



BLM - RAWLINS FIELD OFFICE

Platte Valley Project Work: Past – Present – Future

Platte Valley Habitat Partnership – Feb 11th, 2013



6 Standards for Healthy Rangelands – Wyoming

~ “These management practices will either maintain existing desirable conditions or move rangelands toward statewide standards within reasonable timeframes.”

The majority of all BLM range improvement projects, completed and proposed, have been developed as a result of the S&G’s process and the failures identified.

Assessment areas are defined by watershed boundaries within the Rawlins Field Office, and are evaluated/re-evaluated on a ten year cycle.

The Rawlins Field Office is currently on the second round of evaluations.

The Platte Valley Habitat Partnership identified boundary, includes the following S&G Assessment Areas:

Lower North Platte Watershed (2003) (2013)

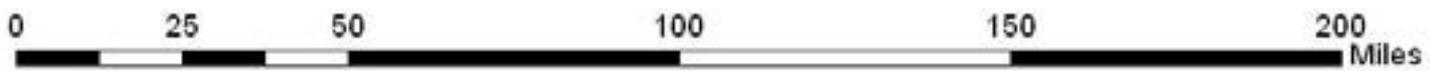
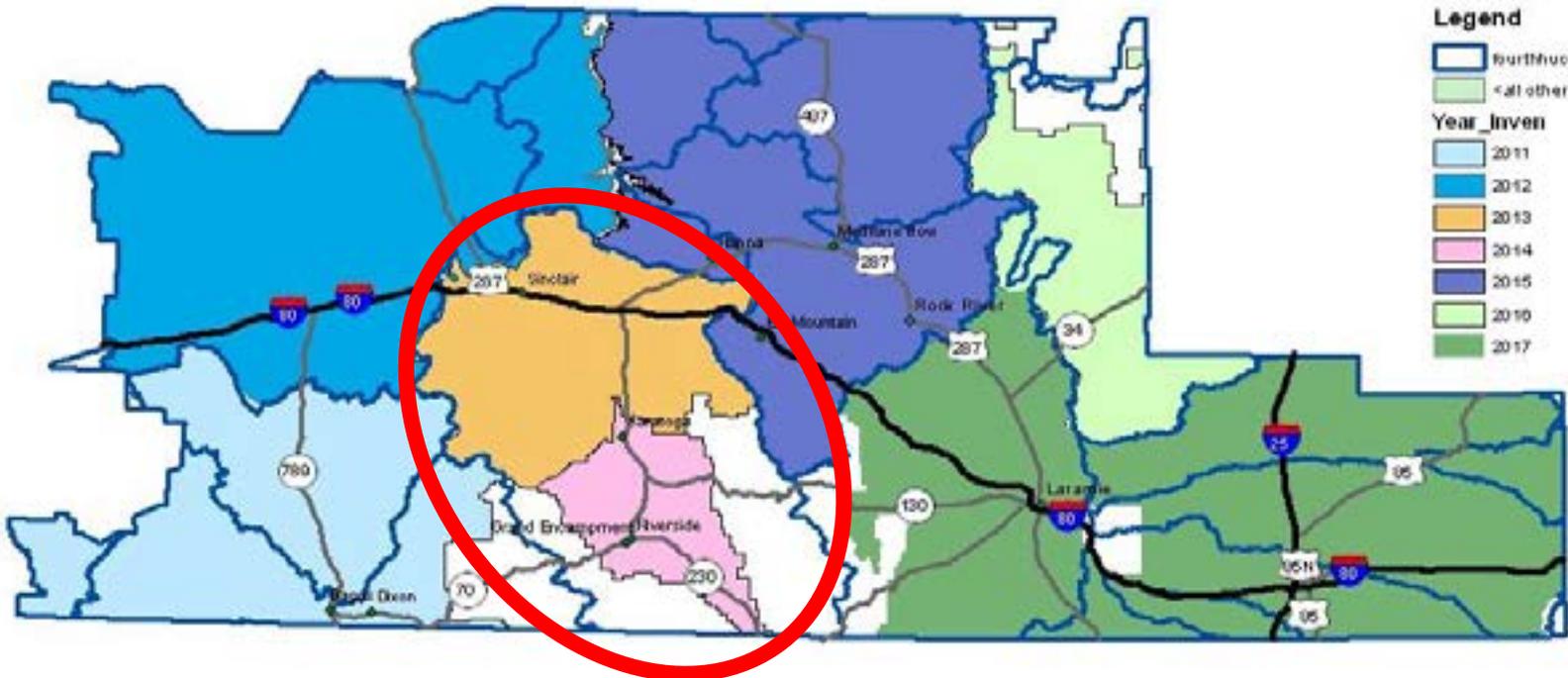
Upper North Platte Watershed (2004) (2014)

Map 1 Watershed Assessment Area By Year



Legend

- Fourthmooc
- <all other values>
- Year_Inven**
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017



Rawlins Field Office

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Standard 1- Watershed Health:

The standard is considered met if upland soil cover generally exceeds 30% and obvious signs of soil erosion are not apparent, and stream channels are stable and improving in morphology.



Page 18-1
Erosion into Prospect Creek
from historic road network on
steep hillsides

Standard 2 – Riparian/Wetland Health:

The standard is considered met if riparian/wetland habitat is rated in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) and existing management will lead to maintaining or improving resource conditions.



Page 24-3 Blown out beaver dam on Heather Creek allotment

Standard 3 – Upland Vegetation Health:

The standard is considered met if plant communities are sustaining themselves under existing conditions and management.



Page 39-1 Mountain big sagebrush/bitterbrush community on the A Bar A Allotment

Standard 3: Uplands (Summary):

"...although concerns about current, and especially near-future, functionality of certain community types remain. Specifically, the review group has determined that the majority of upland vegetation communities are properly functioning in relation to the seral stage to which they have evolved. However, the juniper, pine and mountain shrub communities in **the Baggott Rocks area does not appear to be properly functioning, with severe hedging and browsing and poor age-class structure.**"

"Although aspen stands show various symptoms of disease and decadence – particularly encroachment by conifers, most upland sites are not deemed to be failing this Standard at this time."

Standard 4 – Wildlife/Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Health, Fisheries, Weeds:

The standard is considered met if habitat needed to support Wildlife, Threatened and Endangered, and Fisheries species are being sustained under existing conditions and management. Weed populations are being controlled and/or reduced.



Page 54-1 Bighorn Sheep near Encampment River Canyon

Standard 4: Wildlife habitat (Recommendations):

"Continue to implement vegetative treatments in shrub and woodland habitats to improve the diversity of cover, species, age-class, vertical structure, and mosaic mix of plant communities."

"Begin to implement mechanical treatments to a greater extent where prescribed burns or chemical treatments are impractical, in order to stimulate native, desirable, or obligate species and remove late seral increaser species such as juniper in riparian systems and aspen woodlands."

"Evaluate the need and institute measures where necessary to reduce disturbance to big game species on crucial winter ranges, or other habitat areas where needed. This could involve seasonal closures of roads, seasonal closures of habitat for antler collecting, general off-highway vehicle use, and other activities."

"Develop a comprehensive, cooperative grazing plan for the Pennock Mountain BGCWR including infrastructure necessary for implementation."

Standard 5 – Water Quality:

The standard is considered unknown unless information provided by the State of Wyoming determines the status of a water body as impaired (not meeting) or is meeting its beneficial uses.



Macro-invertebrate sampling

Standard 6 – Air Quality:

The standard is considered met or impaired based on information provided by the State of Wyoming.



