

# BLM Sage-grouse Planning 3.0 Resource Management Plan Amendments

## Draft Idaho Alternative for NEPA Analysis



October 24, 2023



# State Alternative – Basis

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- Uncertainties in BLM process and alternatives
- Proactive stakeholder engagement
- Emphasis on Idaho data
- Balanced Idaho perspective & circumstances
- Governor's Idaho 2021 sage-grouse plan

# BLM Alternatives – Development Process

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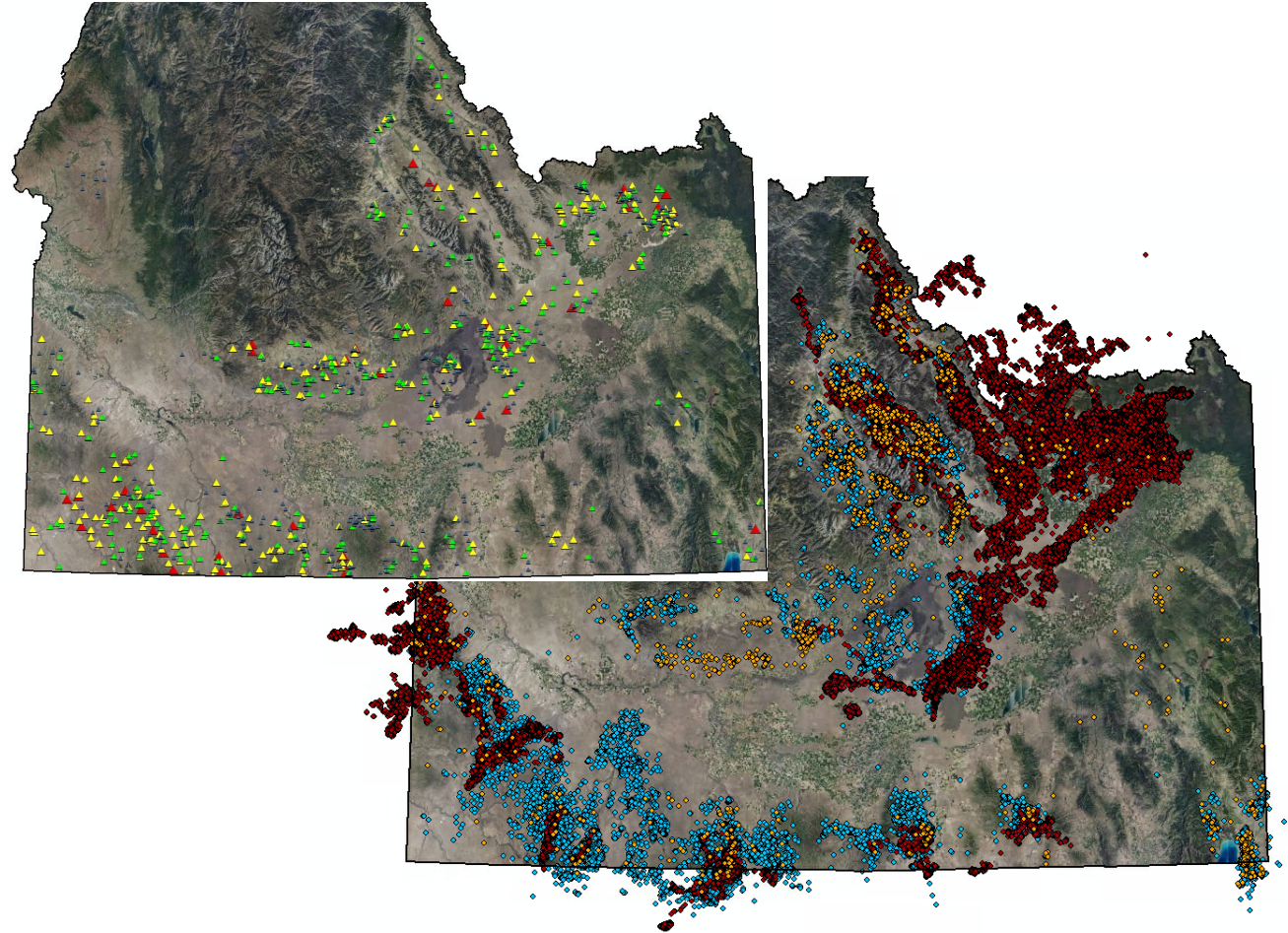
- National
  - WGA Sage-grouse Taskforce
  - BLM Alternatives
    - 1) 2015 amendments – No Action
    - 2) 2019 amendments – No Action
    - 3) Greatest protections
    - 4) Intermediate protections with ACECs
    - 5) State Alternative (Our intent)
- Idaho
  - OSC/IDFG Technical assistance
  - Interagency Sage-grouse Implementation Team & as a Cooperating Agency



