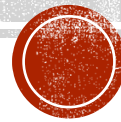


BLM STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

What it is, and how it should work in the term permit renewal process



STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY PUBLIC RANGELANDS

- Standard 1
 - Within the potential of the ecological site (soil type, landform, climate and geology), soils are stable and allow for infiltration to provide for optimal plant growth and minimal surface runoff
 - Considered met where upland ground cover is appropriate for the ecological site, obvious signs of soil erosion are not apparent, and stream channels and stable or improving morphologically
 - Monitoring methods: soil stability, rangeland health, line point intercept
- Standard 2
 - Riparian and wetland vegetation have structural, age and species diversity characteristic of the state of channel succession and is resilient and capable of recovering from natural and human disturbance in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, dissipate energy, and provide for ground water recharge
 - Considered met where riparian/wetland habitat is rated in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) or Functioning at Risk with an Upward Trend
 - Monitoring methods: PFC, MIMs



STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY PUBLIC RANGELANDS

- Standard 3
 - Upland vegetation on each ecological site consists of plant communities appropriate to the site which are resilient, diverse and able to recover from natural and human disturbance
 - Considered met if plant communities are appropriate for the ecological site and are sustaining themselves under existing conditions
 - Monitoring methods: Line point intercept, production
- Standard 4
 - Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and a diversity of native plant and animal species appropriate to the habitat. Habitats that support or could support threatened species, endangered species, species of special concern, or sensitive species will be maintained or enhanced.
 - Considered met if habitat needed to support wildlife species is being sustained under existing conditions
 - Monitoring methods:



STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY PUBLIC RANGELANDS

- Standard 5
 - Water quality meets State standards
 - Considered unknown unless information provided by the State of Wyoming (DEQ) determines the status of a water body as an impaired or is not meeting its beneficial use
 - Monitoring methods: E. coli, temperature, sediment loads
- Standard 6
 - Air quality meets state standards
 - Considered met or impaired based on information provided by the State of Wyoming
 - Monitoring methods: Air quality stations



DETERMINATION VS. DECISION

- The evaluation document is a standalone report that includes:
 - Documentation of the thought process and logic track used, including procedural steps and all conclusions. The document should include the processes used for the selection of the area to be evaluated, selection of indicators, collection of inventory and monitoring data, and data analysis and interpretation of the indicators
 - Identification of types of general location of land health problems
 - Description of existing conditions (to be used for NEPA analysis if needed). The description has to be thorough enough to develop a range of reasonable alternatives
 - Status of each unit evaluated, reported with respect to each of the applicable land health standards
 - Reference to information collected. Information should be entered into GIS
- Determination may be a separate document
- **Not Decision Documents** – which means you can't protest or appeal until it is used in the NEPA process



4-PHASE PROCESS

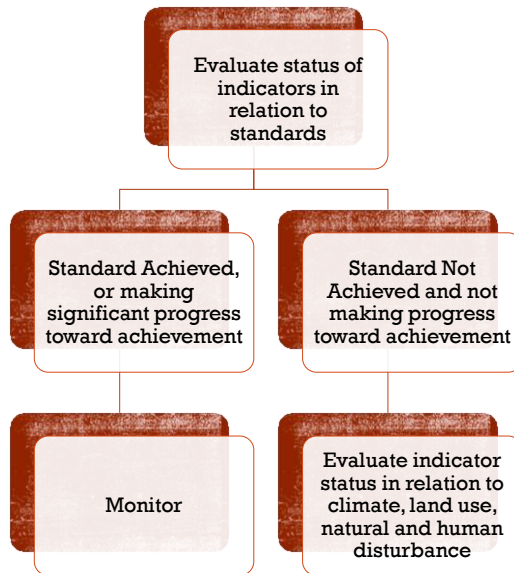
At least according to BLM H-4180-1...



