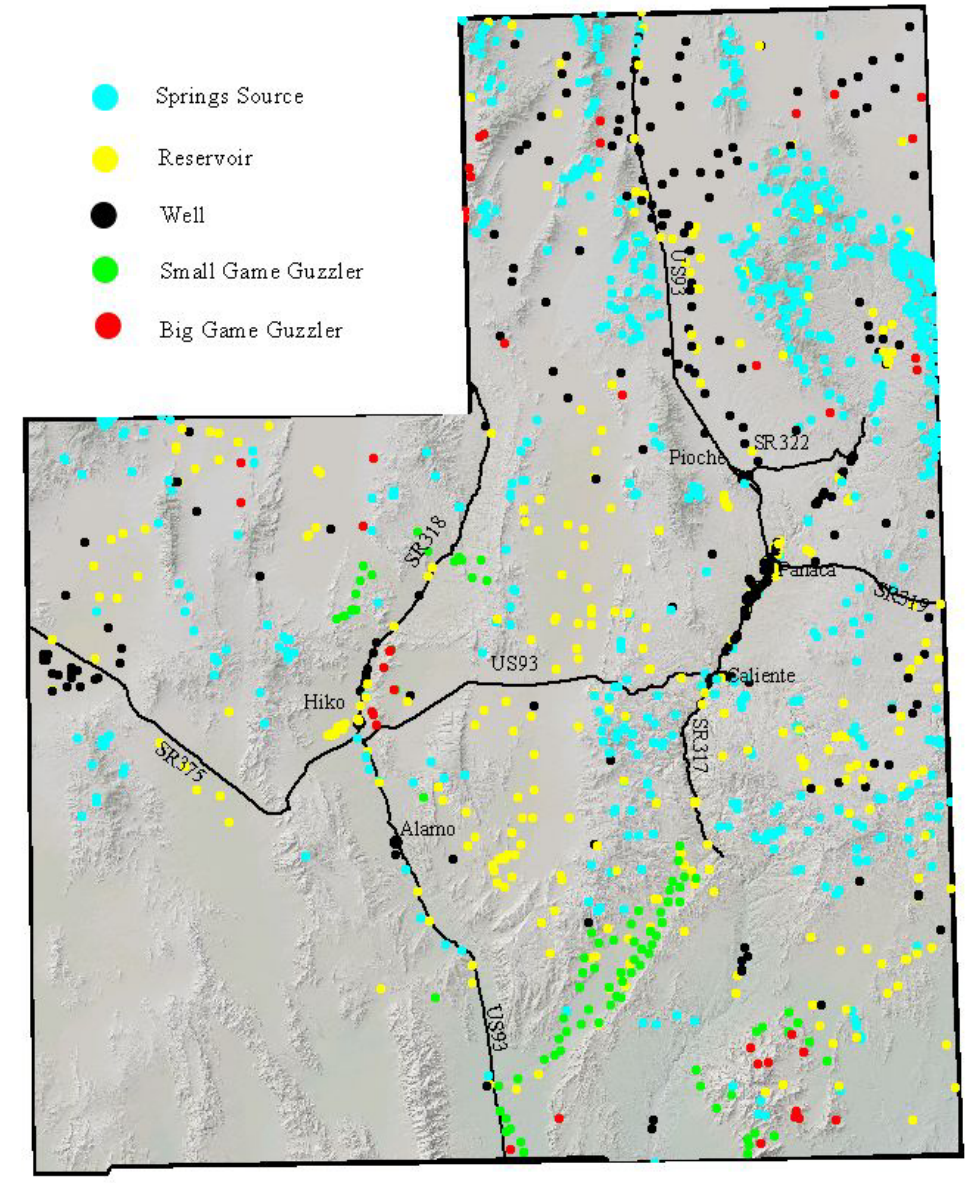
Figure 11: Water Sources within Lincoln County



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APPENDIX C

ELK POPULATION MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT AREA: 23 and 24 **HARVEST**

YEAR	TOTAL HARVEST	COW TAGS	COW HARVEST	% SUCC.	BULL TAGS	BULL HARVEST	% SUCC.	POINT CLASS IN HARVEST						
								1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
1990	2	0	0	N/A	2	2	100%						1	1
1991	2	0	0	N/A	2	2	100%				1		1	
1992	6	3	2	67%	4	4	100%						4	
1993	6	0	0	N/A	6	6	100%					1	3	2
1994	14	12	7	58%	7	7	100%		1		1		4	1
1995	19	25	10	40%	10	9	90%					2	3	4
1996	25	40	15	38%	12	10	83%					2	8	
1997	32	50	16	32%	18	16	89%				1	1	10	4
1998	52	145	32	22%	27	20	74%				1	5	7	7
1999	42	124	24	19%	29	18	62%					2	13	3
2000	126	294	70	24%	88	56	64%	2			4	12	31	7
2001	53	66	24	36%	43	29	67%					12	14	3
2002	101	142	66	46%	45	35	78%				3	8	21	3
2003	163	337	119	35%	75	44	59%			1	4	10	25	4
2004	105	303	59	19%	83	46	55%		1		1	12	28	4
2005	144	366	77	21%	116	68	59%	1	1	1	2	11	44	7
TOTALS	**892**	**1907**	**521**	**27%**	**567**	**372**	**66%**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**18**	**78**	**217**	**50**