Dust Monitoring

Platte Valley Projects – Past (Completed)

Rx Burns:

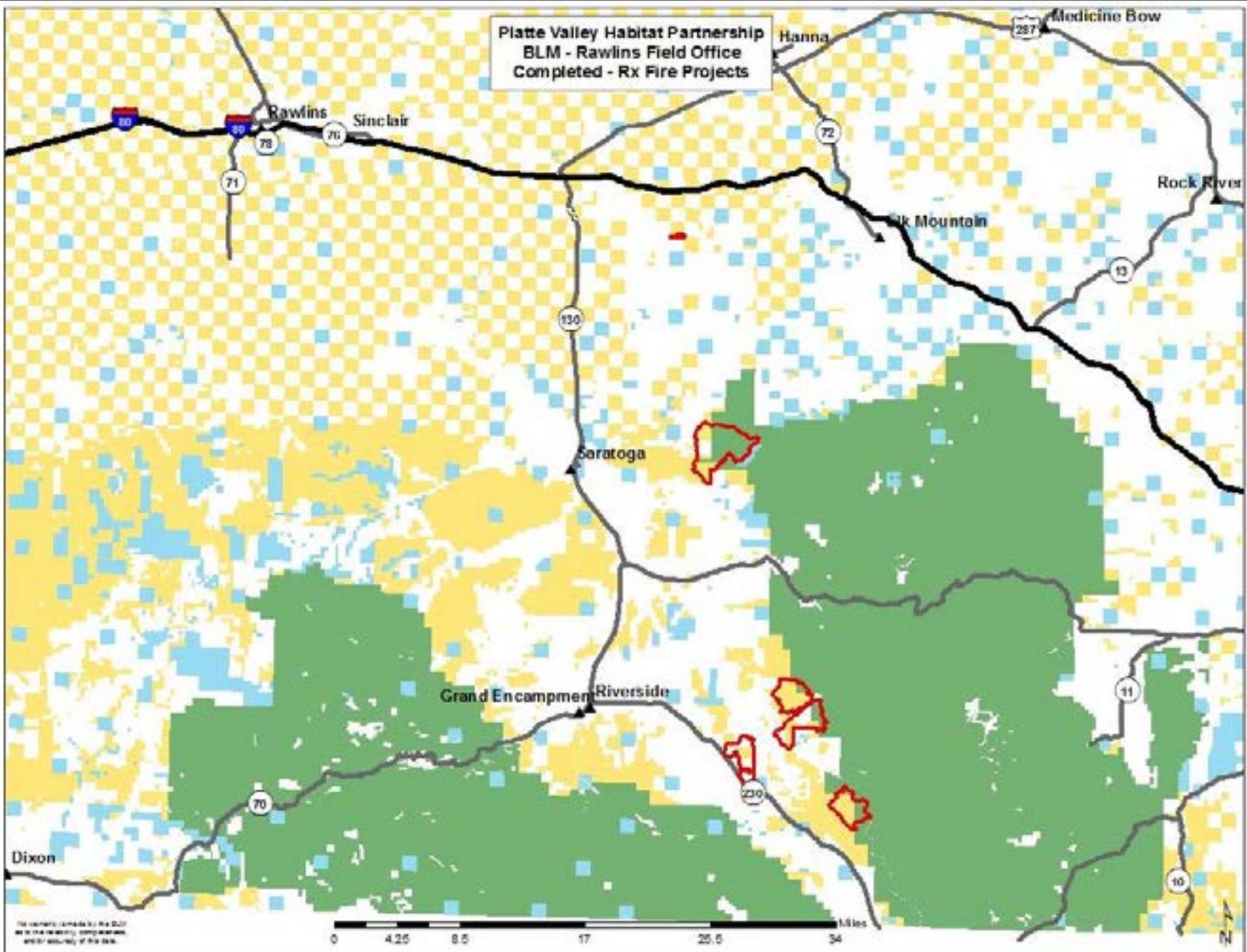
- Pennock Mountain
- Beaver Hills
- West Barrett
- Rattlesnake Creek
- Prospect Mountain
- Encampment River Canyon

Wildfires:

- Blackhall Mountain
- Pennock Mountain
- Encampment River Campground



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BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Completed - Rx Fire Projects



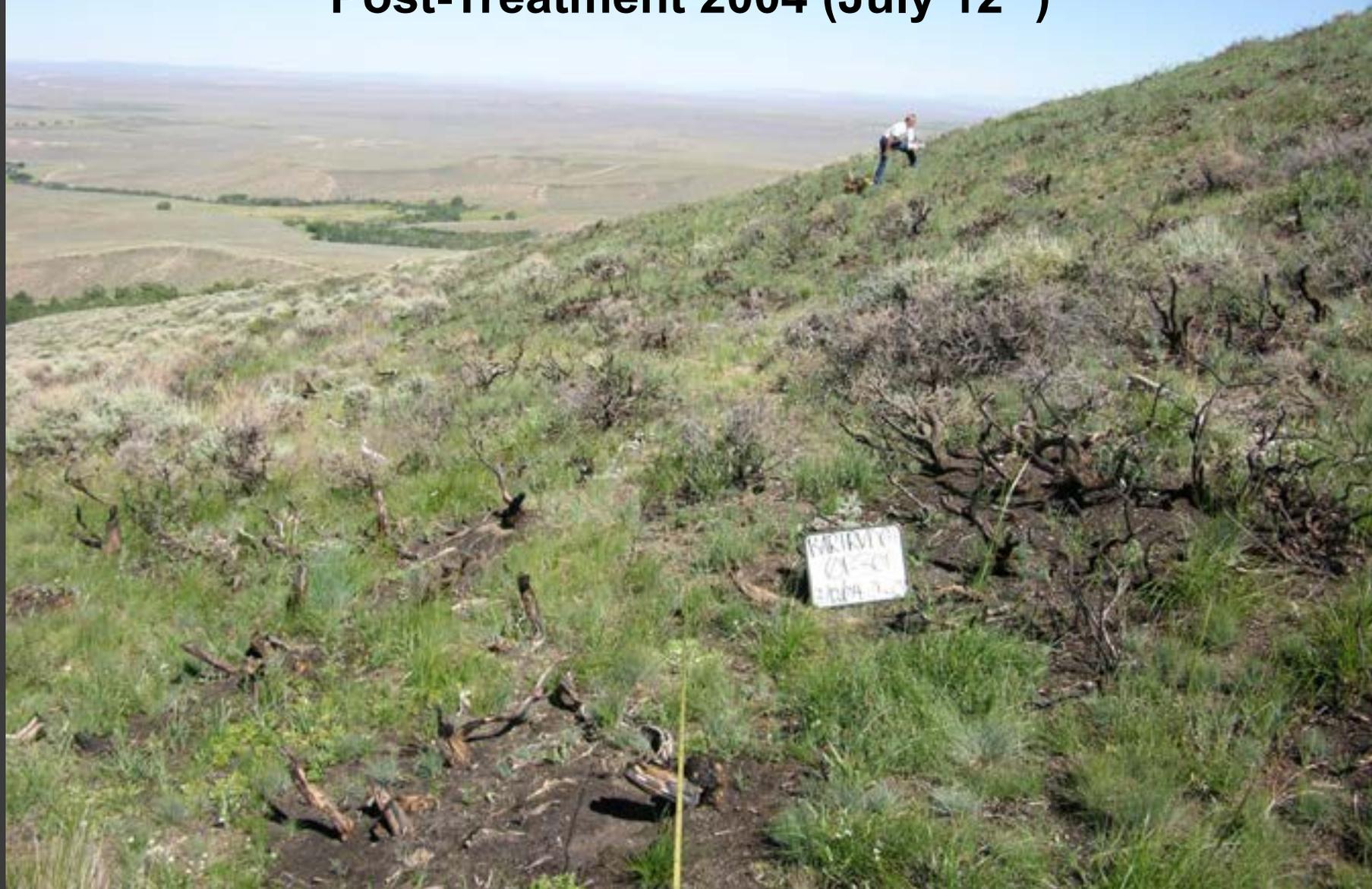
All contents furnished by the BLM
are to the maximum extent possible,
and for accuracy of this data.

