Mountain Plover Project Screen
(*2003 Working DRAFT*)

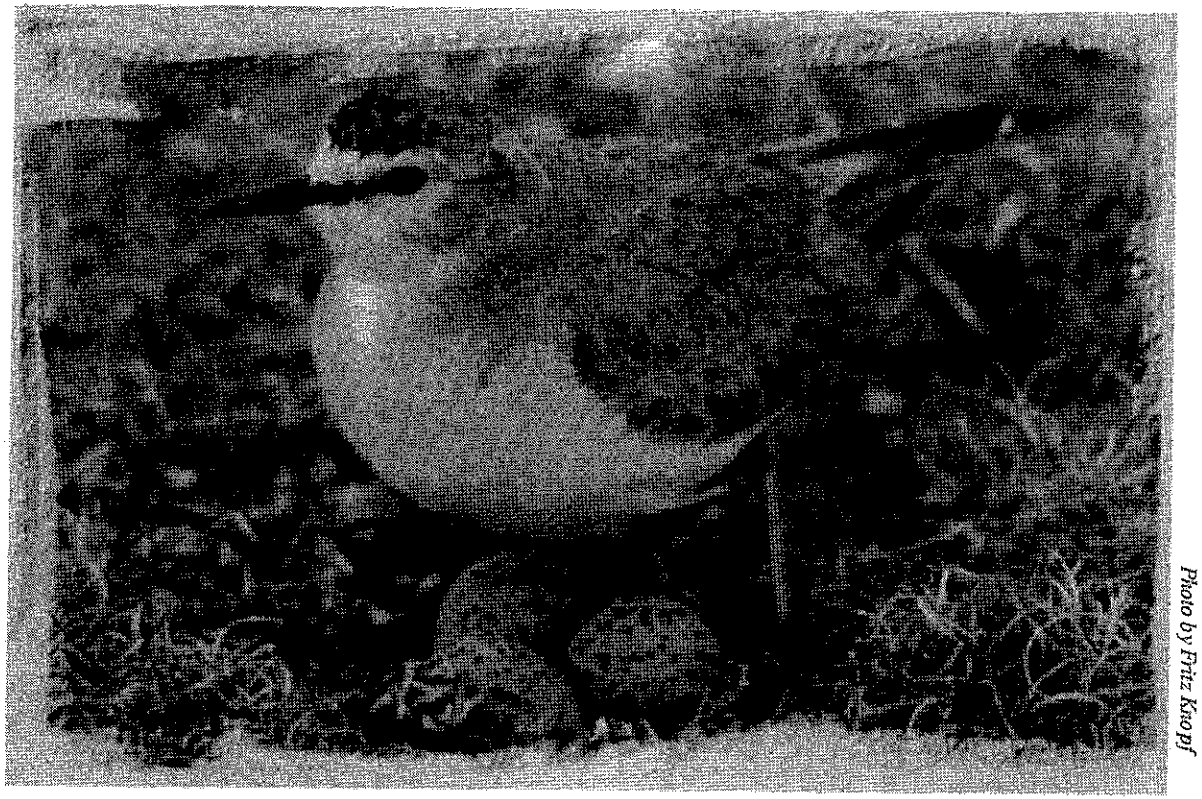

Photo by Fritz Knopf

- US Forest Service Region 2
- US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
- Bureau of Land Management CO, NE, WY

MOUNTAIN PLOVER SCREEN
Explanatory Notes

The mountain plover screen was developed as though the species was listed under the ESA. The effects determinations for activities contained here are based on a "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" threshold, but identified as Not Likely to Jeopardize (NLJ) in the screen to be consistent with the plover's "proposed" status (not yet listed).

To determine when a project/action occurs "within or adjacent to mountain plover habitat" for the purposes of using this screen, the answer should be "No" to ALL of the following questions: 1) Will the activity occur in areas with dense vegetative cover (>30% herb or shrub cover)?, 2) Are trees present within ¼ mile of the project area?, and 3) Is the topography rolling (>5% slope) or broken (cliffs, escarpments, etc.)?