ELK POPULATION MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT AREA: 23 **WINTER HERD COMPOSITION**

		SAMPLE					RATIOS			POINT CLASS OF BULLS					
YEAR	GROUPS	BULL	COW	ADULT	CALF	TOTAL	B/D	F/D	F/AD	1	2	3	4	5	6+
1991		6	8	14	0	14	0.75	0.00	0.00						
1992		14	52	66	29	95	0.27	0.56	0.44						
1993	9	12	24	36	11	61	0.50	0.46	0.31	7	1	1	0	2	1
1994	5	11	65	76	33	109	0.17	0.51	0.43	4	1	1	2	2	1
1995	14	29	91	120	41	161	0.32	0.45	0.34	19	1	2	3	2	2
1996	8	14	72	86	30	116	0.19	0.42	0.35	6	3	0	4	0	1
1997	12	31	63	94	28	122	0.49	0.44	0.30	15	0	0	6	7	3
1998	13	33	98	131	41	172	0.34	0.42	0.31	7	3	8	10	5	0
1999	21	51	120	171	62	233	0.43	0.52	0.36	10	3	6	9	11	12
2000	25	81	88	169	41	210	0.92	0.47	0.24	35	4	6	11	13	12
2001	21	62	91	153	55	208	0.68	0.60	0.36	22	0	5	22	8	5
2002	26	72	48	120	32	152	1.50	0.67	0.27	16	0	3	22	23	8
2003	41	186	222	408	107	515	0.84	0.48	0.26	39	6	27	46	46	22
2004	21	69	123	192	70	262	0.56	0.57	0.36	20	2	6	16	13	12
2005	23	88	134	222	63	285	0.66	0.47	0.28	34	4	3	9	20	18
2006	20	63	94	157	51	208	0.67	0.54	0.32	18	1	1	18	12	13
AVG.	**18.5**	**51**	**87**	**138**	**43**	**183**	**0.58**	**0.47**	**0.31**	**18**	**2**	**5**	**13**	**12**	**8**

MANAGEMENT AREA: 24

		SAMPLE					RATIOS			POINT CLASS OF BULLS					
YEAR	GROUPS	BULL	COW	ADULT	CALF	TOTAL	B/D	F/D	F/AD	1	2	3	4	5	6+
2004	1	3	0	3	0	3	N/A	N/A	N/A				1	1	1
2005	3	7	16	23	8	31	0.44	0.50	0.35	2	1	0	0	1	3
2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE (NDOW)

ELK MANAGEMENT ON PRIVATE LANDS

ELK DAMAGE/COMPENSATION PROGRAM: Initiated by the Nevada State Legislature in 1989 through NRS 504.155 and 504.165. In 1990, the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners adopted NAC 504.350 through 504.440 to define the program.

Purpose: To mitigate and compensate private landowners, primarily agricultural producers, for losses or damage caused by elk. This program allows for cash payments for damage and/or the purchase and construction of protective fencing for crops and haystacks.

Who is eligible? "Any landowner" or, with a letter of authorization from a landowner, "any lessee or manager" of private land with an eligible claim of damage by elk is eligible.

What lands are eligible? Private lands, especially those used to grow agricultural crops including native meadows and privately maintained improvements on public or private lands qualify for the program.

What crops, improvements or losses apply.

Crops, privately maintained improvements which include any structures or facilities such as fences or irrigation equipment, etc. and any site containing an orchard, stack of hay, stored crops and standing crops and losses such as those from grazing reductions apply. Specific crops that qualify under this program include alfalfa, clovers, grass and grain.

Native hay meadows can also be eligible under this program but can also be considered under the Incentive Tag Program depending on the wishes of the landowner. NDOW also considers elk herd health to determine eligibility.

A loss from grazing reductions on private or public property must be contingent upon whether a preponderance of the evidence proves the loss was caused solely by elk.

Claims to an insurance company are not eligible for payment under this program. A single damage claim is limited to $10,000 without Wildlife Commission approval.

How do I apply? It is the responsibility of the claimant to notify the NDOW in writing within 5 days of discovery of elk damage.

When should I apply? Within 5 days of discovery of elk damage and also inform NDOW when the elk damage ceases.

How does it work?