0 4.25 8.5 17 25.5 34 Miles

**Pennock Mountain Rx Spring Burn
Pre-Treatment 2003 (July 15th)
BLM, USFS, RMEF, WG&F**



Pennock Mountain Rx Spring Burn Post-Treatment 2004 (July 12th)



Pennock Mountain Rx Spring Burn Post-Treatment 2005 (June 30th)



West Barrett Rx Spring Treatment 2004



West Barrett Post Rx Fire



West Barrett Fire 1yr Post Rx Fire

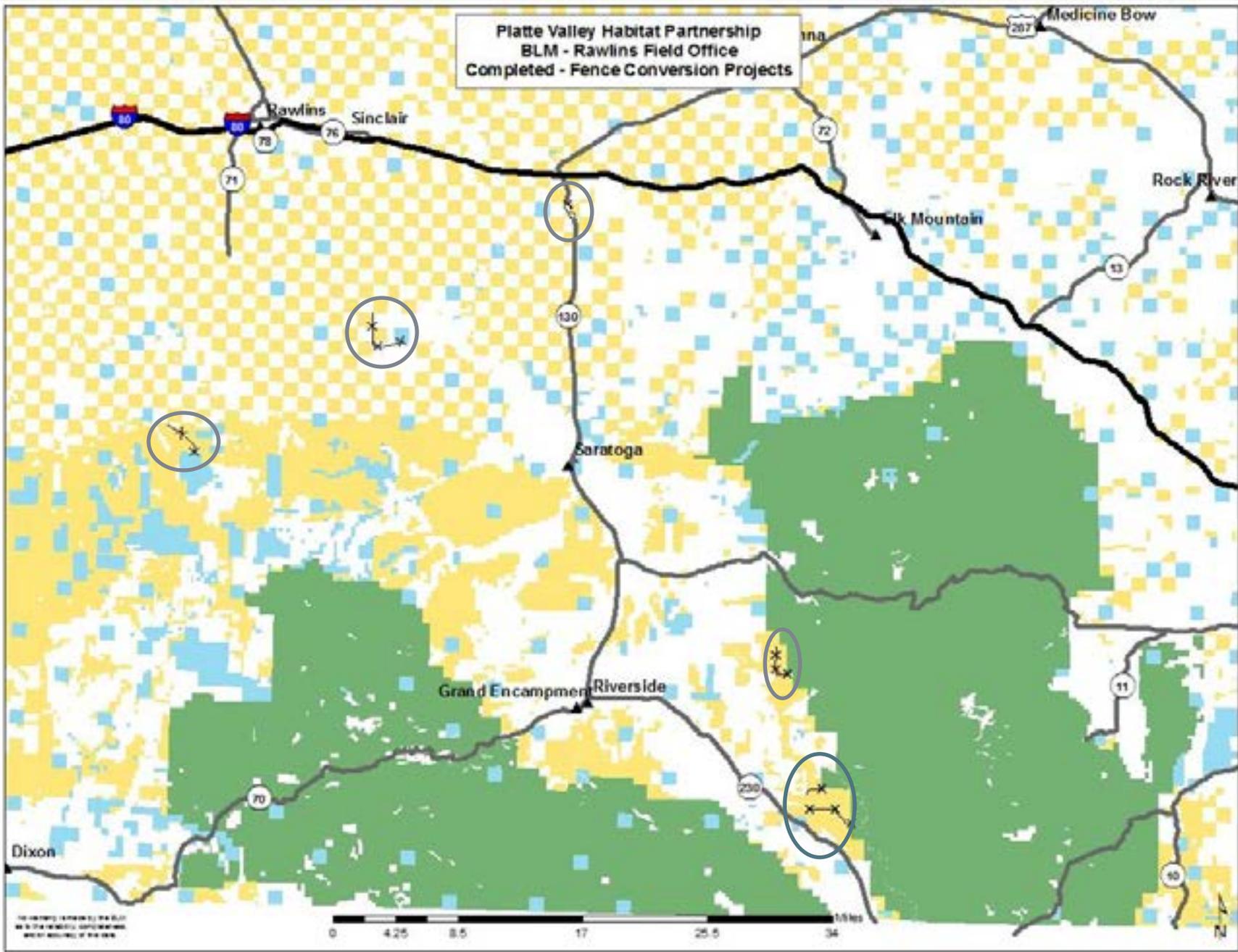
Platte Valley Projects – Past (Completed)

Fence Conversion:

- Saratoga Hwy (1.5 Miles)
- Meads Allotment (.25 Miles)
- Corral Creek (2.5 Miles)
- Prospect (5.5 Miles)
- Romios Ranch (1.5 Miles)
- Pine Grove Bolton (4 Miles)



Platte Valley Habitat Partnership
BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Completed - Fence Conversion Projects



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0 4.25 8.5 17 25.5 34 Miles



Old Fence Line:

- 5-6 wires / woven wire
- Old cedar posts
- No stays
- Poor wire spacing



New Fence:

- 4 or 3 wire (bottom wire smooth)
- Wood stays
- Appropriate wire spacing

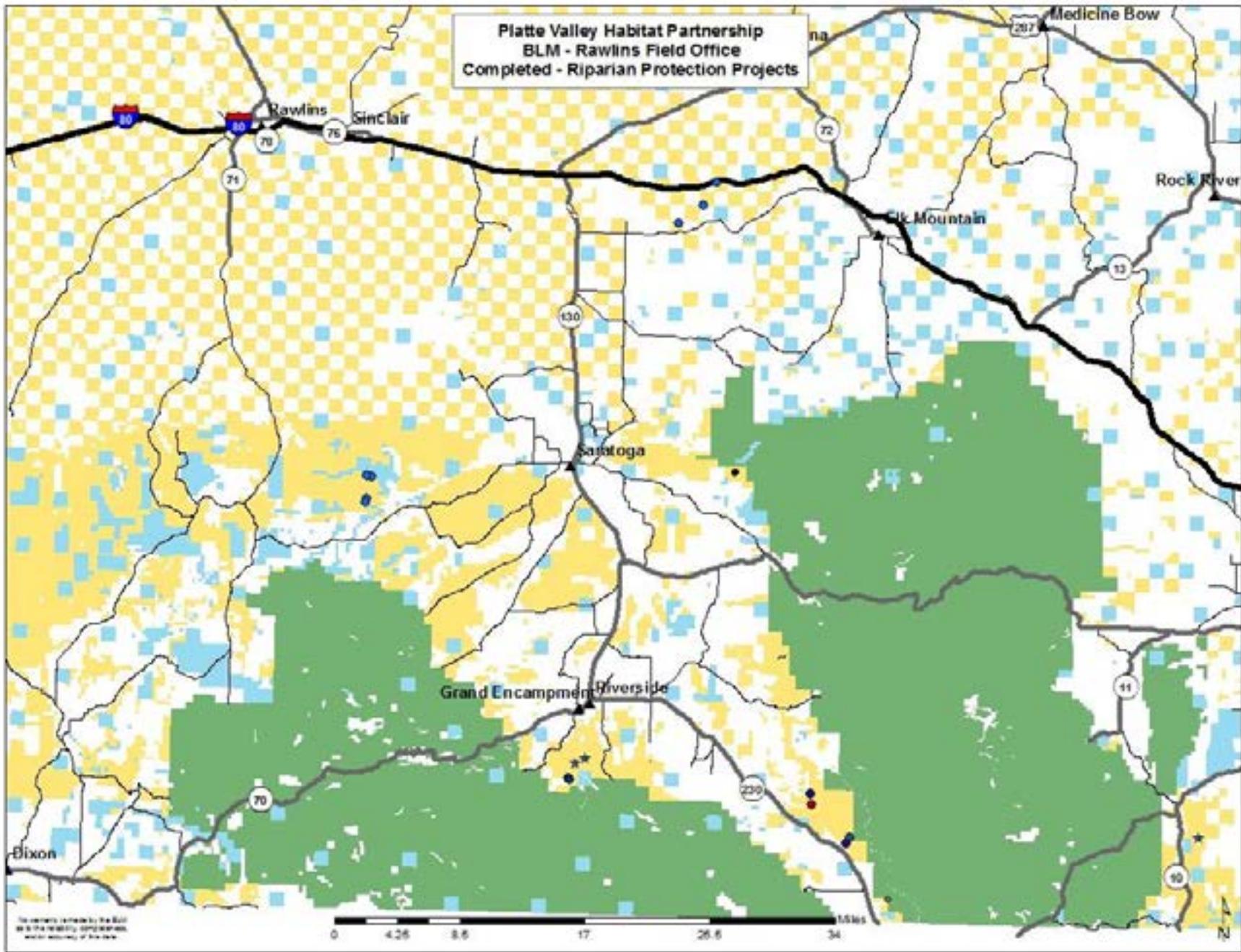
Platte Valley Projects – Past (Completed)