ASSESSMENT PHASE



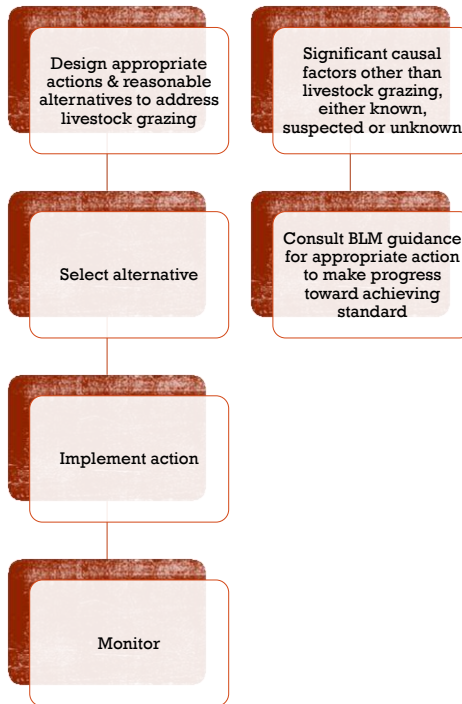
EVALUATION PHASE



DETERMINATION PHASE



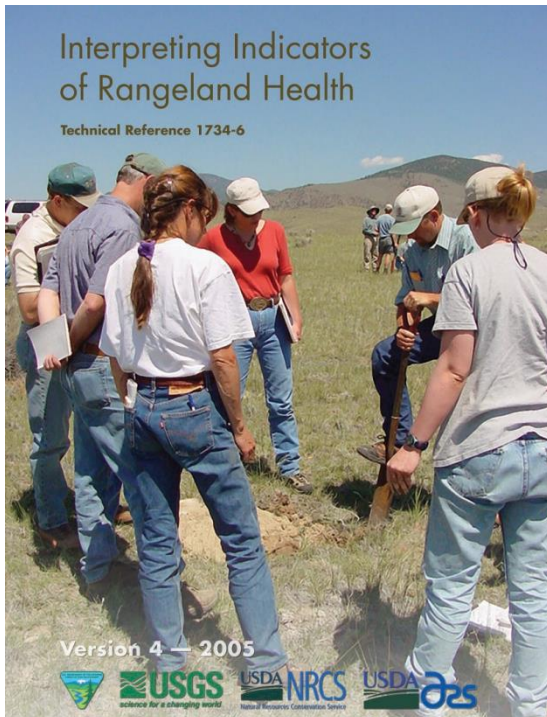
IMPLEMENTATION PHASE





ASSESSING RESOURCE CONDITIONS & EVALUATING RLH STANDARDS

BLM Handbook H-4180-1

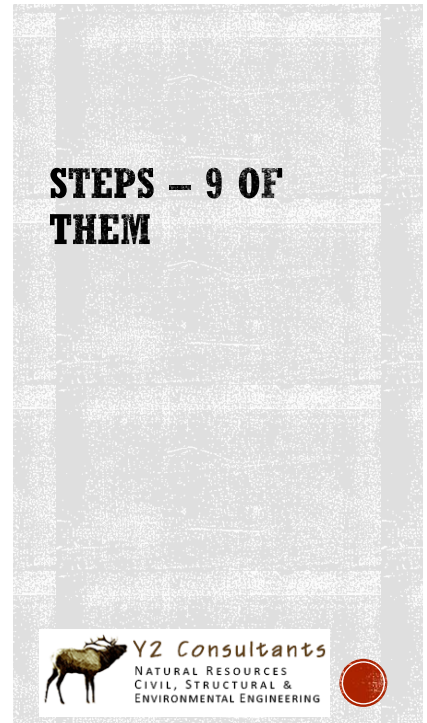


**NOT TO BE
CONFUSED
WITH...**

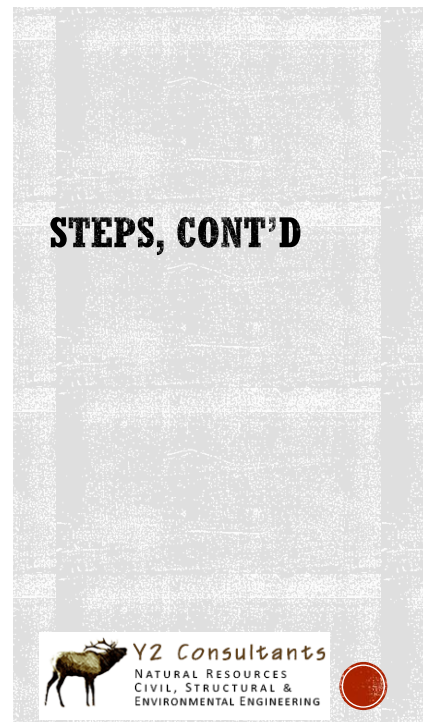
(We can talk about this at the end if we have time.)