All components of an action must be run through the screen to ensure that the effects of the 'entire' action is evaluated.

Since Access applies to all programs in this screen, personnel must first use the Access screen to determine if the effects of the nature of the Access for that action meets the criteria of the screen for NLJ or No Effect. If the Access does not meet the screen, the entire activity must go through normal conferencing procedures. If a NLJ or NE determination IS made for the Access portion of the activity, the action must still continue through the program-specific screen (Recreation, Range Management, Roads & Road Maintenance, Energy Development, or National Fire Plan) to assess effects of all other components of that action on the plover.

Although the activity may fall outside the screen for Access (cannot get to a NLJ or NE box), there is value to complete the program-specific screen and understand how the other components of the activity fit the screen, or how the activity could be adjusted to address the effects raised in the screen and expedite project implementation.

The mountain plover breeding season is defined as April 10 through July 10.

OMPS means the activity is 'Outside the Mountain Plover Screen,' either due to insufficient information or meaning information on effects is insufficient or effects may be and will require normal conference process.

All arrows in the decision trees are 1-way direction only.

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ACCESS
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

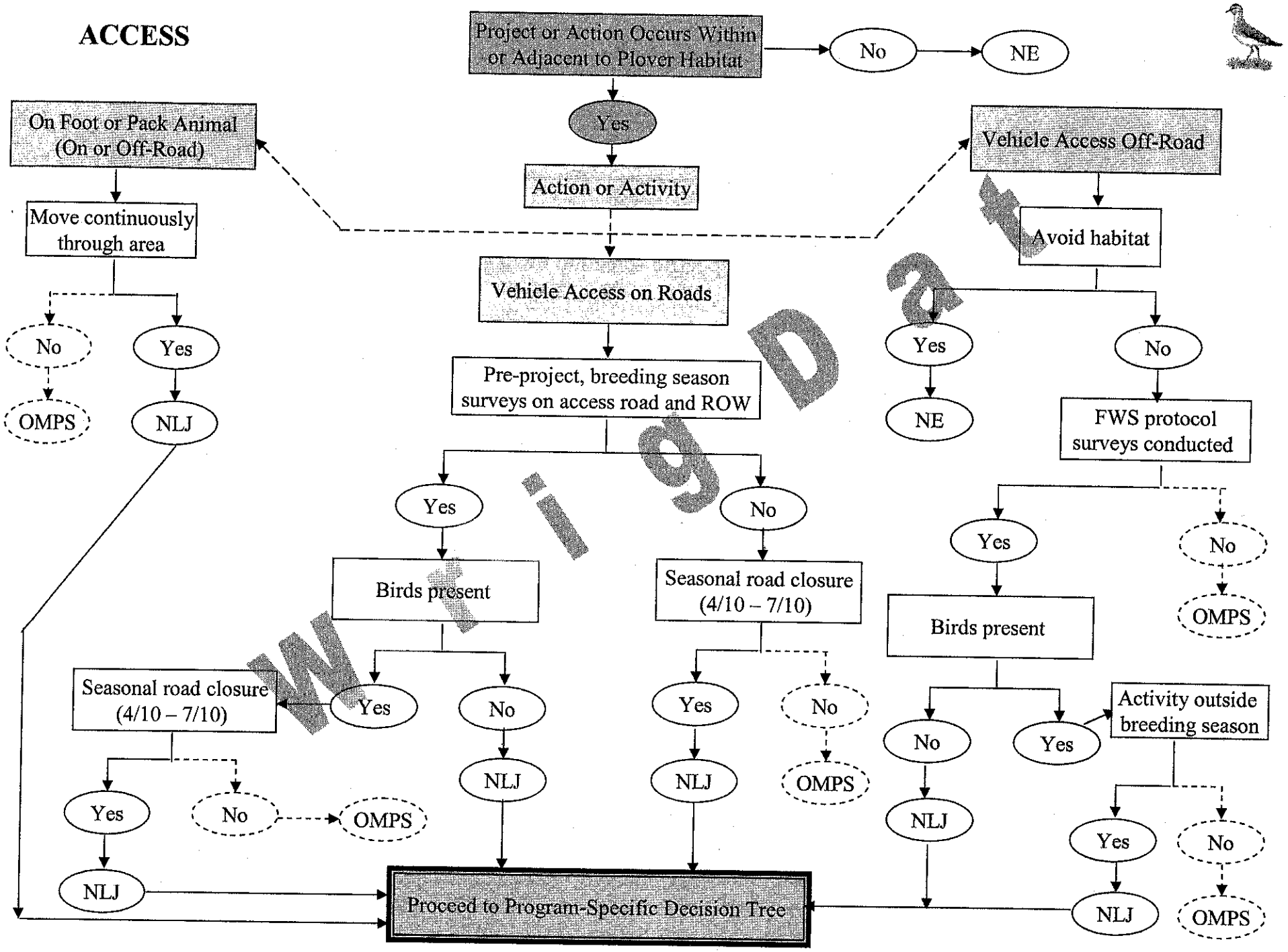
The activity should be run through this screen first. If the determination is NLJ for access concerns, the activity needs to then be run through the program-specific screen to evaluate the 'non-access' components of the project.