Riparian Exclosures/Fence:

- Martinez Springs
- Romios Ranch Spring
- West Dana Seep
- Hidden Springs Seep
- Aspen Pocket Spring
- Jeep Trail Spring
- Cow Camp Spring
- Cabin Spring
- Parkview Hill Spring
- Rattlesnake Cr. Riparian Fence
- Stovepipe Spring
- West Prospect Mtn Spring
- Wolfe Allotment Riparian Fence
- West Dish Spring
- Lone Willow Bush Spring
- North Cedar Creek



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Completed - Riparian Protection Projects



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Upper North Cedar Creek Riparian Exclosure



2006 Photo



2008 Photo

Rattlesnake Creek Riparian Pasture



2005 Photo



2012 Photo

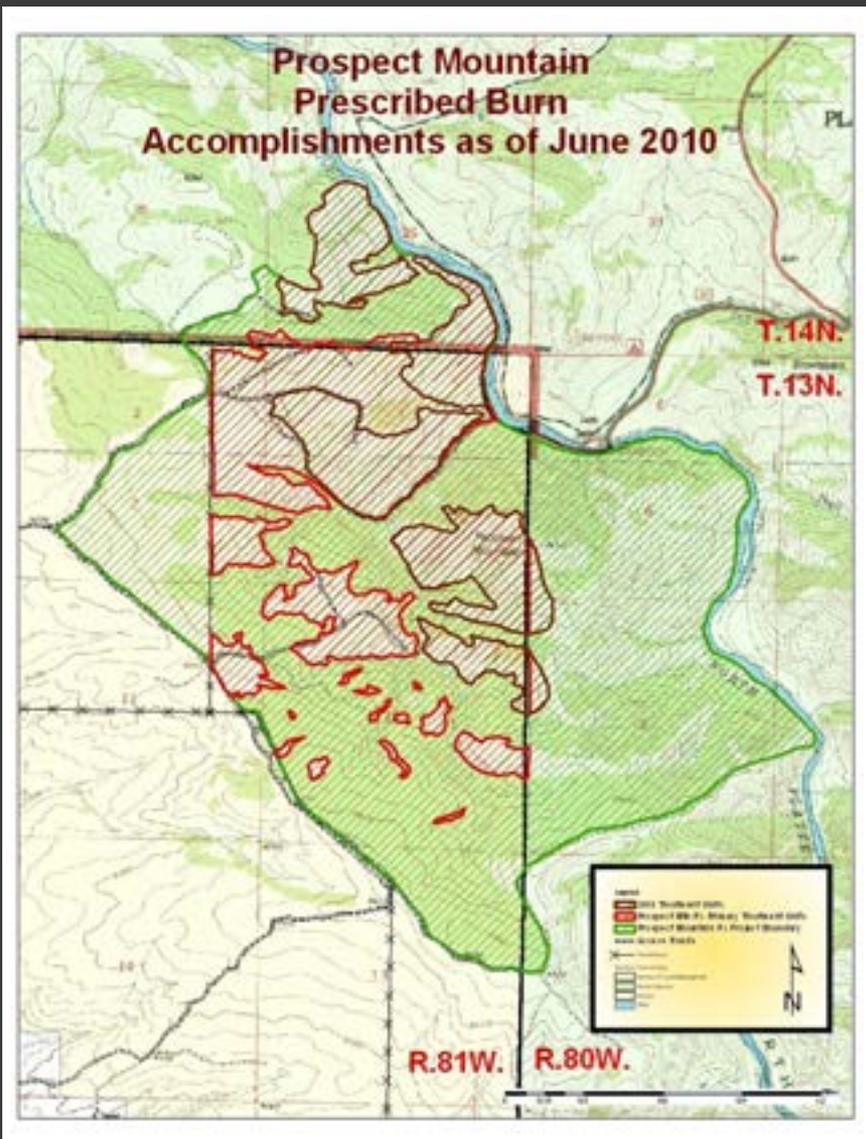
Management Actions:

- Riparian Pasture Fence – 2005
- Willow Plantings – 2005-2011
- Upper Flood Plain Rx Burn – 2007
- Livestock Grazing Rest – 2005 to Present

Platte Valley Projects – Current/Ongoing

- Prospect Rx
 - Mule deer transition
- Weeds
 - Continued Treatments
- Chad Allotment
 - Allotment Infrastructure
- Mechanical Conifer Removal
 - School/Moore's Creeks
- Fence Conversion
 - G&F Mule Deer Collaring Study
 - Prioritize main travel corridors area





Current Accomplishment



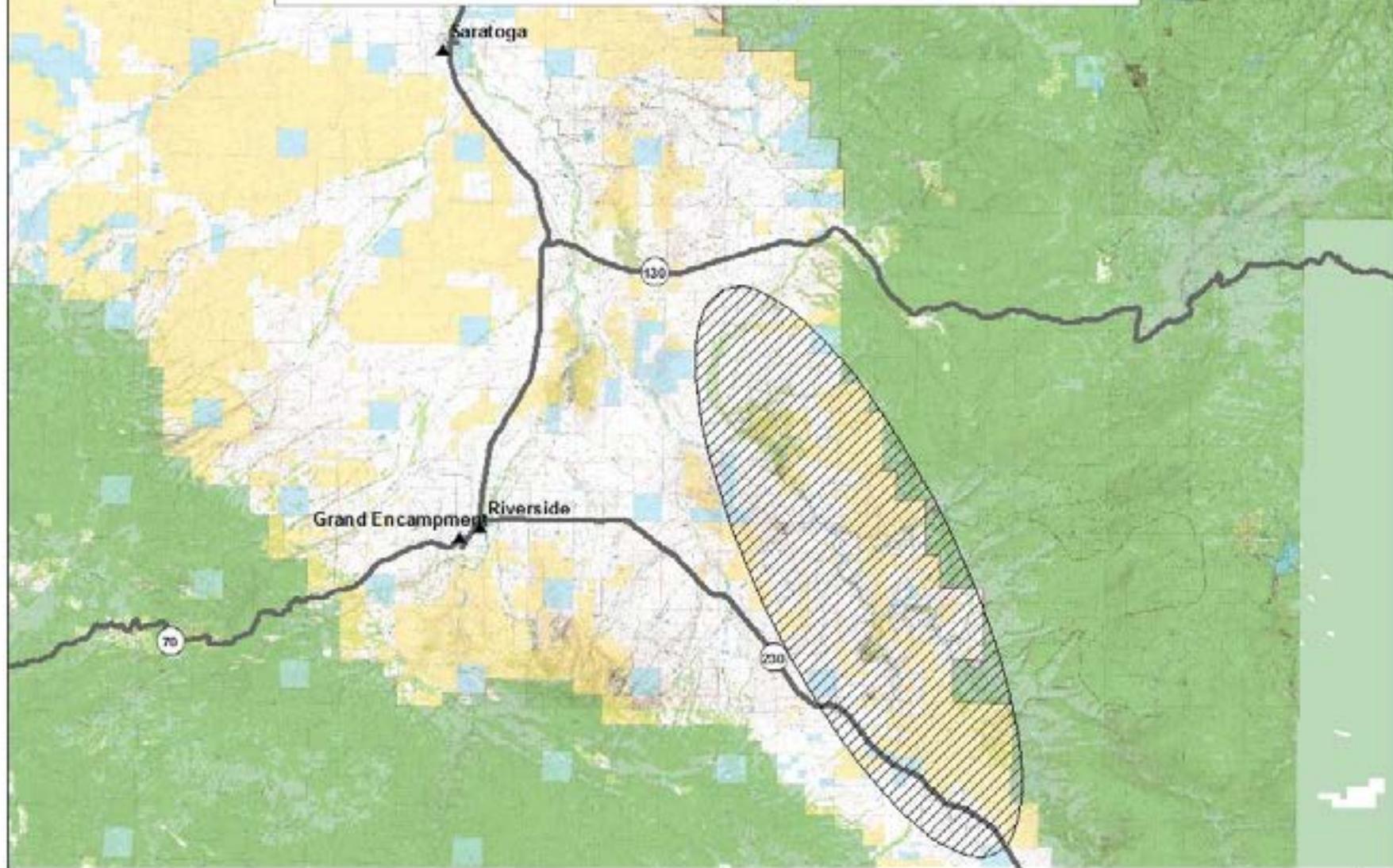
Proposed Additional Acres

Weeds Current:

- Funding – Annual Budget \$50,000.00 (Maintenance)
Leafy spurge, Musk thistle, Spotted/Russian/Diffuse knappweed(s), Houndstongue
- New Species of Concern
 - Perennial pepperweed
 - Oxeye daisy
- Cheatgrass, Yellow toadflax, Canada thistle, Dalmation toadflax....not on the radar....?