1. The NDOW representative will investigate the damage with the claimant as soon as possible and definitely no later than 10 days following notice of damage and enter into a Cooperative Agreement (Form 110) with the claimant.
2. An elk depredation damage or loss report (Form 111) will be filled out by the Department investigator in cooperation with the claimant.
3. If the claimant and the Department do not agree on the amount a Local Panel formed pursuant to NAC 504.430 shall be used to determine payment.

Can I apply for both Incentive and Compensation Programs? Any single piece of property, i.e. a native hayfield, cannot be considered for both programs in a single year, but a claimant could have property that qualifies for both programs, i.e. NDOW could fence an alfalfa field (Damage/Compensation Program) and the same ranch could have native elk habitats on adjacent private lands that qualify for the Incentive Tag Program.

NDOW Reno Office
1100 Valley Road
Reno, NV 89512
(775) 623-6565

NDOW Elko
60 Youth Center Road
Elko, NV 89801
(775) 777-2300

Ely Field Office
1218 North Alpha St.
Ely, NV 89301
(775) 289-1655

NDOW Las Vegas
4747 Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89108
(702) 486-5127

NDOW Panaca
P.O. Box 779
Pioche, NV 89043
(775) 728-4233

NDOW Tonopah
P.O. Box 1032
Tonopah, NV 89049
(775) 482-3153

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE (NDOW)

ELK MANAGEMENT ON PRIVATE LANDS

ELK INCENTIVE TAG PROGRAM: Initiated in 1997 through NRS 502.142

Purpose: To promote cooperation of private landowners who provide elk habitat that enhances Nevada's precious elk resource.

Who is eligible? "Any landowner" or, with a letter of authorization from a landowner, "any lessee or manager" of private land in an area open to regular bull elk hunting is eligible.

What lands are eligible? Private lands that provide native meadow and rangeland elk habitat qualify for the program.

Agricultural croplands do not apply.

Specific crops that **do not** qualify under this program include alfalfa, clovers, grass and grain.

Native hay meadows because they can be considered either a "native wildlife habitat" or an agricultural crop are eligible under both programs. The decision is mostly left up to the landowner but health considerations for Nevada's elk herds might also be considered before a native hay meadow is determined eligible under the Incentive Tag Program.

How do I apply? It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit a letter "each year" notifying the NDOW that they are interested in participating in the elk incentive program.

When should I apply? As soon as possible after January 1st each year since calculations for incentive tags are based on elk use during the calendar year (January 1 – December 31).

How does it work?

1. The applicant and NDOW representative set up a meeting to initiate required paperwork and conduct initial investigation as needed.

2. The applicant provides a map depicting the private land being used by elk.

3. The applicant and the local NDOW representative work together to keep track of the number of elk and the amount of time spent by elk on the private land in question.

What is the formula? The number of incentive tags is based on the percentage of the total elk herd that the private land supports over the entire year.

Some private lands support elk 24 hours a day while some private lands are only used for a portion of each day. The calculations take this into account.

The formula is calculated on a monthly basis for each month elk use the private land as follows:

(The % of the elk herd using the private land) times (the % of time in the year spent by those elk on the private land) times (the previous year's bull quota) or

(%elk herd) X (% of year on private land) X (previous year's bull quota) = # of incentive elk tags (not to exceed 50% of total bull quota).

What can you do with the tag? The applicant can use the tag, give it to anyone you may choose or sell it to whomever you may choose. The tag holder must buy or possess a Nevada hunting license ($33 – resident, $142 – nonresident) and pay the normal elk tag fees ($138 - resident, $1,218 – nonresident) to obtain the tag by mail from the NDOW Reno Office.

NDOW Reno Office
1100 Valley Road
Reno, NV 89512
(775) 623-6565

NDOW Elko
60 Youth Center Road
Elko, NV 89801
(775) 777-2300

Ely Field Office
1218 North Alpha St.
Ely, NV 89301
(775) 289-1655

NDOW Las Vegas
4747 Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89108
(702) 486-5127