Access refers to new activities and structures, or activities outside normal use patterns.

Pre-project road surveys are expected to follow the FWS protocol to the extent they apply to conducting surveys only on roads and their Rights Of Way.

Working Draft

ACCESS



Working Draft

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

Activities under this program should first be run through the Access screen before proceeding here.

"Other construction" activities include: Road construction; Central Delivery Point (POD building for CBM, central tank battery site, injection site, trailer site, pipe yards, compressor sites); Reservoir for CBM water; Installation of pivot irrigation, misters, atomizers for CBM water; Stacking drilling equipment in habitat; Gravel pit development.

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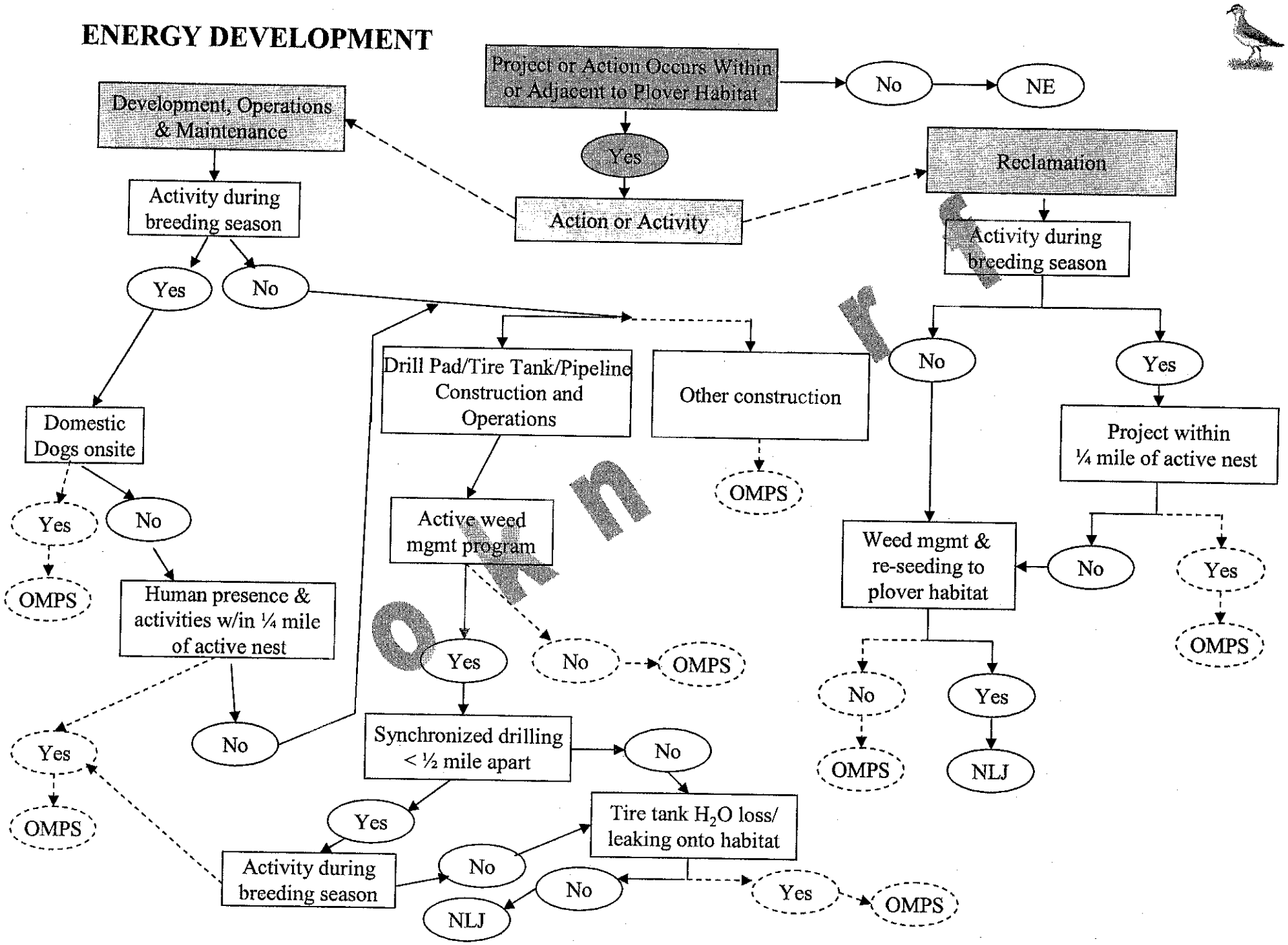
ENERGY DEVELOPMENT



