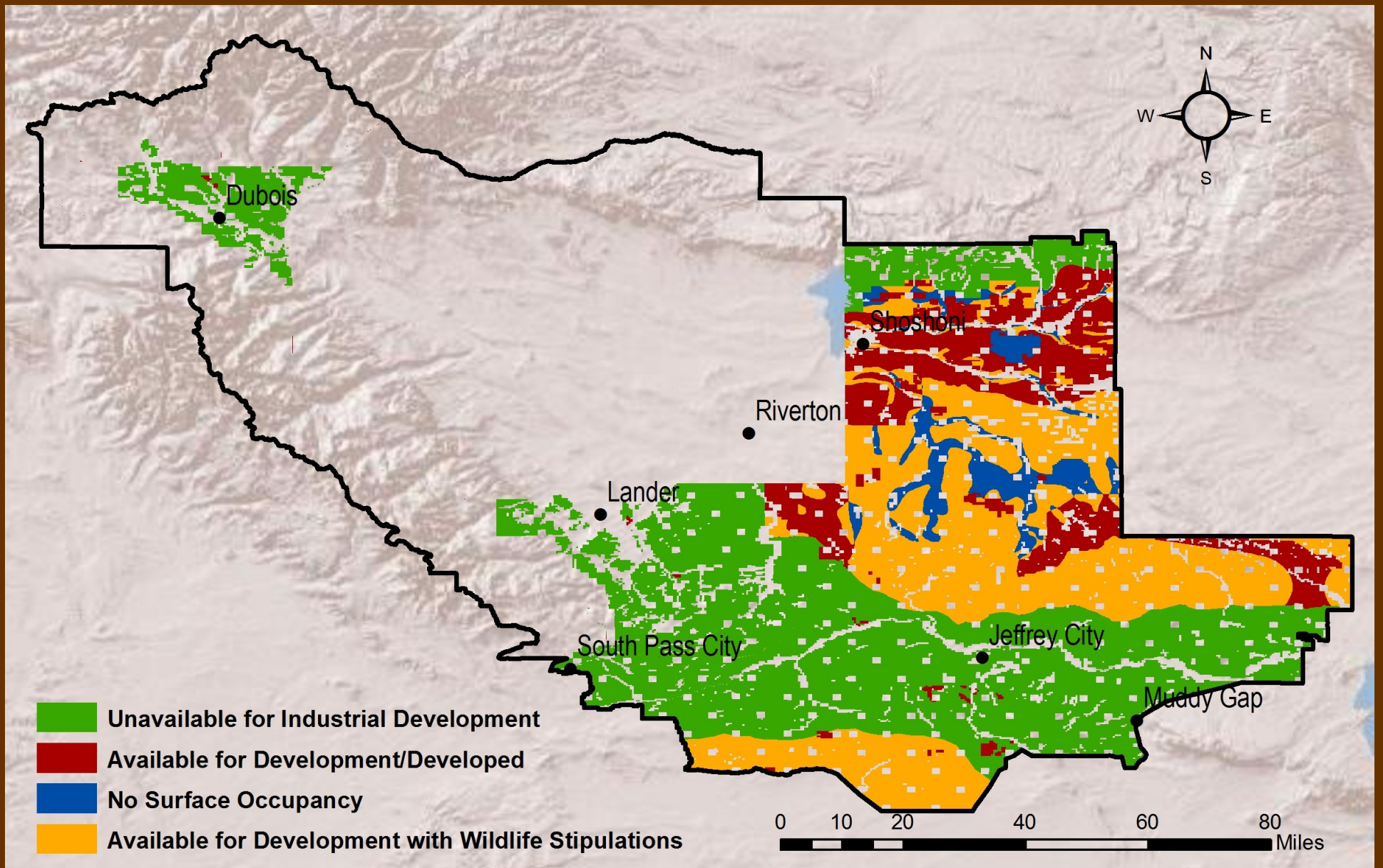
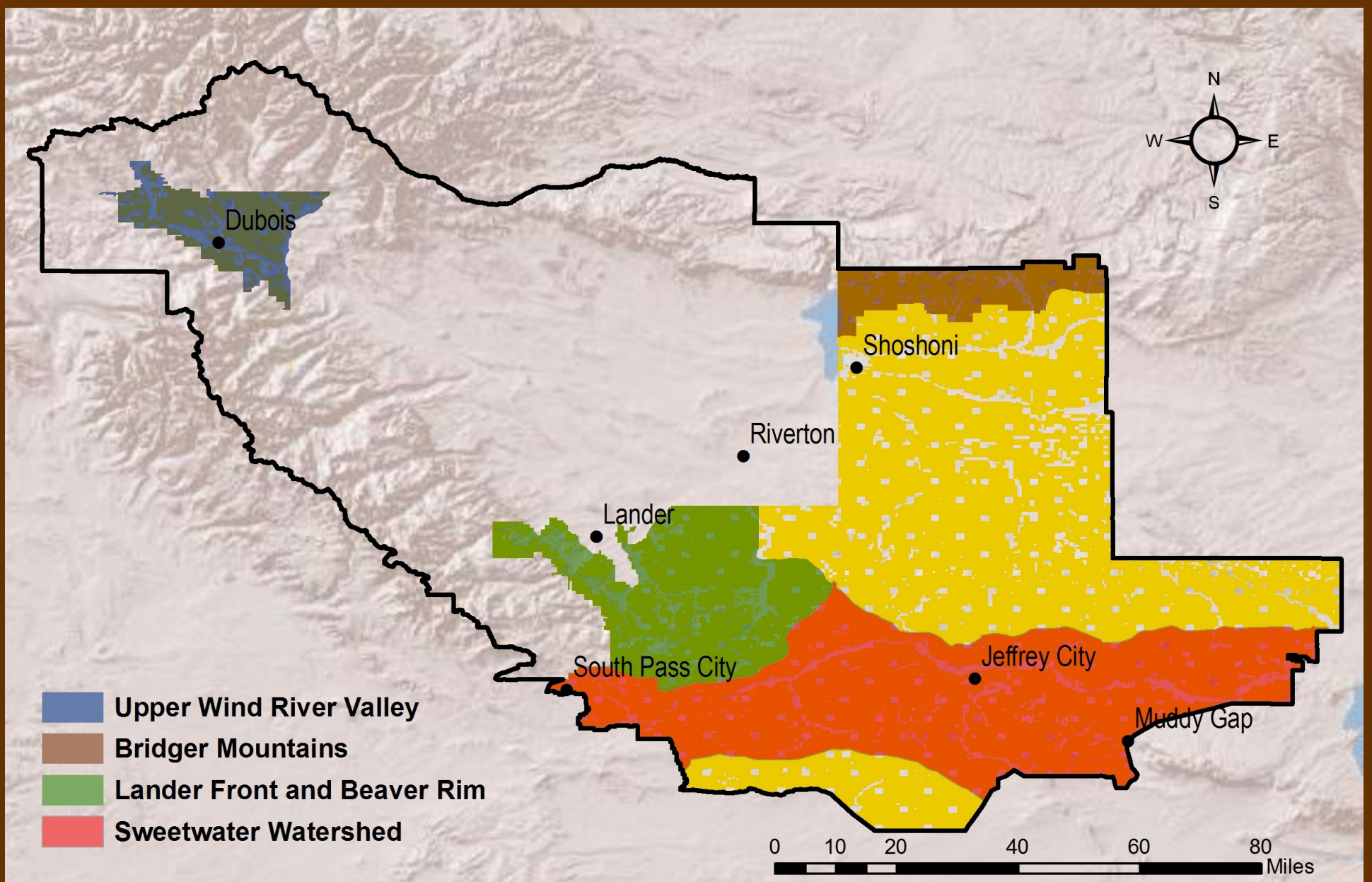