# Idaho Alternative – Best Available Data

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- Lek counts
- Telemetry
  - Space use
  - Movements/connectivity
- Habitat models
  - Nesting
  - Late brood-rearing
  - Wintering
  - Sagebrush cover
  - Tree/annual grass cover



# Idaho Alternative – HMAs

## PHMA

- High and medium-high Breeding Bird Density
  - Large areas of intact habitat
    - Medium and high habitat suitability
    - High sagebrush cover
    - Low tree cover
    - Low annual herbaceous cover
  - Important connectivity and seasonal habitat, especially winter
  - Lack of disturbance (e.g., invasives, wildfire, anthropogenic features)
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## IHMA

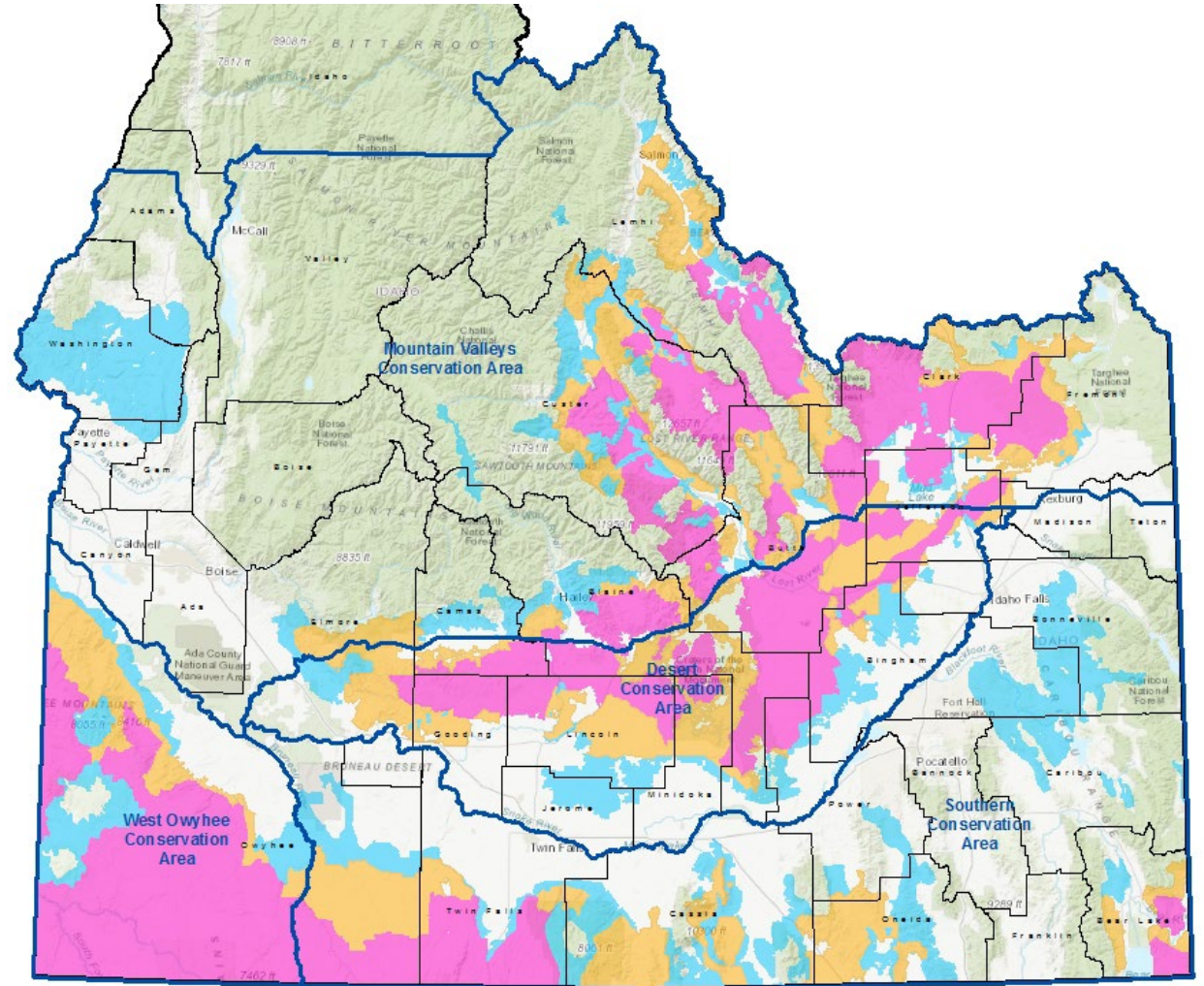
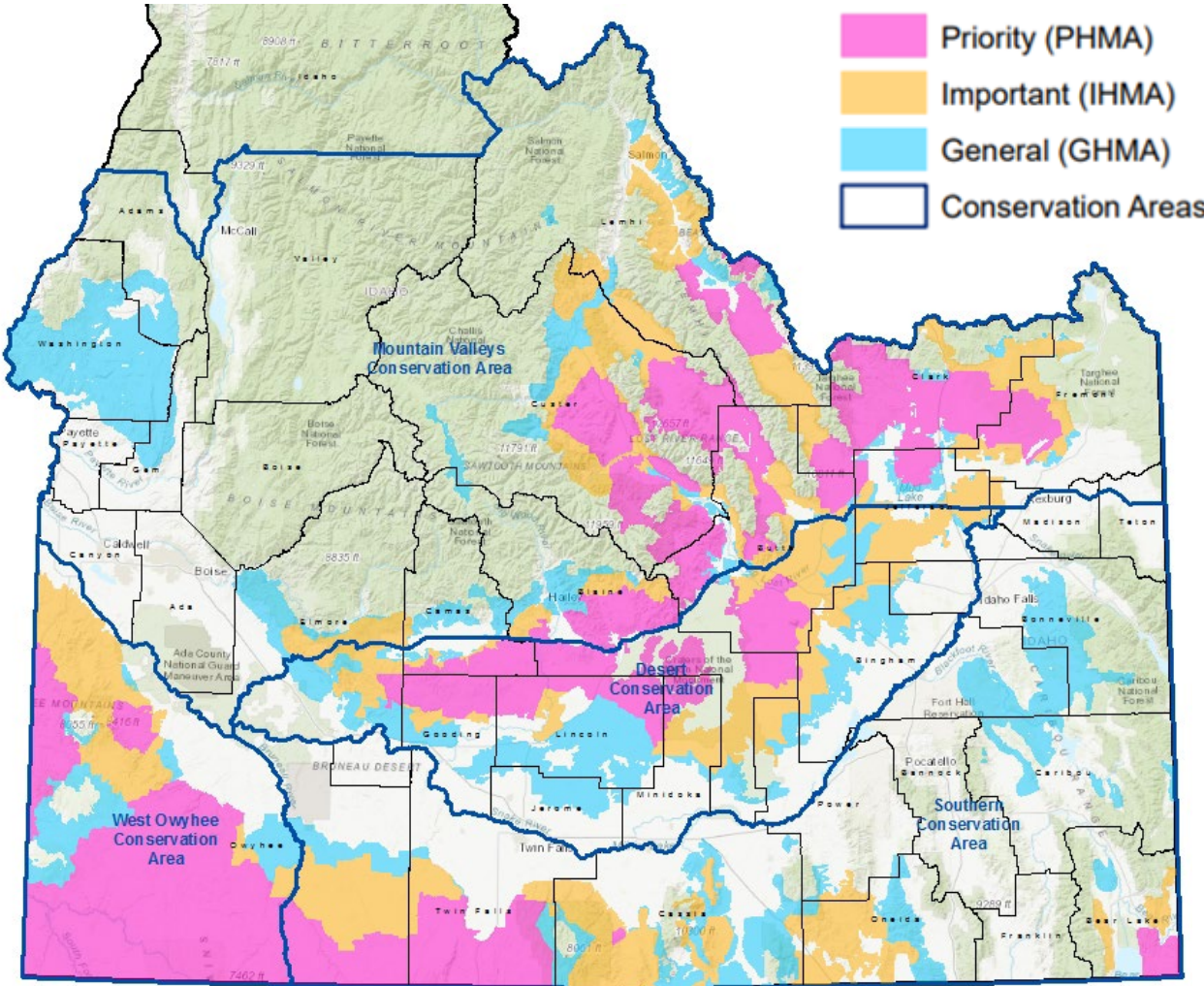