**Platte Valley Habitat Partnership
BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Weed Treatments - "Platte Valley" Concentration Area**



All elements provided by the BLM
are to the best of our knowledge
and belief accurate as of the date.

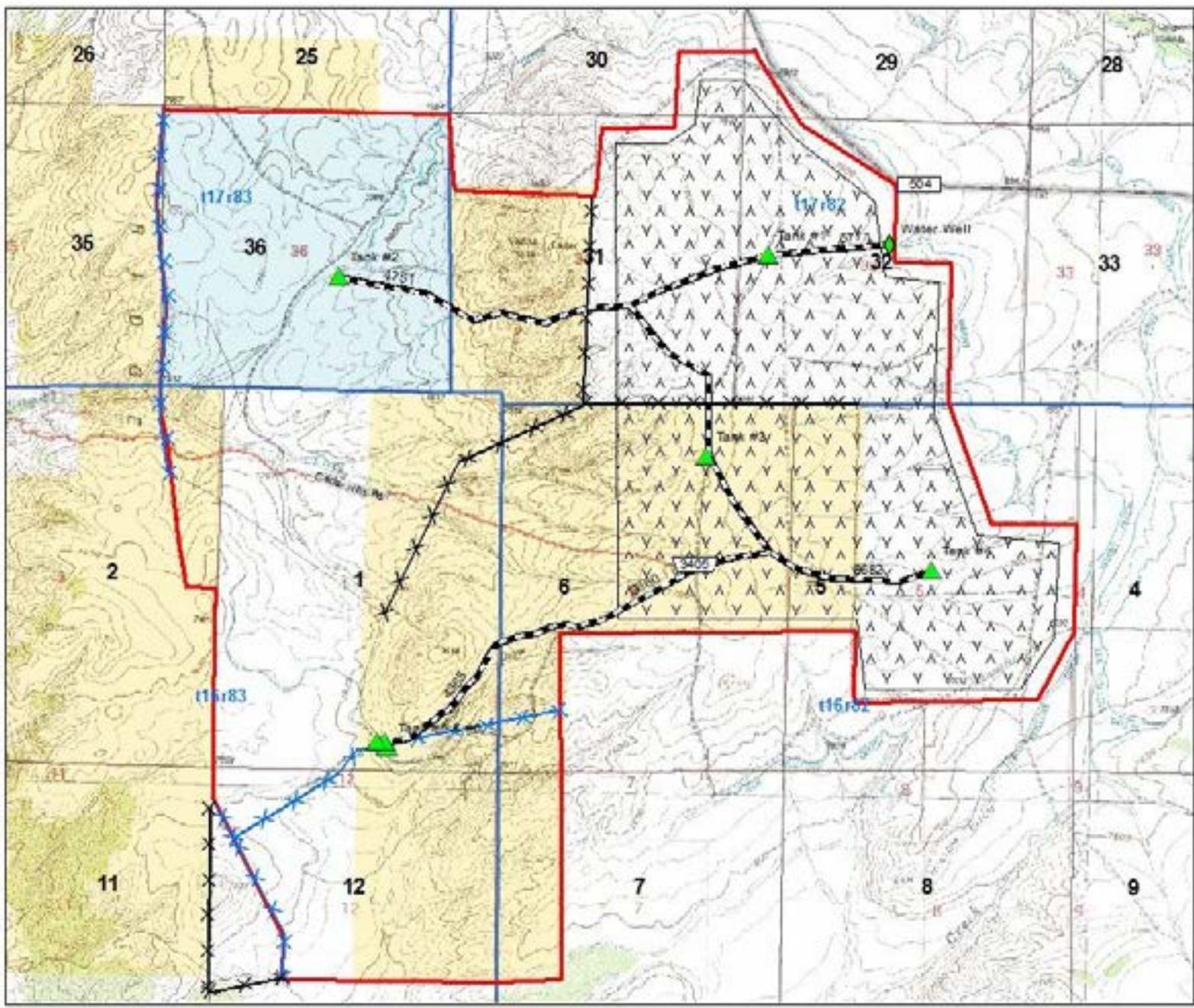


Chad Allotment
Proposed Pasture Fence
FY 2013



Legend

- Tank
- Well
- Fence
- Pasture Boundary
- Water Conduit
- BLM District, Section, Line
- Section
- Mountain
- Water
- Sagebrush Steppe
- Hill
- Bad Land
- Sage Steppe
- Bad Land

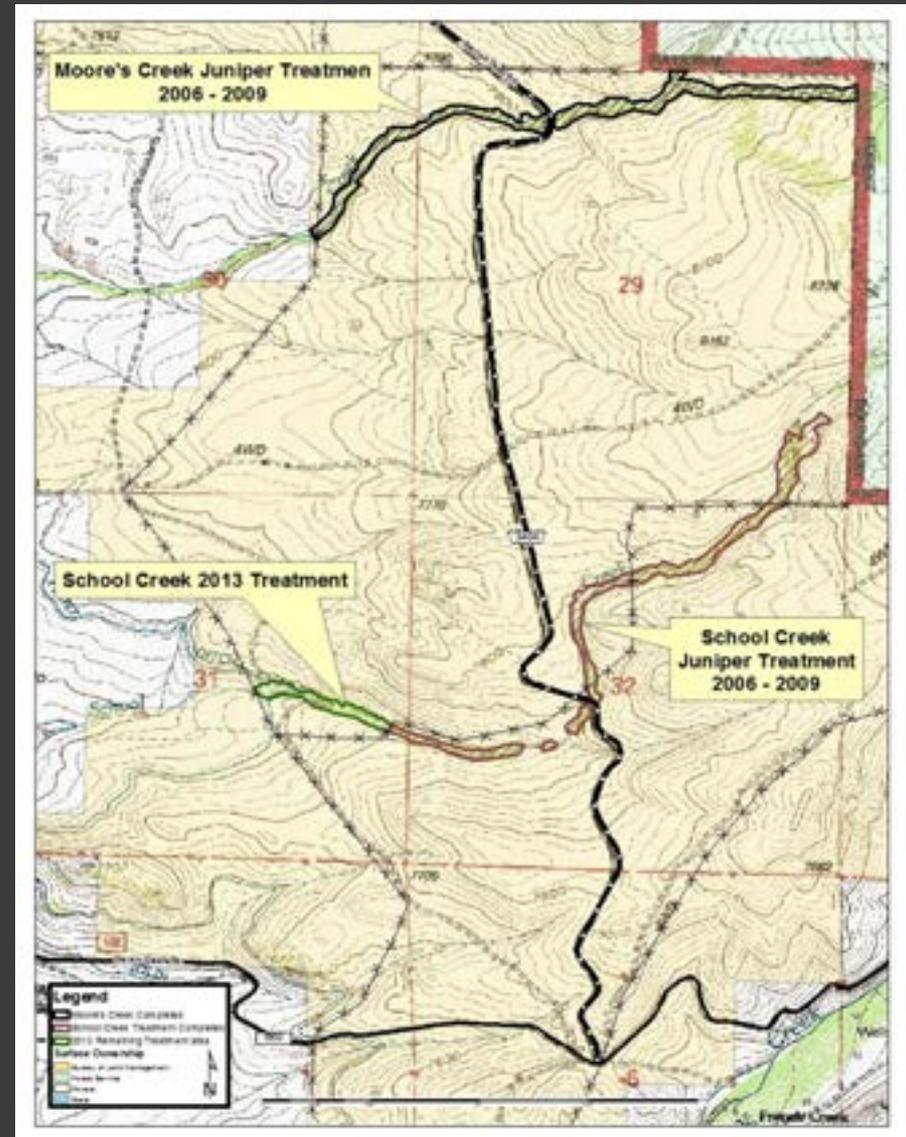


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Platte Valley Projects – Current/Ongoing