RANGE MANAGEMENT
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

Activities under this program should first be run through the Access screen before proceeding here.

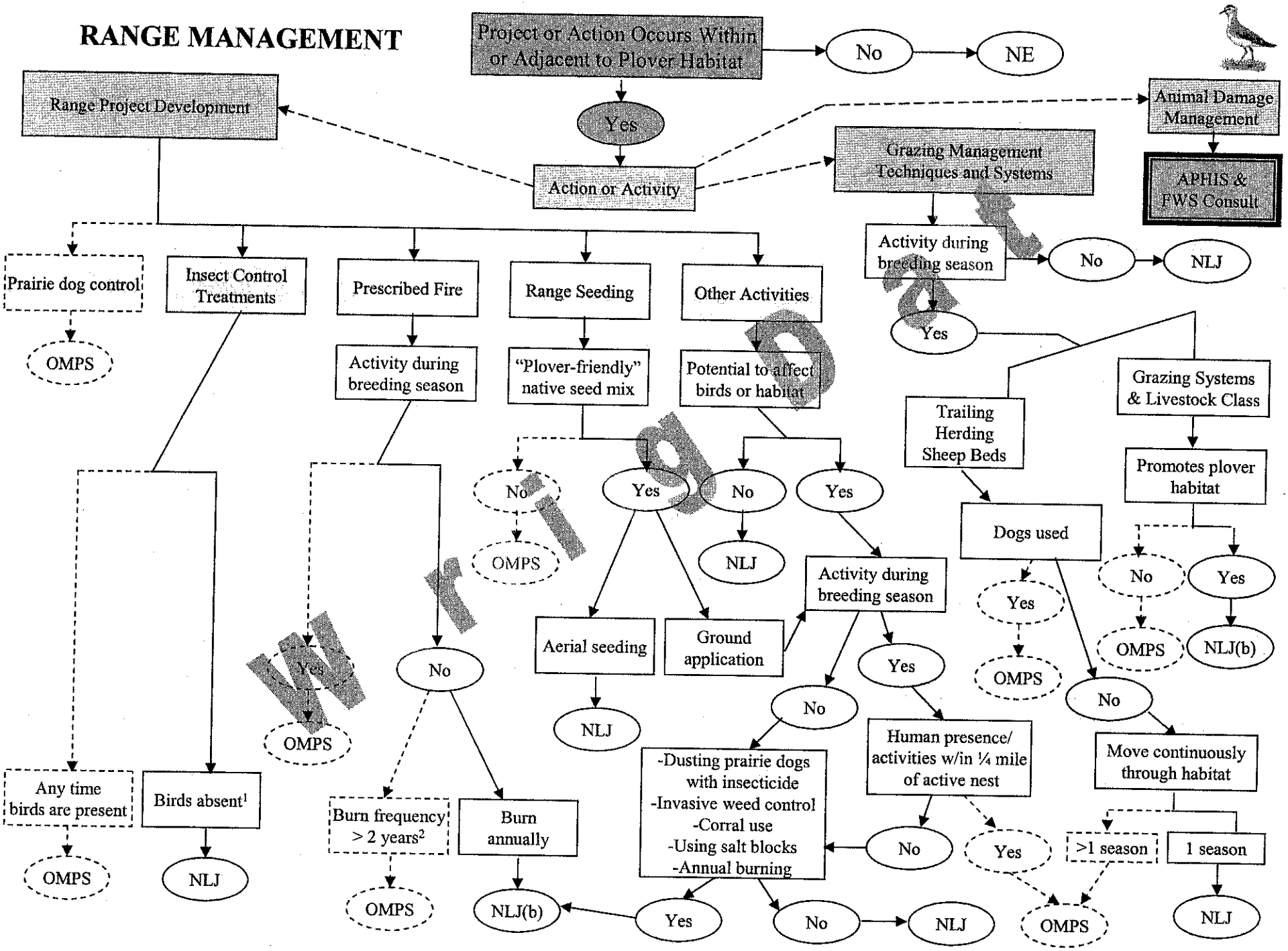
"Other" activities include all of the following and their associated component activities: Water development construction, (water pipelines, springs, storage tanks & watering troughs, guzzlers, pits, reservoirs, wells, temporary water tanks and water hauling); Fence construction, enclosures/exclosures, reconstruction, and maintenance (electric fence, woven wire, barbed wire, buck & pole, post & pole, let-down, etc.); Rangeland restoration; Post-fire rehabilitation; Chemical, mechanical, cultural and biological weed control; Construction of temporary and permanent corrals; Placement of salt/supplemental feed by cross country travel or on existing roads or trails by foot, horseback, vehicles; Use of salt blocks and supplemental feed by livestock, wild horses and wildlife; Road maintenance, vegetation rehabilitation, and all other range management road maintenance.

[1]Plovers have either not returned for the year or have migrated out of the area after completion of breeding and fledging periods.

[2]Burning results in short-term removal of vegetation which is assumed to be beneficial to plovers. However, burning will also stimulate vegetation growth and could be detrimental to plovers if burning is infrequent or discontinued.

NLJ(b) = Not Likely to Jeopardize and in fact is expected be "beneficial" to the mountain plover.

RANGE MANAGEMENT



RECREATION
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

Activities under this program should first be run through the Access screen before proceeding here.

[1]Trail construction/maintenance assumed to not occur in plover habitat.

[2]"Other Non-Dispersed Activities" generally refers to concentrated (in time and place) gatherings of 2 or more people. These and related activities include Hunting - Prairie Dogs and other "varmints"; Target Shooting/Practice; Archery (competitive, sport/target); Backpacking; Camping (developed - tent, trailer, RV; primitive - tent, trailer, RV); Other Social Gatherings (e.g. Picnicking, Festivals, Concerts, Camp Fire Gatherings, Rendezvous, Re-enactment Events, Tours, Environmental Education, Interpretive Programs, Nature Study, etc.); Pack Trips; Overnight Recreational hunting (firearm, archery) and trapping - big game, upland bird, small game, waterfowl, target shooting and practice; Staging Areas for Vehicles and People.