- Connects and buffers PHMA
  - Slightly lower habitat quality and/or more fragmented
  - Lower Breeding Bird Densities
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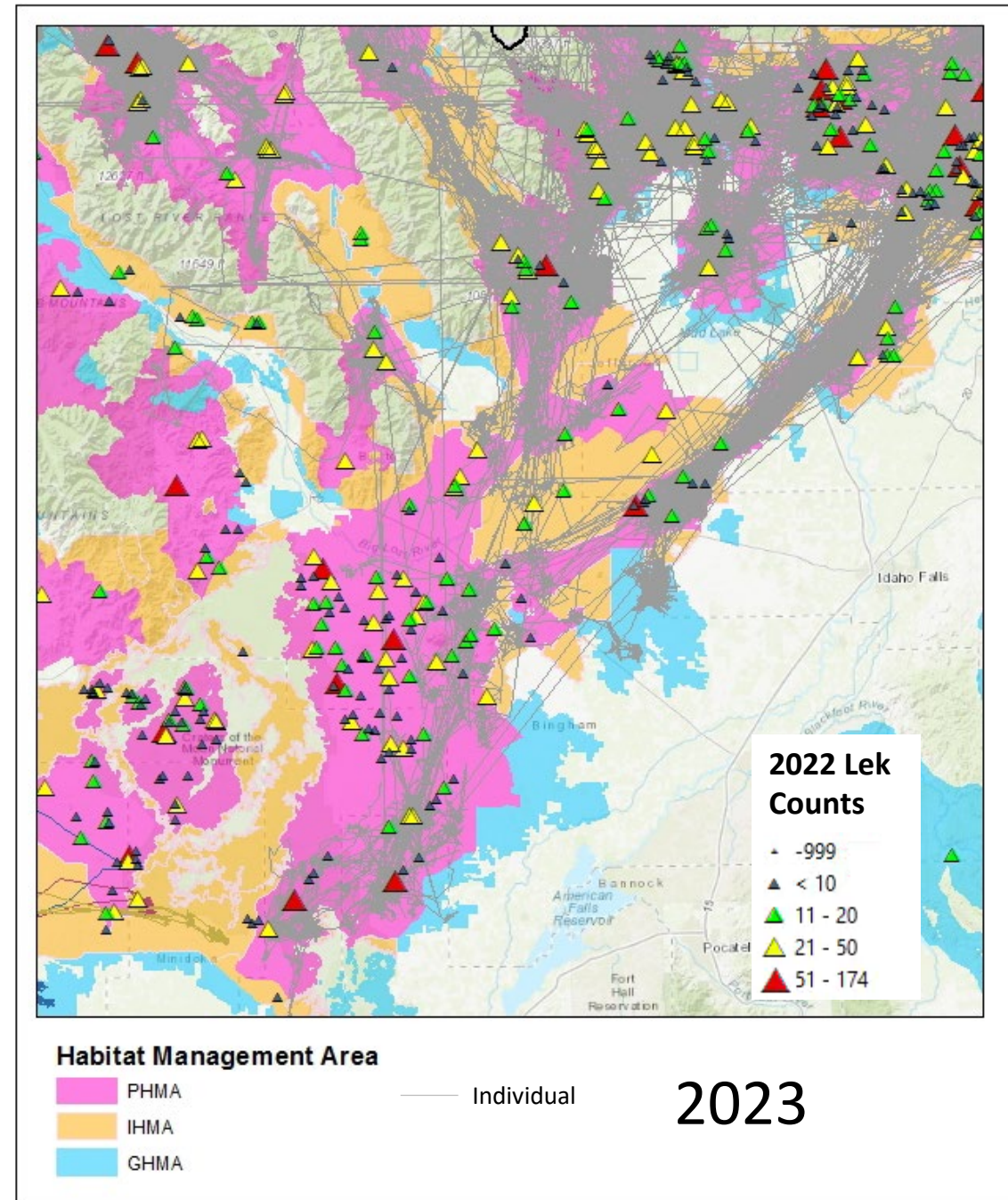
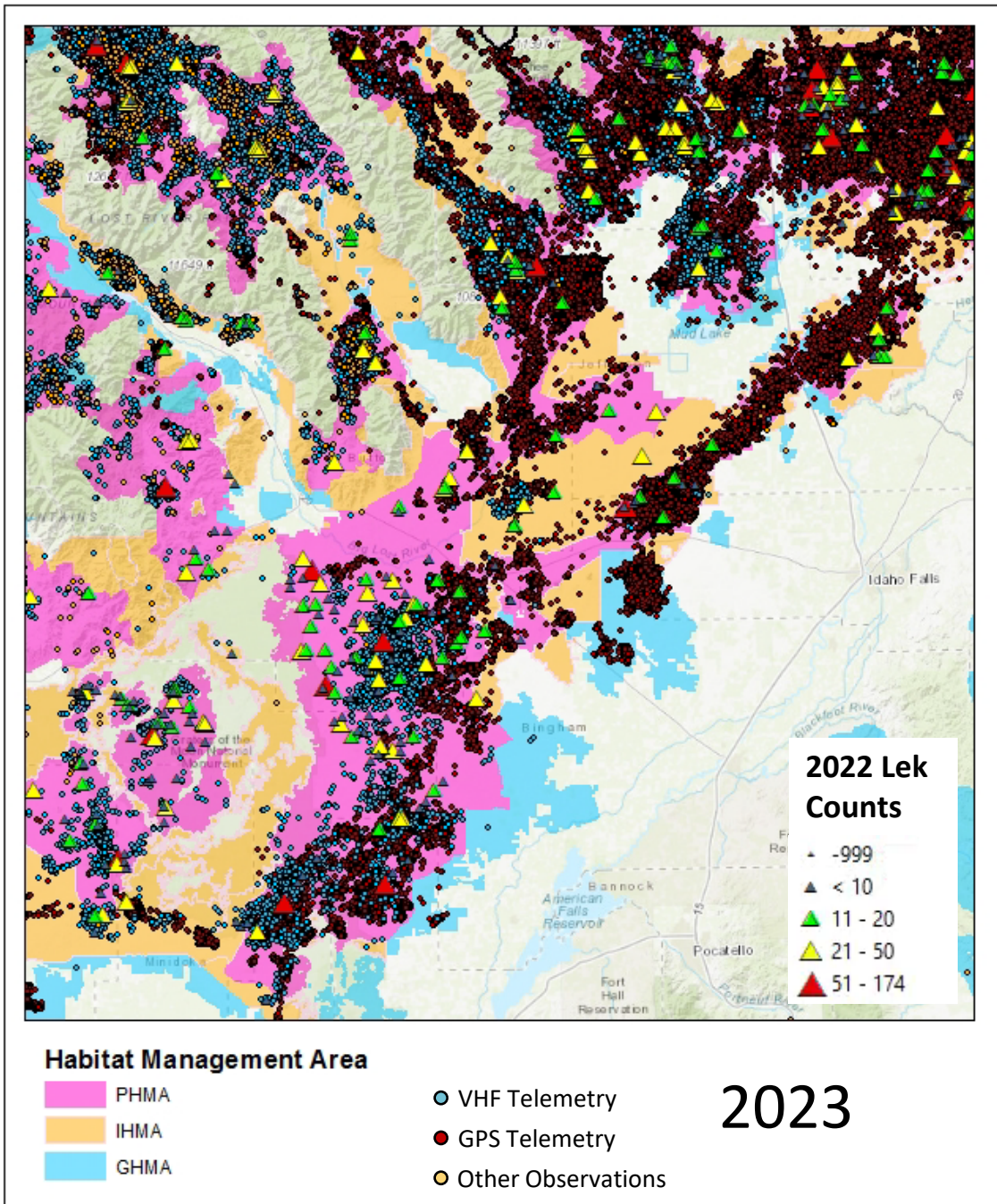
## GHMA