NDOW Panaca
P.O. Box 779
Pioche, NV 89043
(775) 728-4233

NDOW Tonopah
P.O. Box 1032
Tonopah, NV 89049
(775) 482-3153

APPENDIX F

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
Habitat/Range/Forage Monitoring and Adjudication				
Action 1:	Establish key areas in habitats suitable for elk and identify key species	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Key areas and key species will be determined by seasonal use patterns.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Note elk movements and establishments into other management areas.	NDOW	All Others	N/A
Action 2:	Determine ecological status at each key area and as state and transition models become available, apply state and transition models for range sites in each key area.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
Action 3:	Identify desired state and phase for each key area.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
Action 4:	Establish allowable use levels where needed.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Complete MA 23 and establish for MA 24 and Management Unit 223.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
Action 5:	Collect sufficient data to determine how much available forage is being consumed by each of the different users when conflict is apparent.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	Prior to March 15th of each year, the TRT will have a meeting to discuss monitoring needs for the year.	BLM	All Others	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action			Responsibility	
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	In areas identified by the team, collect utilization data prior to livestock turn out and immediately after livestock come off to differentiate use by livestock versus other users. In addition, collect utilization data at the end of the grazing season (including any rested pastures).	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW/ County	All Others
	Under cooperative monitoring strategies, all verifiable data collected by other sources will be considered (i.e., other agencies, private consultants, etc.).	BLM	N/A	N/A
	If necessary construct three-way exclosures to identify levels of use by different users.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW/ County	All Others
Action 6:	By March 15th of each year, review annual monitoring data as a team and set priorities for the following year's monitoring needs.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Review monitoring data in Unit 223, MA 23 and 24 and Lincoln County portions of MA 13 every five years. (Note: Additional key areas for elk will be established as needed.)	BLM	All Others	N/A
Action 7:	In the short-term, identify problem areas and address the problem.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	If a problem is identified, the TRT will get together as soon as possible to review the situation and make recommendations to the appropriate party (ies) to correct the problem.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	If possible, identify which elk herd/group is causing the problem (i.e., If elk are causing problems in the Meadow Valley Seedings), and implement management actions against those animals. These management actions may include, but are not limited to, hazing, trapping,	NDOW	Permittees/ Ranchers	All Others