[3]"Other Dispersed Activities" are ones that the activity itself is not the issue with mountain plovers, but the access across plover habitat and effect on that habitat and birds is the only main concern (access may be a concern for the Non-Dispersed Activities too but not the only concern). These activities should be evaluated through the Access screen and include the following: Antler collection in Spring; Mountain Biking; Road Biking; Driving for Pleasure; Fishing; Gathering non-commercial products (i.e., individual-use sage collection, rock/mineral collection, petrified wood, etc.); Hiking; Walking; Running; Horseback Riding; Day-Use Recreational hunting (firearm, archery) and trapping - big game, upland bird, small game, waterfowl, target shooting and practice; Land/Sand Sailing, Sand Boarding; All Other Activities Accessing through Plover Habitat.

Activities determined to be non-affecting due to season of use or low likelihood of activity occurring in plover habitat: Diving/Snorkeling; Dog Mushing; Ice Climbing; Ice Skating; Ice Fishing; Other Winter OHV; Personal Watercraft; Power boating; Racing - ATV, Adventure, Auto/Truck, Bicycle, Foot, Motorcycle, OHV Cars, Trucks, and Buggies; Rowing/ Floating/ Rafting; Sailing; Skating - Roller/Inline; Ski Joring; Skiing - XC, Downhill; Snowplay-General; Snowboarding; Snowmobiling, Snowshoeing; Swimming/Water Play; Wake Board; Water Skiing; Wind Surfing.

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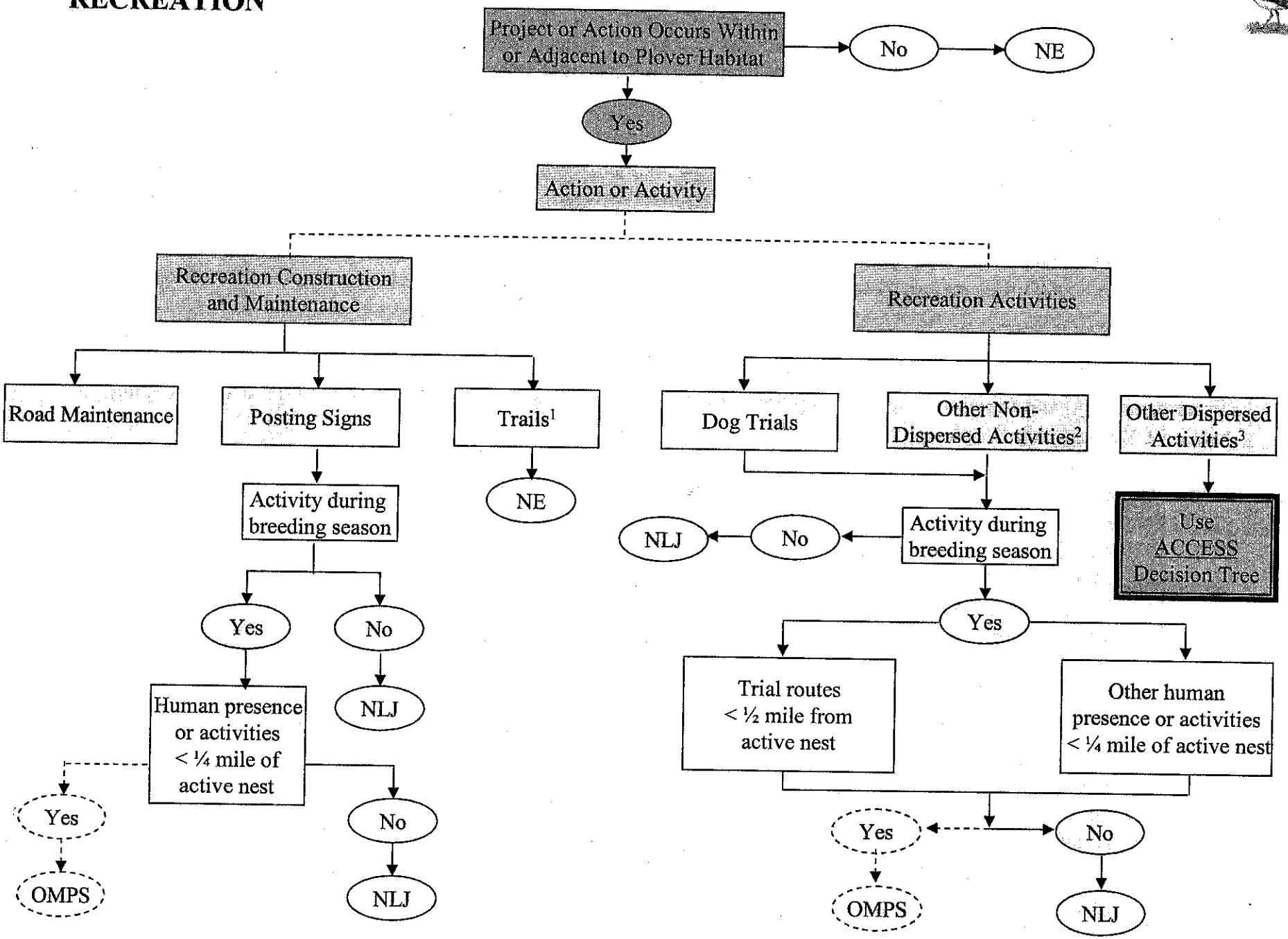
RECREATION