# BLM's Lander Resource Management Plan

## Balancing Conservation and Development



## Special Landscapes that Deserve Protection



**BLM lands in the Lander Field Office** contain some of America's finest wildlife habitats, intact historic trails, dramatic open spaces, and wildlands. An array of landforms give rise to salt deserts, sagebrush steppe, native grasslands, shrublands, juniper woodlands, aspen stands, cottonwood and willow riparian corridors, and evergreen forests—nearly every habitat type found in Wyoming can be found in this field office. These habitats support mule deer, elk, pronghorn, moose, beaver, prairie dogs, golden eagles, bald eagles, and many other wild creatures, including large predators such as grizzly bears and wolves. One of the best known wild herds of bighorn sheep relies on some of these BLM lands. The southern por-



Chris Merrill

tion of the Lander Field Office is home to one of the world's best remaining sanctuaries for the greater sage-grouse. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service described this area in 2010 as one of the two most important "remaining areas of contiguous range essential for the long-term persistence of the species."

Every year, thousands of visitors from across the nation travel to the Sweetwater Watershed to celebrate and commemorate 19th century pioneer journeys along the Oregon, Mormon, and California trails. Hikers can enjoy the unique high desert portions of the Continental Divide Scenic Trail on their way through the Red Desert. The historic and recreational trails in the Lander Field Office are nationally recognized and are some of Wyoming's finest contributions to the National Landscape Conservation System—a system that the Department of Interior has prioritized for special management.



Scott Copeland

This proposal envisions a balance between energy development and the protection of wildlife and special places. With so much of Wyoming already dedicated and available to energy development, we believe the BLM, through the Lander RMP, can and should ensure protection of some of Wyoming's most extraordinary, open, wild, and undeveloped landscapes. Even if the BLM were to ensure the protection of these treasured landscapes, a significant portion of the Lander Field Office—an area with oil, gas, uranium, and wind resources—could remain available for development. This is the very definition of balance. Towns such as Lander and Dubois have been growing even during the recent economic downturn because of their diversified economies that rely in part on

the natural and recreational values that draw tourists and new residents. Providing protection to the landscapes that surround these towns and draw tourists, hunters and anglers, and outdoors enthusiasts to the region will not prevent economic development; in fact it would help to bolster continued diverse economic growth.

### **A Balanced Approach for Jobs, Wildlife, and Open Spaces**

With this proposal we ask the BLM to protect four remarkable landscapes within the Lander Field Office. These landscapes—the Upper Wind River Valley, the Bridger Mountains, the Sweetwater Watershed, and the Lander Front—each have unique and priceless resources that are incompatible with industrial development and should be protected for current and future generations. We ask that these four areas, 51 percent of the BLM managed federal mineral estate within the Lander Field Office, be made administratively unavailable for industrial development throughout the life of the revised Lander RMP. The remaining 49 percent of the federal mineral estate in the field office—an area with oil, gas, uranium, and wind—would remain available for development. Because relatively few conflicts occur in the areas we propose for protection, the BLM can protect sensitive natural, historic, and recreational resources while also allowing the development of energy resources to help satisfy national energy needs.

### **The Lander Field Office**

- A sanctuary for the greater sage-grouse.
- The Oregon, Mormon, and California National Historic trails draw visitors from across the nation.
- Rare species such as wolves, grizzly bears, and peregrine falcons continue to roam some of these BLM lands.
- Hikers experience the high desert as they pass through this area on the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail.
- Thousands of bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and moose range across these public lands throughout the year.
- A balance between energy development and conservation will maintain natural and recreational values and will continue to support diversified local economies.