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action			Responsibility	
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	and special hunts.			
	If it is anticipated that the allowable use level for elk will be exceeded prior to livestock turnout, implement management actions (i.e., early livestock turnout, grazing system adjustments, or other techniques to be researched) to prevent the problem from occurring and negatively impacting the livestock operator.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Develop new forage areas through all appropriate management techniques (i.e., improved water distribution, placement of mineral/salt blocks, etc.) to address concentration problems.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	In the case of emergency situations, (e.g. drought), temporary adjustments to elk numbers through special hunts, hazing, and trapping, may be recommended by the TRT.	NDOW	All Others	N/A
Action 8:	In the long-term, when monitoring identifies elk causing the same problem three out of five years take appropriate management actions to correct the problem.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Use range improvements (i.e., burning, seeding, fencing, etc.) to address long-term problems.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Adjust elk population levels, as necessary, by hunt unit.	NDOW	County/ State	N/A
Action 9:	If there is a disagreement on monitoring data interpretation, initiate an informal outside review for alternative dispute resolution.	All	N/A	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	This should occur within 60 days once the team realizes it cannot reach an agreement	All	N/A	N/A
Action 10:	When additional forage is made available (i.e., through maintenance of existing vegetation conversion projects, new vegetation conversion projects, other range improvements, management strategies, etc.), use will be allocated among the different users in accordance with the applicable watershed assessment.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW/ County	All Others
	Prior to any habitat enhance project, all parties will be given the opportunity to participate in funding the project. This will be taken into consideration during the allocation process.	All	N/A	N/A
	On maintenance of existing vegetation conversion projects, any previous cooperative agreement or range improvement permit will be taken into consideration by the team when allocating additional forage	BLM	N/A	N/A
* Possible Conflict with Ely BLM RMP Decision	All users will be allowed to use new forage areas as long as short-term utilization objectives are being met.	BLM	N/A	N/A
Population Management				
Action 1:	In the short-term, manage tag quotas to maintain an objective of 350 adult head of elk in MA 23.	NDOW	County/ State	N/A
	Evaluate monitoring data in conjunction with the Wilson Creek Allotment Re-evaluation/Watershed Assessment to determine if this number is appropriate.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	In the short-term, monitor populations and minimize elk impacts in MA 24 until BLM watershed analyses are	NDOW	N/A	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	completed.			
	While watershed analyses are conducted, implement habitat restoration projects in MA 24.	BLM	N/A	N/A
	Once the watershed analysis is complete, implement MA 24 population goals as identified in Action 3, increasing elk populations as habitat is improved.	NDOW	N/A	N/A
	Maintain Clover Creek Drainage and Upper Meadow Valley Wash watersheds as top priorities in the Ely Field Office RMP.	BLM	All Others	All Others
Action 2:	Allow for population management based on emergency habitat conditions within a given year.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Hold emergency depredation hunts.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Trap and transplant elk if sites are available.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
Action 3:	In the long-term, increase elk populations in Lincoln County to 1,850. The long-term population objective for elk in Unit 223 of MA 22 is 150 animals. (Note: the White Pine County Elk Management Plan has proposed target population levels for Units 221 and 222 of MA 22 of 850 and 750 elk, respectively. These two units are partially in Lincoln County, but the target levels are not included in the long-term population objective.) The long-term population objective for elk in MA 23 is 900 animals. The long-term population objective for elk in MA 24 is 800 animals.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Monitor to determine that extra forage is available for elk.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	In accordance with the State Plan, maintain elk populations below carrying capacity.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Re-evaluate available habitat each time the plan is evaluated (every five years).	BLM	All Others	All Others
Action 4:	Under present habitat conditions and concern for desert bighorn sheep, Units 243, 271, 281 - 284 and 287 will be considered Elk Free Zones. In addition, the Nellis Air Force Range Complex and the Nevada Test Site will be Elk Free Zones.	NDOW	County/ State	N/A
	If the team determines that repeated elk use is occurring in Elk Free Zones and that an elk herd may be establishing itself in the area, management actions will be taken to disburse, move, or remove the animals.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Evaluate Elk Free Zones every time this plan is reviewed.	All	N/A	N/A
Action 5:	Management practices which could lead to establishment of elk in Incidental Use Areas will not actively be encouraged.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Incidental Use Areas will not a) be managed for elk, b) have population objectives established, and c) have habitat improvements designed to attract elk installed.	All	N/A	N/A
	Monitor these areas to determine the effects of elk use, if any, on rangelands.	BLM	Permittee/ NDOW	All Others
	If the team determines that repeated elk use is occurring in incidental use areas and that an elk herd may be establishing itself in the area, management actions will be taken to disburse, move, or remove the animals.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
Action 6:	Elk populations will be monitored using aerial surveys, radio telemetry, and ground	NDOW	State/ County	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	counts.			
	NDOW will fly a minimum of six hours in a helicopter during January or February of each year to monitor the existing elk herd in MA 23.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	NDOW will fly a minimum of six hours in a helicopter during January or February of each year to monitor the existing elk herd in MA 24.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Whenever feasible, one representative appointed by the Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife will accompany NDOW on aerial surveys.	NDOW	N/A	N/A
	As a minimum, attach one radio collar to an elk for every 50 elk in the herd in MA 23 to help determine important use areas (i.e. calving grounds, winter range, etc.) and seasonal movement patterns.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	As a minimum, attach one radio collar to an elk for every 10 elk in the herd in MA 24 to help determine use areas, seasonal movement patterns, and population estimates.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
	Fly a minimum of six to eight hours annually to monitor radio-collared elk in each management area	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Conduct ground surveys two or three times per month in problem areas.	NDOW	State/ County	All Others
Action 7:	Use public hunting as the primary tool to manage elk populations to meet land use plan, and elk management plan goals and objectives.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Although the State Plan states a ratio of 15 - 40 bulls per 100 cows, in order to meet current public demand for a quality elk hunt in Lincoln County, attempt to maintain a post season ratio no less than 25	NDOW	State/ County	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	bulls per 100 cows.			
Action 8:	Any other technique to manage elk populations will be available for use (e.g., trapping & transplanting).	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	If monitoring indicates forage is available for elk in Unit 223 or in MA 24, elk may be released in accordance with Commission Policy Number 22and Number 26.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Attach some kind of visual marking (e.g. colored ear tag or collar) on every elk released into an area. In addition, attach one radio ear tag to one bull elk for every 10 bulls released. Or attach one radio collar to one elk for every 10 elk released.	NDOW	State/ County	All Others
	Conduct aerial surveys of radio-collared elk released into an area bi-monthly.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
Action 9:	In accordance with NRS 571, maintain Disease-Free Status of domestic and wild animal populations in Lincoln County.	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
	Implement all strategies listed in the State Plan (NDOW 1997)	NDOW	State/ County	N/A
Habitat Management				
Action 1:	Enhance habitat to create more diverse plant communities to meet multiple use objectives.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Fire management options described in the current Ely Fire Management Plan will be used where appropriate. Seed these burned areas, where necessary to reduce soil loss and maintain site productivity.	BLM	N/A	N/A
	Prioritize habitat enhancement projects first in those areas where there are livestock/elk conflicts and/or areas invaded by heavy pinyon-juniper.	BLM	All Others	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	Second priority for habitat enhancement projects are those areas identified as potential elk habitat and where additional forage is needed.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Use best available method for habitat enhancement projects given constraints for the identified area.	BLM	N/A	N/A
Action 2:	In any seeding project (i.e., maintenance of an existing project, new project, fire rehabilitation, etc.) recommend use of native species except when other species would better help attain desired plant communities.	BLM	N/A	N/A
	Investigate a solution to facilitate seeding managed natural fires that can not be seeded with federal monies through Ely BLM Fire Plan.	All	N/A	N/A
	Consider availability of seed so we aren't limited to expensive native seed. For burned areas not seeded by BLM, the TRT should review these and determine if seeding projects should take place. Consider other existing plans relating to seed mixtures.	All	N/A	N/A
Action 3:	TRT should participate on any fire rehabilitation team reviewing any fire affecting identified elk habitat.	All	N/A	N/A
	Evaluate the success of fire rehabilitation efforts on an annual basis and if possible, plan for additional multi-species habitat enhancement.	BLM	All Others	N/A
Action 4:	The desired goal for multi-species habitat enhancement projects (maintenance of existing projects, new projects, fire rehabilitation projects, etc.) is a minimum of 5,000 acres per year by all methods. This will be dependent on funding, manpower, etc.	BLM	All Others	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	Use best available method for maintenance of existing projects given constraints for the identified area (i.e., prescribed natural fire, prescribed burning, herbicide application, chaining, railing, chopping, etc.) including seeding the project area again if necessary	BLM	N/A	N/A
	Habitat Sub-committee (Various Assignments)	BLM	All Others	N/A
	The TRT should review and provide subsequent direction following BLM directed fire rehabilitation.	All	N/A	N/A
Action 5:	At least annually the TRT will review this plan and the sub-committee recommendations and forward them to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will take the recommendations to the appropriate agencies.	All	N/A	N/A
Action 6:	The TRT should consider making recommendations for seed mixes for vegetation treatments (prescribed burns, fire rehabilitation, restoration etc.).	All	N/A	N/A
Water Development				
Action 1:	Ensure adequate water is available yearlong for desired distribution of elk.	All	N/A	N/A
* Ely BLM Draft RMP identifies BLM as lead and specific timelines and actions identified.	Evaluate existing water availability and prioritize need for development based on habitat potential (i.e., strategically placement of water systems to based on habitat potential (i.e., strategically placement of water systems to facilitate management of livestock and wildlife through the use of water.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Develop, maintain, and improve availability and distribution of water through all possible means (i.e., natural	All	N/A	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action		Responsibility		
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
	springs, developed springs, pipelines, wells, reservoirs, guzzlers, etc.).			
	Develop partnerships between governmental agencies, permittees, and others for existing water development projects to provide water for elk and other wildlife on a case by case basis.	All	N/A	N/A
	Develop, redevelop, or move water locations to further along achievement of rangeland health. Solicit from livestock operators' information regarding existing water sources that would benefit all parties.	BLM	All Others	N/A
	Evaluate options and develop solutions to secure adequate monies to outsource BLM NEPA clearances for water developments.	All	N/A	N/A
	Assure BLM addresses mitigation in EISs to mitigate direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to elk habitat from land development, changes in land tenure, water development, etc.	BLM	All Others	N/A
Action 2:	Recognize the value of private water rights and do not undertake any activity that would interfere with those rights.	All	N/A	N/A
	Evaluate where elk use is conflicting with privately held water rights.	NDOW	Permitee/ Rancher/ Farmer	All Others
	Where appropriate, develop agreements with private water right holders for development and use of those waters where conflicts exist.	All	N/A	N/A
	Develop agreements, where possible, with private water right holders prior to elk becoming established in other areas.	All	N/A	N/A