- Lowest habitat quality
- Lowest Breeding Bird Densities

# 2015

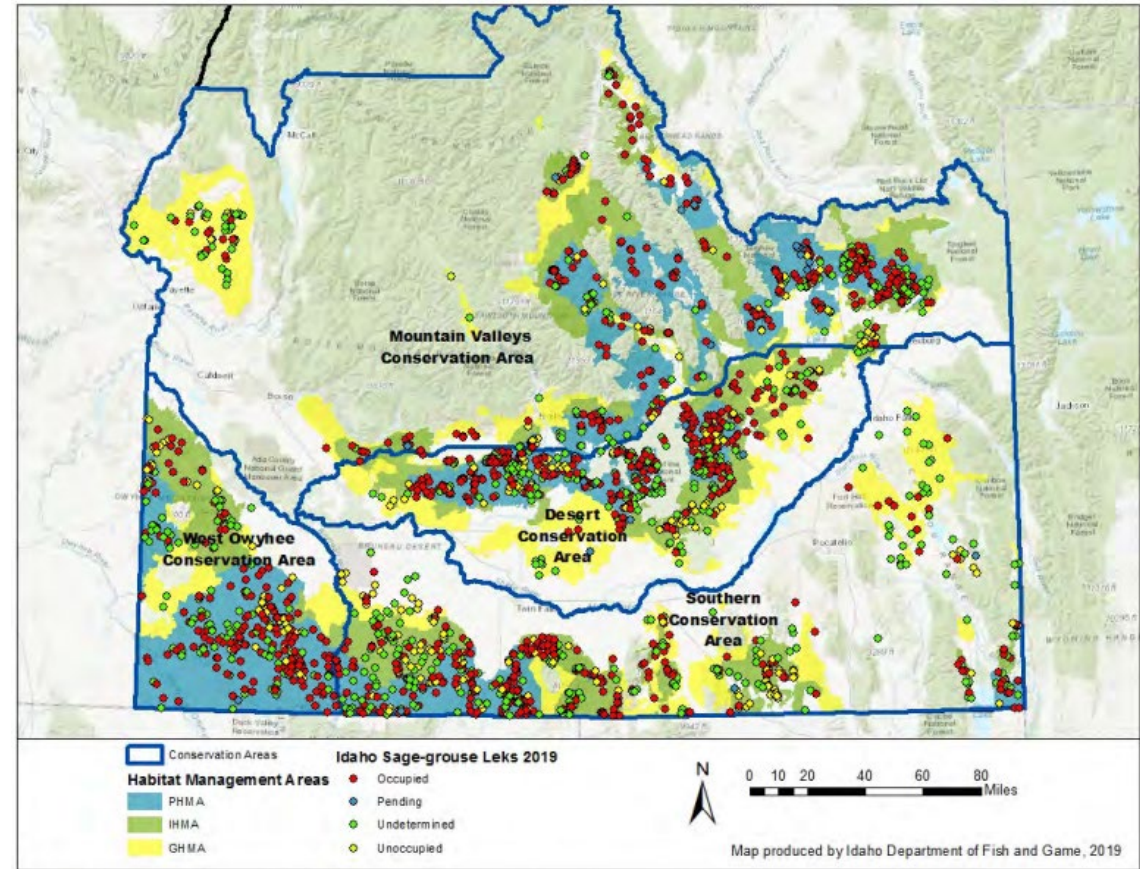
# 2023





# Idaho Alternative – Stakeholder Input

- 2023 HMA map
  - Increase mapping precision
  - Remove non-habitat
  - Acknowledged telemetry data
  - Questioned models and professional judgement
  - Apply site-specific local knowledge