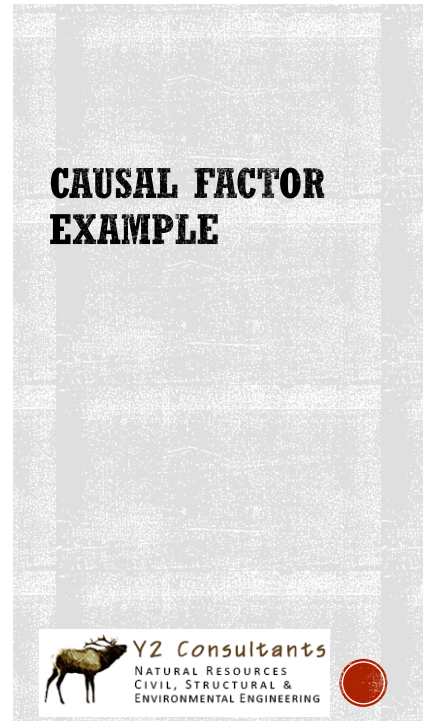
1. **Prepare for the Assessment and Evaluation**
 - Assemble the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT)
 - Identify criteria for selecting assessment and evaluation areas
 - Prioritize assessment and evaluation areas (i.e., impaired waters, critical habitat)
2. **Conduct the Assessment and Evaluation**
 - Subdivide the area for data collection if needed
 - Select indicators to evaluate each standard
 - Relevant, Affordable, Credible, Understandable
 - Select collection methods for monitoring
 - Review adequacy of existing information (age, methods used)
 - Compile and organize information
 - Evaluate data



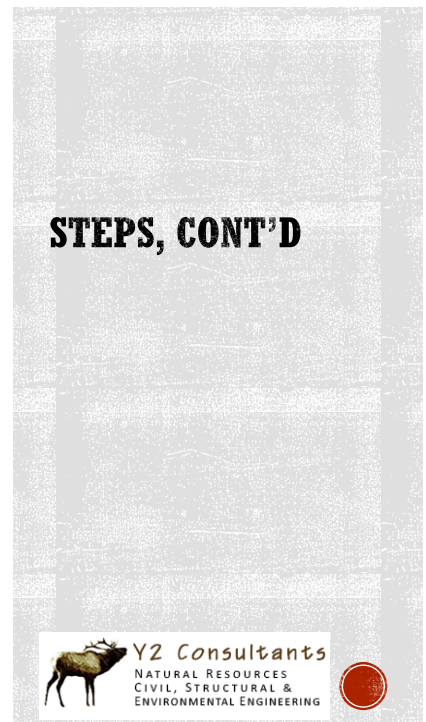
3. **Identify causal factors**
 - When 1 or more standard is not achieved or is not making significant progress toward achievement, or there is a lack of conformance with guidelines, the cause for deviation has to be identified
 - For each unit not meeting a Standard:
 - List standard(s) not achieved, reasons for not meeting, and indicator(s) used
 - Review ancillary data (grazing records, project records, local history, etc.)
 - List suspected significant causes for each unit
 - Review possible landscape scale as well as site level causes
 - Complete a site-scale assessment if appropriate
 - Consider whether “natural” disturbances (i.e., fire, flood, weeds) are the cause and if the area is likely to recover on its own under existing management



- **Example: Standard 4 – Habitat**
 - Standard is partially met because of lack of diversity in shrub age classes and the understory lacks diversity
 - Area burned 10 years ago; seeding partially successful
 - Cattle in the allotment 6/1 to 12/15
 - Wild horses (over AML)
 - Greater sage-grouse brood-rearing area
 - Winter habitat use by big game (which are over objective)
- Fire suppression, livestock, wildlife, wild horses, drought



4. **Authorized Officer makes a determination**
 - Statement of achievement or non-achievement for each Standard
 - List of causal factors for non-achieving Standard(s)
 - Use best data and resource information available
 - Statement of conformance or non-conformance with guidelines
 - Date determination is made and the signature of the authorized officer
5. **Grazing-related questions**
 - Is it more likely than not that existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use are significant factors in failing to achieve the Standards or conform with the guidelines? (YES/NO)
 - Is it more likely than not that existing grazing management needs to be modified to ensure that the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health are met, or making significant progress toward being met? (YES/NO)



- “If the existing livestock grazing management or level of use is determined to be a significant causal factor for not achieving Standards or not making significant progress toward achieving a fundamental of rangeland health, the authorized officer must take appropriate action **as soon as practicable but no later than the beginning of the next grazing year** to bring grazing activities into conformance with grazing guidelines or to modify them so that significant progress can be made toward achieving Land Health Standards.”