Elk Management Actions and Strategies				
Action			Responsibility	
		Primary (Lead)	Secondary	Tertiary
Action 3:	Comply with all applicable federal and state laws and policies in development of new waters on public land.	BLM	NDOW	All Others
Action 4:	Comply with all applicable state water laws in development of water on private lands.	NDOW	NRCS	All Others (Except BLM)
Action 5:	Take a proactive approach in the management of livestock, wildlife, and horses to maintain riparian areas in accordance to BLM's proper functioning condition (PFC). Take action on a case-by-case basis depending on the identified user.	BLM	All Others	N/A
Elk Depredation				
Action 1:	NDOW will work with the Lincoln County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife to insure those strategies regarding Elk Damage Management listed in the State Plan are implemented locally.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others
Action 2:	Make the two brochures prepared by NDOW, one explaining the Elk Damage Compensation Program (Appendix C), and the other describing the Special Incentive Elk Tags (Appendix D), available to private landowners in Lincoln County.	NDOW	County/ State	All Others

APPENDIX G

NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS
REPORT ON SUB-PLAN PLANNING PROCESS

Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Elk Species Management Plan Committee
Elk Sub-Plan Initiation and Elk Sub-Plan Revision Process

Background:

Historically, federal agencies, counties and the State Board of Wildlife Commissioners through the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) have initiated the elk sub-planning process. In the past 5 years the Western Elko County Elk Sub-plan, the Central Nevada Elk Plan, and current revision of the White Pine and Lincoln County elk sub-plans have been ongoing. Public participation in these elk planning processes has stimulated discussion and resulted in the identification of planning process concerns by various interested parties including private individuals, the Nevada Wildlife Federation, and elk enthusiasts many of whom are members of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The Nevada State Board of Wildlife Commission in order to increase the knowledge, interest and participation in elk planning responded to this input by establishing an Elk Species Management Plan Sub-Committee to develop a Commission Policy that would guide future elk planning efforts in accordance with the *Nevada Elk Species Management Plan* (ESMP).

Participation in the sub-committee planning process included sportsmen, Nevada Wildlife Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, United States Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Nevada Wildlife Commissioners and Nevada Department of Wildlife staff with expertise in elk management and planning. Below are their recommendations for the two elk planning processes, i.e., 1) A new elk sub-plan, and 2) An elk sub-plan revision.