Mechanical Treatment:

- School Creek (Conifer Removal)
- Moore's Creek (Conifer Removal)



Platte Valley Projects – Current/Ongoing

Fence Conversion:

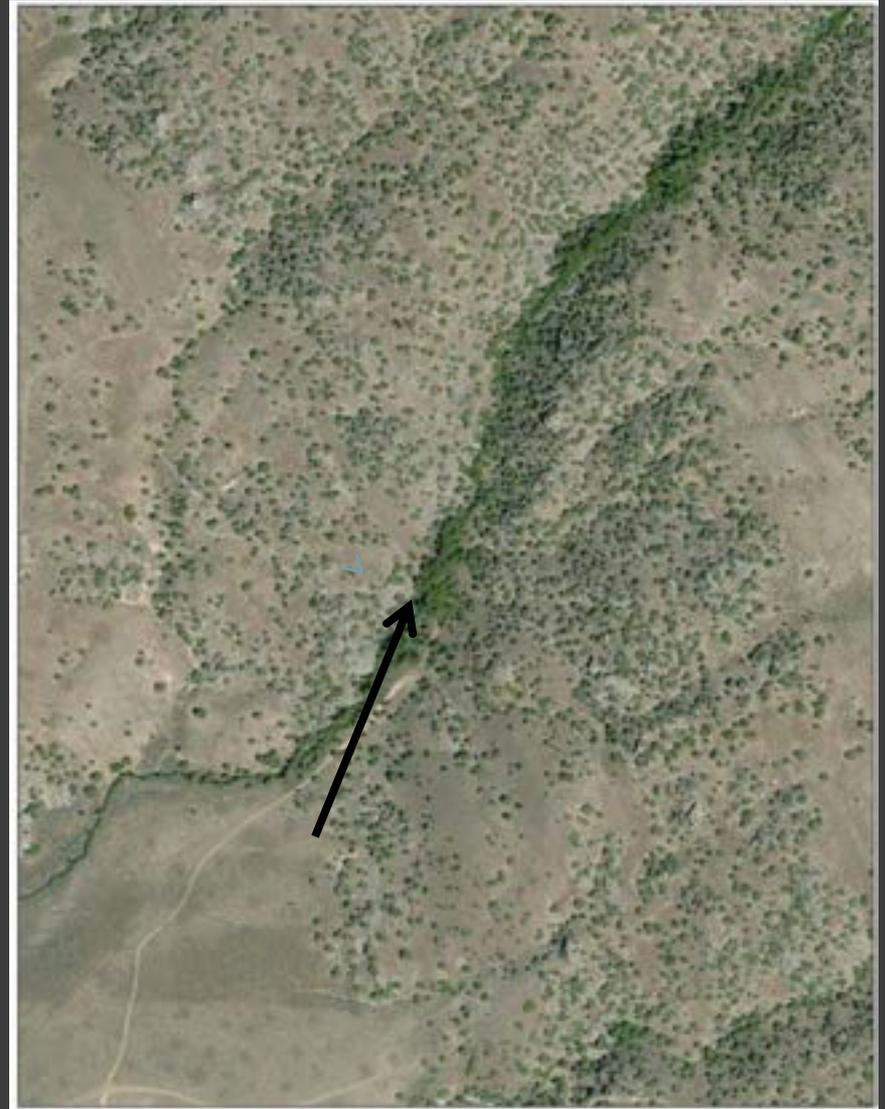
- WY G&F Collaring Study – Identify Primary Travel Corridors
- Continued Funding Support
 - WWNRT, RMEF, WLCI
- Project Type Easy to Identify and Approve on BLM (existing fencelines)
- Multiple Conversions Types: Benefit Wildlife & Restrict Livestock Movement (3 & 4 Wire, Post & Pole/Wire, Buck & Rail, Post & Rail)



Platte Valley Projects – Proposed/Future

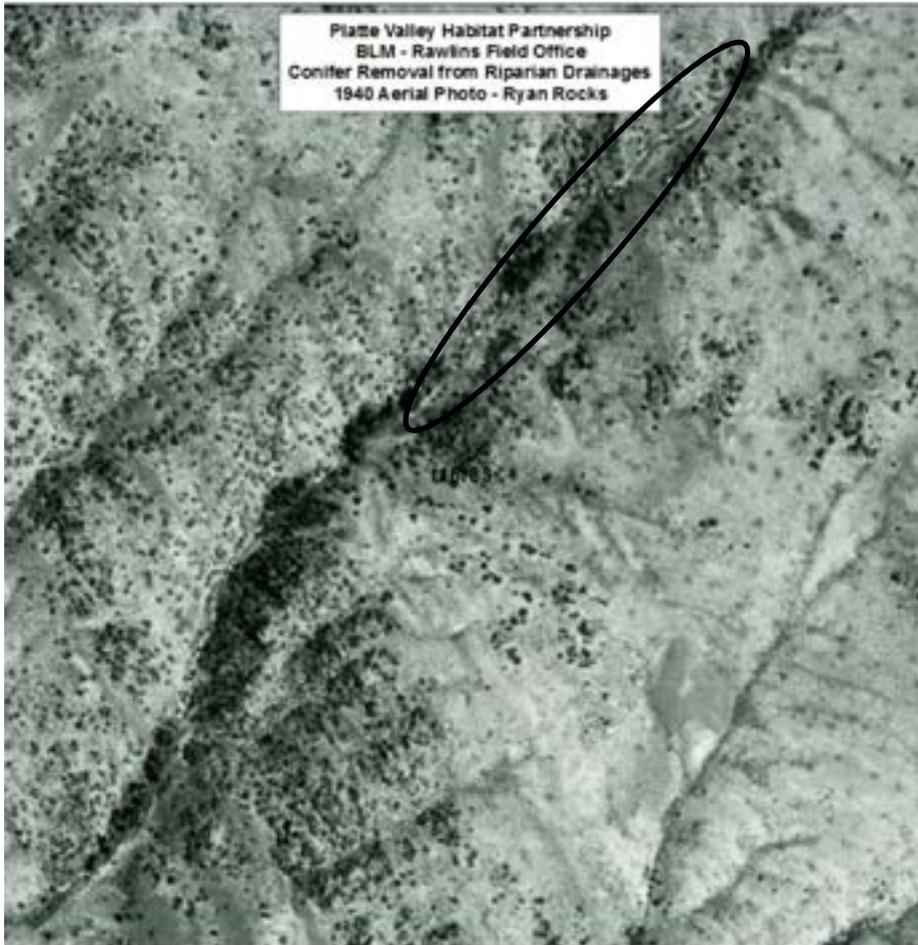
- Mechanical Thinning of Conifers from Riparian Areas
- Methodist Rx Burn (Aspen Regeneration) (BLM/Landowner + USFS?)
- Additional Weeds Treatments
- Travel Management / Seasonal Motorized Restrictions / Antler Collection Pressure
 - BLM and/or G&F
 - Would an antler collecting restriction mitigate current issues?
- Pennock Mountain Unit – Developed Grazing Infrastructure
 - Provide needed flexibility to rest vegetation treatment units.