Project or Action Occurs Within or Adjacent to Plover Habitat
No
NE
Yes
Action or Activity
Recreation Construction and Maintenance
Recreation Activities
Road Maintenance
Posting Signs
Trails[1]
Dog Trials
Other Non-Dispersed Activities[2]
Other Dispersed Activities[3]
Activity during breeding season
NE
NLJ
No
Activity during breeding season
Use ACCESS Decision Tree
Yes
No
Yes
Trial routes < ½ mile from active nest
Other human presence or activities < ¼ mile of active nest
Human presence or activities < ¼ mile of active nest
NLJ
Yes
No
OMPS
NLJ
Yes
No
OMPS
NLJ

ROADS & ROAD MAINTENANCE
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

Activities under this program should first be run through the Access screen before proceeding here.

Road construction is defined as creation of new road; road maintenance is activities associated with existing road.

Activities include Traffic Control; Various road maintenance activities including Blading and grading, Surface rocking (rock replacement), Roadside brushing, Ditch cleanout, Opening and closing roads, Culvert maintenance, Stormproofing; Disposal site; Dust abatement (water or chemical); Various road restoration activities including Surface shaping and draining, Culvert installation and upgrade, Installation of drainage dips and waterbars, Surface material processing / in place rock crushing; New construction.

Activities determined to be non-affecting due to season of use or low likelihood of activity occurring in plover habitat: Hazard tree removal; Adding cross drain culverts; Bridge maintenance; Slide removal; Logging out