Policy:

This Commission Policy for new or revised elk sub-plans will be developed in accordance with the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* Goal on Page 59, *"To make the ESMP a dynamic working document that is responsive to new data, new ideas and changing environmental or political considerations"* by following the stated strategy in the ESMP as follows: *"Keep the ESMP open for evaluation and/or modification by any interested party through interaction with the Nevada State Board of Wildlife Commissioners by submission of a request to evaluate or modify the ESMP as an agenda item for discussion and action at regularly scheduled Wildlife Commission meetings...."*

New Elk Sub-Plan:

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners will initiate a new elk sub-planning process in accordance with the *Nevada Elk Species Management Plan* (Goal and Strategy page 57) through the following actions:

A. The Director will apprise the Commission when the Nevada Department of Wildlife documents the need for a new elk sub-plan either because elk have become established or an opportunity has been identified to establish elk in a previously unoccupied area of the state.

B. The Commission will then appoint a Steering Committee chairman within 3 months and invite participation on a Steering Committee from all interested groups in accordance with the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* (Goals/strategies pages 56 & 57). Any person nominated and/or appointed to the Steering Committee shall have the authority to represent their organization and shall be appointed from the following list of potential participants:

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF)
Local Sportsmen's Association
Nevada Wildlife Federation (NvWF)
County Wildlife Advisory Boards (CWAB)
Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
Guides/Outfitters
Mule Deer Foundation
Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Nevada Woolgrower's Association
Farm Bureau
Affected Permittees
Sierra Club
Wild Horse Organizations
Audubon Society
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
County Government
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
United States Forest Service (USFS)
Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)
Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDOA)
Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
National Park Service (NPS)
Tribes

C. The Nevada State Board of Wildlife Commissioners will appoint a Steering Committee from the list of volunteers and assigned agency personnel submitted by the above list of contacts for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and NDOW will provide Steering Committee members with copies of the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* and elk sub-plans as needed.

D. Elk planning meetings will be initiated in the community closest to the new elk sub-plan area.

E. The Steering Committee will appoint a Technical Review Team to gather historical information and data to be used to develop a draft elk sub-plan. The TRT shall be comprised of natural resource professionals representing NDOW,

applicable land managing agencies, permittees, tribes, and other affected interests. The NDOW representative will be responsible for compilation and preparation of the elk sub-plan draft.

F. Within 6 months of the first meeting, the steering committee will prepare and distribute the first draft for additional public comment as follows:

a. The Commission.
b. The Director for posting on the NDOW Website/news release.
c. At scheduled public meetings in both Reno and Las Vegas to present a summary of the draft and solicit public comments which shall be considered by the TRT and the Steering Committee before preparation of the final draft.

G. Monitor progress of elk planning groups and make necessary adjustments to the planning team as needed to facilitate progress.

H. Ensure that new elk sub-plans are submitted in accordance with the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* (Goal page 56).

Elk Sub-Plan Revisions

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners will initiate an elk sub-planning process in accordance with the *Nevada Elk Species Management Plan* (Goal and Strategy page 57) through the following actions:

A. When the Nevada Department of Wildlife documents the need for an elk sub-plan revision to address changing conditions or documented concerns, NDOW shall collaborate with federal land managers to verify the need to initiate an elk sub-plan revision process and advise the Director.

B. The Director shall apprise the Wildlife Commission.

C. The Wildlife Commission will appoint a Steering Committee chairman within 3 months and invite participation from previous members of the Steering Committee and make sure all interested groups are included in accordance with the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* (Goals/strategies pages 56 & 57). Any person nominated and/or appointed to the Steering Committee shall have the authority to represent their organization and shall be appointed from the following list of potential participants:

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF)
Local Sportsmen's Association
Nevada Wildlife Federation (NvWF)
Local County Wildlife Advisory Boards (CWAB)
Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
Guides/Outfitters
Mule Deer Foundation

Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Nevada Woolgrower's Association
Farm Bureau
Affected Permittees
Sierra Club
Wild Horse Organizations
Audubon Society
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
County Government
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
United States Forest Service (USFS)
Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)
Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDOA)
Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
National Park Service (NPS)
Tribes

D. The Nevada State Board of Wildlife Commissioners will appoint a Steering Committee from the list of volunteers and assigned agency personnel submitted by the above list of contacts for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and NDOW will provide Steering Committee members with copies of the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* and elk sub-plans as needed.

E. Elk planning meetings will be initiated in the community closest to the elk sub-plan area.

F. The Steering Committee will appoint a Technical Review Team to gather historical information and data to be used to develop a draft elk sub-plan. The TRT shall be comprised of natural resource professionals representing NDOW, applicable land managing agencies, permittees, tribes, and other affected interests.

G. Existing plans will be in electronic format and the NDOW representative will make actual revisions to the sub-plan document with notations in "parentheses" or (brackets) explaining changes in order to keep track of the TRT and/or Steering Committee decisions/actions.