Conifer Encroached Riparian System
Cedar Ridge Area – Ryan Rock Allotment



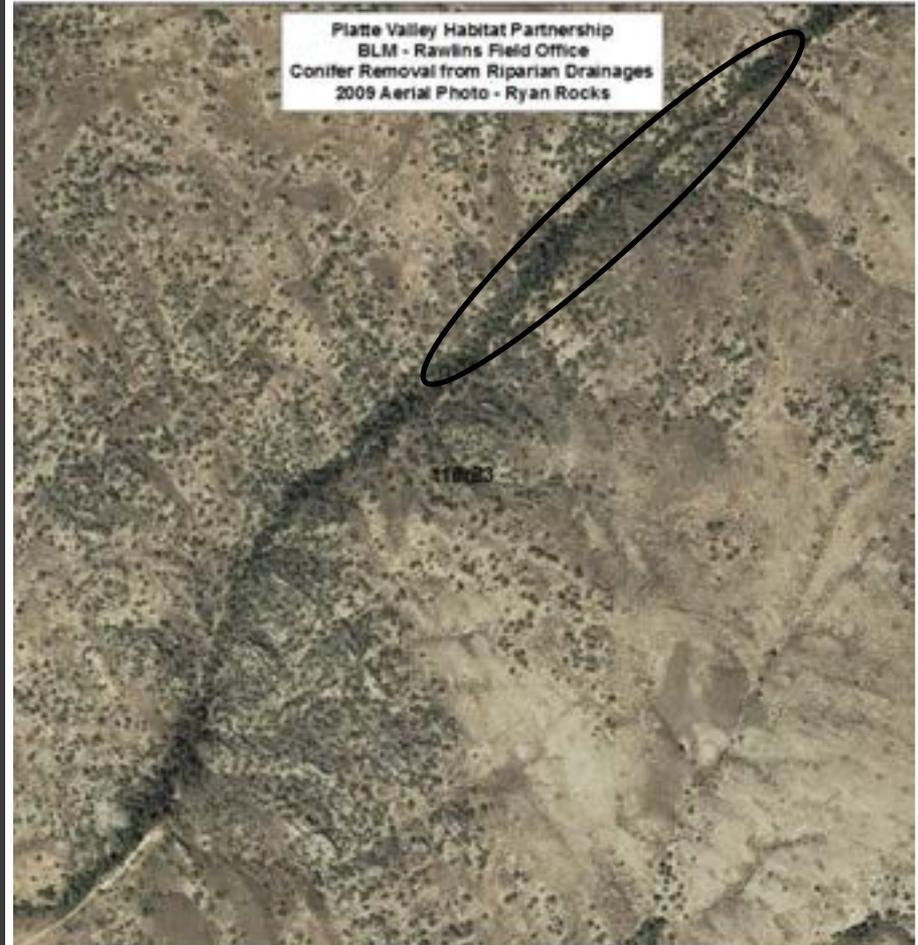
Conifer Encroachment in Riparian Areas: 1940 vs. 2009 Aerial Photography

Platte Valley Habitat Partnership
BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Conifer Removal from Riparian Drainages
1940 Aerial Photo - Ryan Rocks



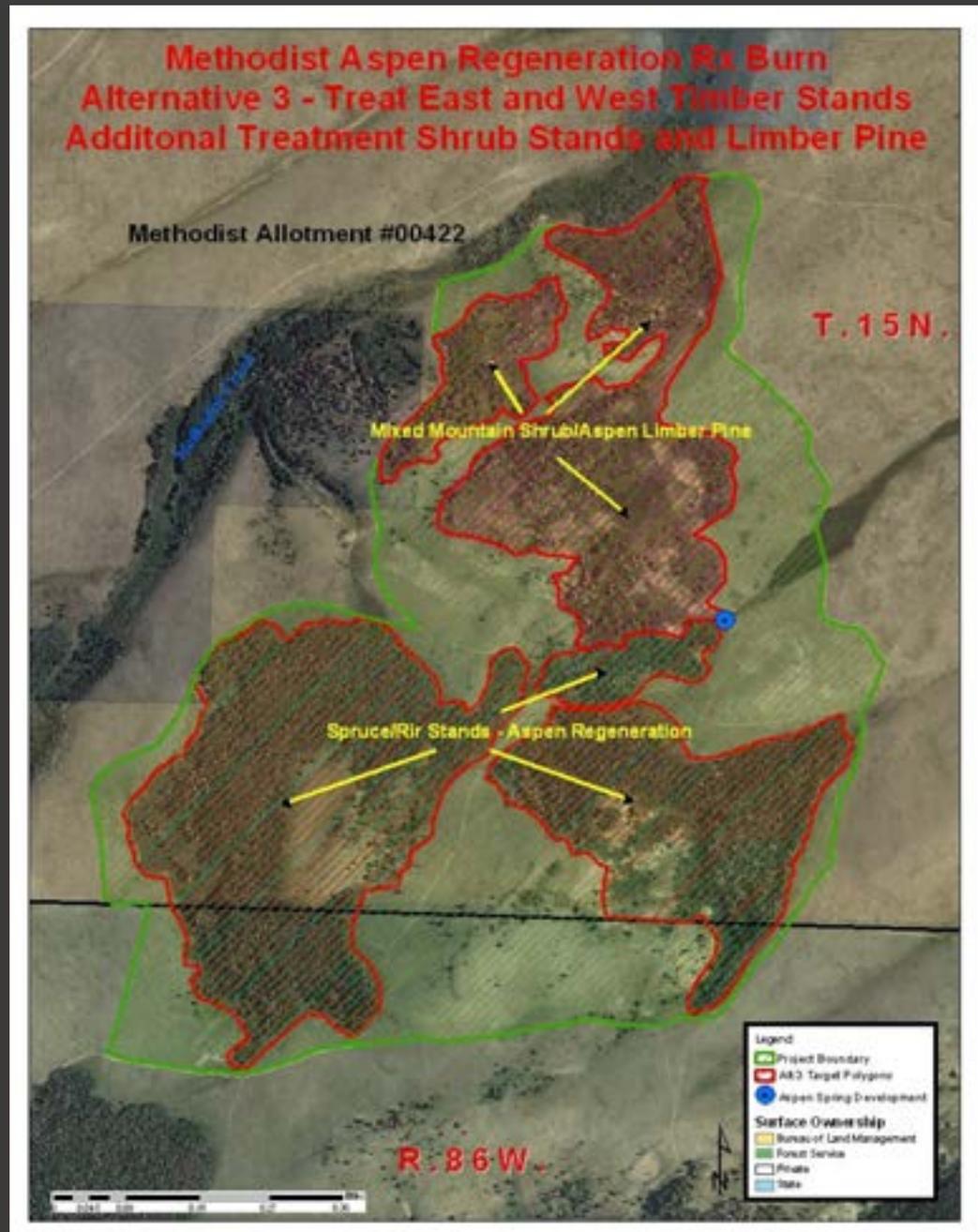
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

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BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Conifer Removal from Riparian Drainages
2009 Aerial Photo - Ryan Rocks



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

Methodist Allotment Aspen Regeneration Rx BLM/Landowner/USFS?

