

MASSACRE POPULATION MANAGEMENT UNIT
PRIVATE LANDS RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk #7: Conversion of meadows to bare ground

Season/Habitat affected: Brood-rearing

Contributing Management Action: Over utilization of meadows

Risk Rating: Medium

Of the 1,500 acres (500 private, 1000 public) of riparian vegetation dominated communities in the Surprise Resource Area portion of the Massacre PMU, about 663 acres (about 45% of the riparian communities) receive periodic heavy use that exposes some bare soil in the riparian system. Management is in place to mitigate this level of use on about 600 of these acres, including establishing wild horse appropriate management levels, interim decisions with riparian stubble height requirements, additional enclosures, deferred use, periodic rest, and early turnoff for regrowth. Most AMPs call for maintaining greater than 90% ground cover on meadows, horse plans recognize the significance of season-long wild horse use on meadows, and Rangeland Health Assessments are picking up the areas (and addressing the causes) where use to bare ground on meadows is still occurring. About 63 acres of riparian communities, primarily in portions of allotments used by livestock and wild horses and on allotments used season-long, continue to receive annually high levels of use with no mitigation. Therefore, the risk of converting meadows to bare ground is moderate.

Risk #16: Artificially high predator population

Season/Habitat affected: All

Contributing Management Action: High speed roads, which increase the amount of road-killed animals and attract ravens.

Risk Rating: Low

Conservation Measure(s): Do not authorize new rights-of- ways within 3.2 km (2 miles) of leks.

Responsible Parties: BLM, NDOT

Monitoring: Monitor leks a minimum of 2 years in 5.

Contributing Management Action: Urban expansion and ranchettes, which increase the amount of garbage and attract ravens.

Risk Rating: Low

Conservation Measure(s): *Retain public lands that contain leks, nesting, brood-rearing or other important habitats for sage-grouse unless disposal would result in acquisition of equal or better habitat or lead to better habitat connectivity.*

Responsible Parties: **BLM**

Monitoring: *Monitor leks a minimum of 2 years in 5.*

Contributing Management Action: Agricultural expansion, which increases the amount of food for ravens

Risk Rating: Low

Conservation Measure(s): *Retain public lands that contain leks, nesting, brood-rearing or other important habitats for sage-grouse unless disposal would result in acquisition of equal or better habitat or lead to better habitat connectivity.*

Responsible Parties: **BLM**

Monitoring: *Monitor leks a minimum of 2 years in 5.*

Private lands are mostly uninhabited with little chance of additional urban or agricultural expansion. With the exception of Nevada highways 34 and 8A (45 mph, gravel), roads in the Massacre PMU are mostly low speed. Therefore, there is a low risk of producing an artificially high predator population as a result of road kill, urban expansion, and agricultural expansion.