H. Provide TRT members with copies (hard or electronic) of the State Elk Species Management Plan and/or other pertinent sub-plans and elk planning information to facilitate the planning process.

I. Within 3 months of the first meeting, the steering committee will prepare and distribute a first draft of the revised sub-plan for additional public comment as follows:

a. The Commission.
b. The Director for posting on the NDOW Website/news releases.
c. At scheduled public meetings in both Reno and Las Vegas to present a summary of the draft and solicit public comments which shall be

considered by the TRT and the Steering Committee before preparation of the final draft.

J. Monitor progress of elk planning groups and make necessary adjustments to the planning team as needed to facilitate progress.

K. Ensure that Sub-plan revisions are submitted in accordance with the *Nevada State Elk Species Management Plan* (Goal page 56).

The Wildlife Commission approves this policy "Elk Sub-Plan Initiation and Elk Sub-Plan Revision Process" as Addendum 1 to the Nevada Elk Species Management Plan, at their regularly scheduled meeting on February 10-11, 2006.

Chris MacKenzie, Chairman
Board of Wildlife Commissioners

2/11/06
Date

GLOSSARY

Allowable Use Level (AUL) - (1) A degree of utilization of current year's growth which, if continued, will achieve management objectives and maintain or improve the long-term productivity of the site. (2) The percentage a plant is utilized when the rangeland as a whole is properly utilized. The allowable use varies with time and systems of grazing. Allowable use is synonymous with proper use.

Appropriate Management Level (AML) - The number of wild horses or burros established through the BLM's planning process and evaluation of monitoring data to achieve multiple use objectives and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance in a herd management area.

Ecological Status - The present state of vegetation of an ecological site in relation to the potential natural community (PNC) for the site. Ecological status is independent of use. It is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions, and amounts of plants in a community resemble that of the PNC. The four ecological status classes correspond to 0-25, 26-50, 51-75, or 76-100 percent similarity to the PNC and are called early seral, mid seral, late seral and PNC, respectively.

Elk Free Zones - Those areas where elk use will be excluded.

Established Herd - Ten or more cow elk showing repeated use of an area during the same season for two consecutive years and/or continual use of an area for twelve consecutive months. This could occur through pioneering or through introduction or reestablishment efforts.

Incidental Use Areas - Those areas that have not been identified as ***potential habitat*** or Elk Free Zones, and where use is not concentrated or repeated during the same season of the year for two consecutive years.

Key Area - A relatively small portion of a rangeland selected, based on its location, use, or grazing value, as a monitoring site for grazing use. It is assumed that key areas, if properly selected, will reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over the range.

Key Species - (1) Forage species whose use serves as an indicator to the degree of use of associated species. (2) Those species which must, because of their importance, be considered in a management program.

Long-Term - Ten to twenty years.

Potential Habitat - Potential habitat is defined in terms of the number of elk per square mile if no other uses were occurring on the land. High density habitat equals three elk per square mile, moderate potential equals two elk per square mile, and low potential equals one elk per square mile.

Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) - Riparian-wetland areas are functioning properly when

adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows, thereby reducing erosion and improving water quality; filter sediment, capture bedload, and aid floodplain development; improve flood-water retention and ground-water recharge; develop root masses that stabilize streambanks against cutting action; develop diverse ponding and channel characteristics to provide habitat and the water depth, duration, and temperature necessary for fish production, waterfowl breeding, and other uses; and support greater biodiversity. The functioning condition of riparian-wetland areas is a result of interaction among geology, soil, water, and vegetation (Barrett et al., 1995).

Seral Stage - The developmental stages of an ecological succession. Seral stage is synonymous with successional stage. (See ecological status.)

Short-Term - Five years or less.

State – A recognizable, relatively resistant and resilient complex with attributes that include characteristic climate, soil resource including soil biota, and the associated aboveground plant communities.

State and Transition Model – A state and transition model is used to describe vegetation dynamics and management interactions associated with each ecological site. A state and transition model provides a method to organize and communicate complex information about vegetation response to disturbances (e.g., fire, lack of fire, drought, unusually wet periods, insects, and disease) and management.

State and transition models help managers and scientists to look at an ecological site and tell what state it is in and what phase it is within that state. This understanding of ecological sites and their condition gives managers a way to know whether they must act immediately to keep a vegetation state from crossing (transitioning across) a threshold. Or if a site has crossed a threshold, immediate action may not be the best action or the most cost effective alternative. (Draft Ely RMP)

Three-way Exclosure – An exclosure that consists of two fenced areas and one control area. The control area can be grazed by all ungulates. A second area is fenced to preclude access by livestock and wild horses, but where wildlife would have access. A third area is fenced to preclude access by all users. The three areas can then be compared to determine which users are having the greatest effect. Each portion should be approximately five acres in size.

REFERENCES

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