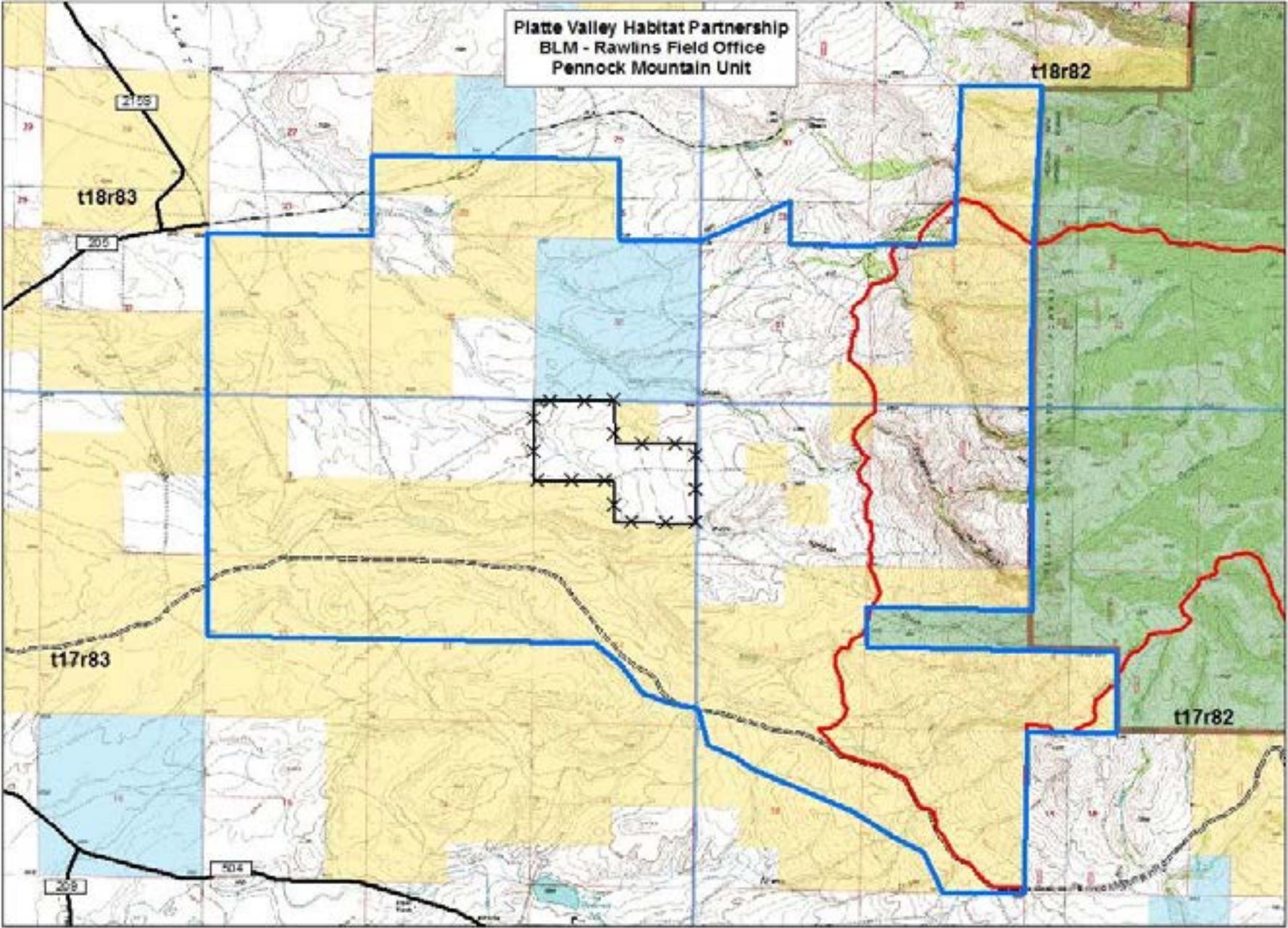


Travel Management / Seasonal Motorized Restrictions / Antler Hunting Pressure



In July, 2009, the Wyoming Legislature enacted a law giving the Wyoming Game and Fish Department the power to regulate the collection of shed antlers and horns in western Wyoming. According to the new law, its purpose is "To regulate and control the collection of shed antlers and horns of big game animals for the purpose of minimizing the harassment or disturbance of big game populations on public lands west of the Continental Divide any time between January 1 through April 30 of each year."

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BLM - Rawlins Field Office
Pennock Mountain Unit



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Future Project Implementation Hurdles

- **Funding**

- Grant Sources, In-Kind, BLM Budgets, NGO's

- **Livestock Operator Management/Flexibility**

- Grazing Rest (i.e. 2 growing seasons post fire)
- Pasture Flexibility (Pennock Unit Grazing Infrastructure?)
- Temporary Fencing (post treatment rest)

- **NEPA, Specialist Requests, Consultation, Clearances**

- Archeology Clearance (i.e. time, workload, soil disturbance)

- **BLM - Project Implementation Timeline**

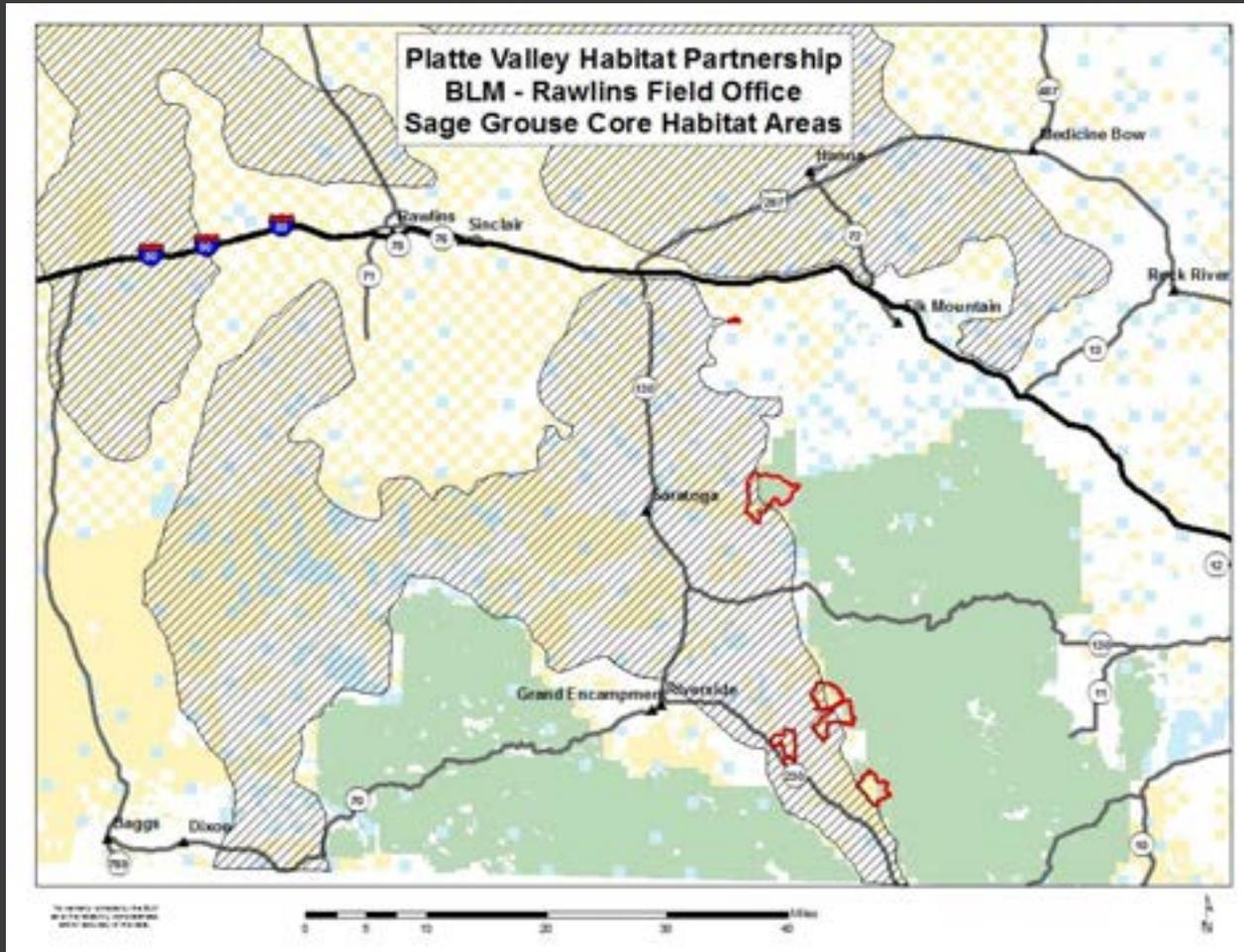
- Other Field Office Projects (i.e. Ferris & Seminoe Mountains)
- Funding/Budget Request Timeline
- Projects 2-3 years out

- **Multiple Use**

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, is the Bureau of Land Management "organic act" that establishes the agency's multiple-use mandate to serve present and future generations.

Future Project Implementation Hurdles

- **Sage Grouse Core Area / Disturbance Restrictions**
 - Mechanical Treatment 60m spacing..... \$ Cost/Acre
 - Restrict Landscape Scale Rx Burning



The End



Questions???