IF YES...



6. Develop a plan

- Address all Standards not achieved, conditions where the fundamentals of rangeland health were not met or not making significant progress toward being met
- If livestock grazing was a causal factor in failure to meet a standard, work with the permittee(s)/leasees and other stakeholders to determine appropriate actions; propose modifications to the terms and conditions – must be in place before the start of the next grazing season
- If something other than livestock caused the failure to meet a standard, consult other programs for guidance
- Document any conflicts between existing objectives and the watershed potential
- Develop a monitoring plan to measure progress toward achieving the standards. **Do not use qualitative assessments as a trend monitoring method**

STEPS, CONT'D



7. Implement the plan
8. Monitor progress
9. Report results



PITFALLS & CAUTIONARY TALES

There are many...and they have serious repercussions for your permit!



LESSONS LEARNED

- Read the rules. All of them.
- Bring a copy of the rules with you.
- Refer to the rules as needed.
- If you don't want to do this, hire someone who will.
- Do not assume your range con has the rules, or any training on how to use the rules.
- Assume the other side has the rules, and read them, and will use them to your detriment.
- **This is the single-most important document for your term permit renewal.**
 - **If livestock are identified as a causal factor there will be changes to your permit.**
- Do not rely on the agency to collect data on your allotment. Do it yourself, or hire someone.
- The Sage-grouse LUPA changed the game. Stay tuned.

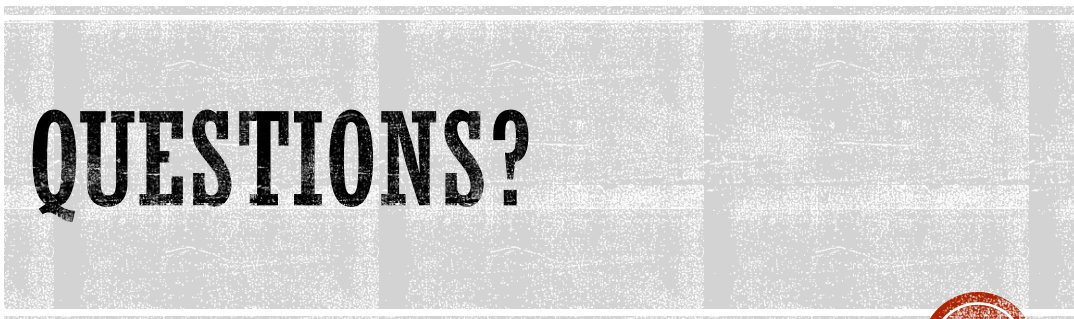
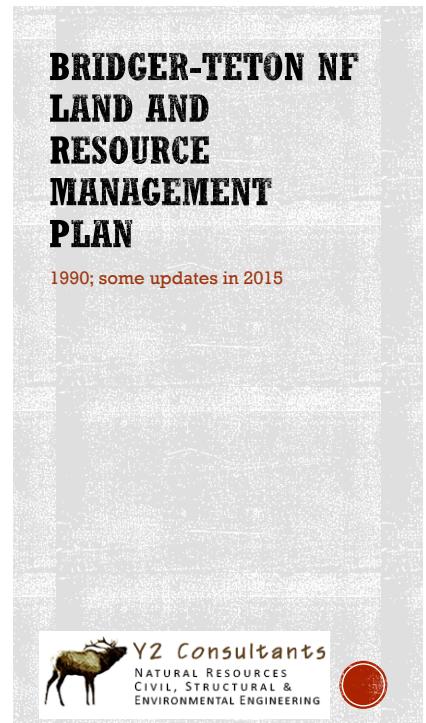


FOREST SERVICE

This will be fast!



- BTNF Forest-wide Management Prescriptions, Standards and Guidelines address similar principles
- Desired Future Conditions
 - Basic tools for land management
- Annual Operating Instructions
- Allotment Management Plan (usually part of the AOI)



You made it!