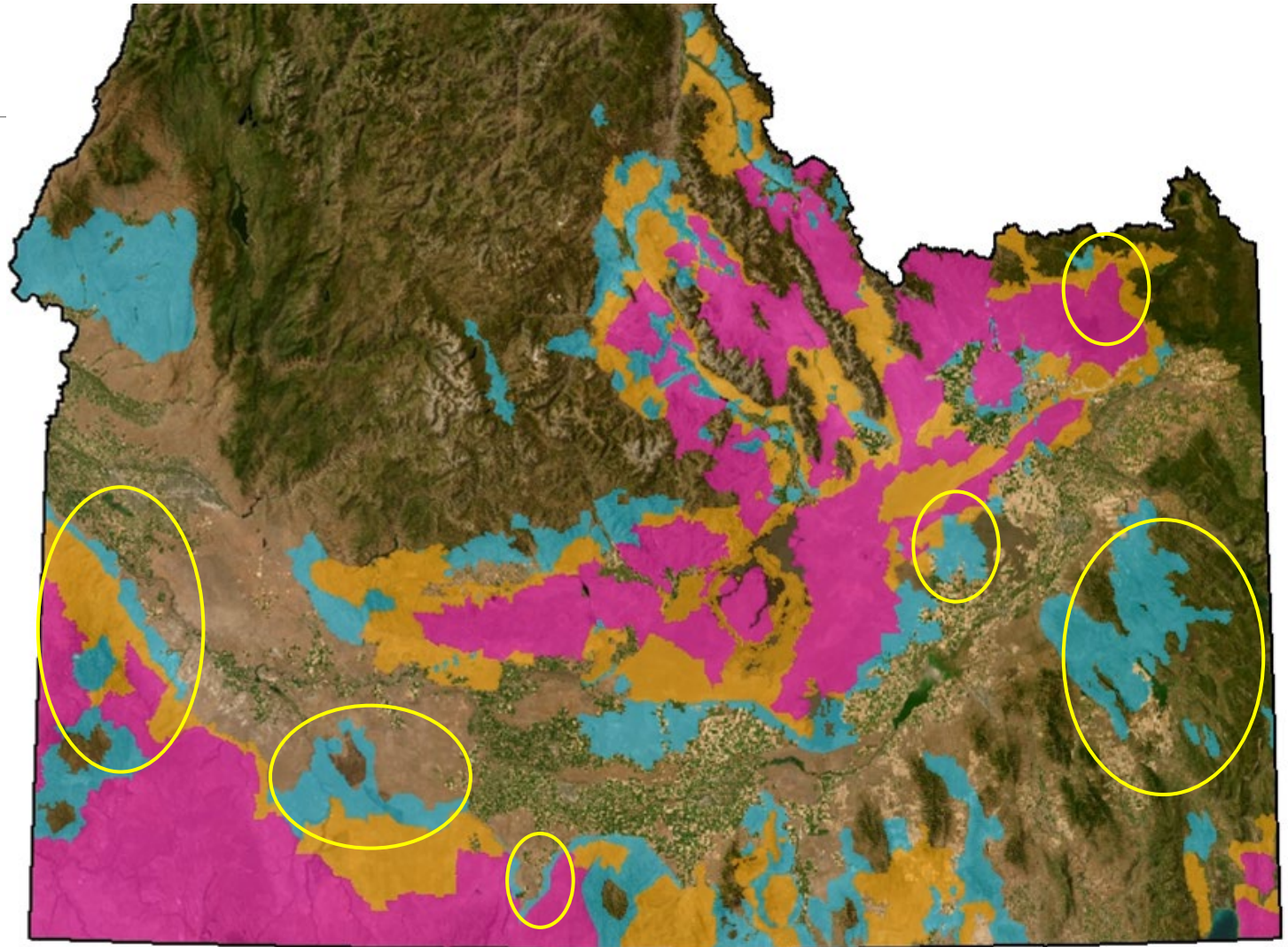
- 2021 Idaho Plan

Figure 1. Idaho's Sage-Grouse Management Area



# Stakeholder Input – 2023 HMA Map

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- Owyhee Front
  - Saylor Creek
  - Rogerson V
  - Twin Buttes
  - East Idaho Uplands
  - Shotgun Valley



# Idaho Plan – Key Recommendations

- Increase trigger precision with Fine Scale Areas
- Retain No disturbance caps
- Continue tiered buffers approach
- Adopt WAFWA lek definitions
- Emphasize grazing should not be affected if meeting health standards
- Add BLM should discuss predation with FWS, APHIS and State if a causal factor
- Acknowledge utility maintenance access/activity needs
- Continue basing HMAs on best available data for existing conditions