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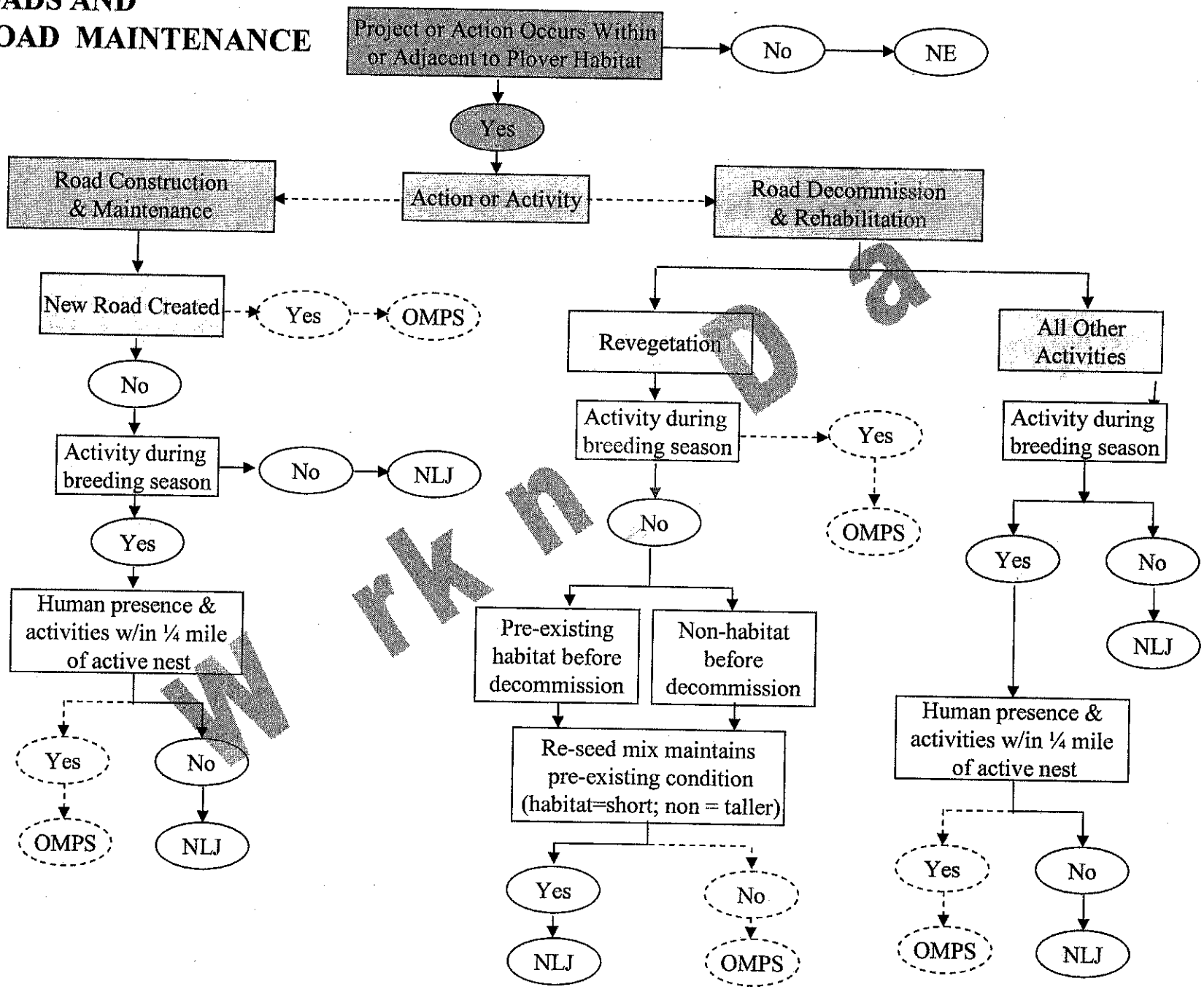
ROADS AND ROAD MAINTENANCE



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NATIONAL FIRE PLAN
Decision Tree Explanatory Notes

Activities under this program should first be run through the Access screen before proceeding here.

The following National Fire Plan activities were determined to be non-affecting due to low likelihood of the activity occurring in plover habitat: defensible space; forest product; mechanical treatments; watershed restoration other than revegetation; all TES habitat restoration other than fish and wildlife monitoring-nesting surveys; trail construction/reconstruction/maintenance except for gravel borrowing/borrow pit and excavating material, including on site; all the following activities under abandoned mine restoration: floodplain reclamation, wetlands reclamation-remove contaminated soil, wetlands reclamation-construct cell, wetlands reclamation-restore stream channel, tailings impoundment rehab-water management, tailings impoundment rehab-cap impoundment, restore surface flow, dredge tailings restoration-aerial videography, dredge tailings restoration-tailings redistribution, dredge tailings restoration-restore channel flow, groundwater control-reroute.

The following National Fire Plan activities are covered in other parts of the mountain plover screen: watershed restoration (revegetation) – see range management screen; range infrastructure – see range management screen; prescribed fire – see range management screen; mine waste dump removal (revegetation) – see range management screen; insect suppression – see range management screen; recreation facilities and operations – see recreation screen; weeds/chemical treatments – see range management screen.

[1]For Mine Waste Cleanup, decision tree assumes no habitat loss because disturbed areas will be reclaimed to pre-existing condition.

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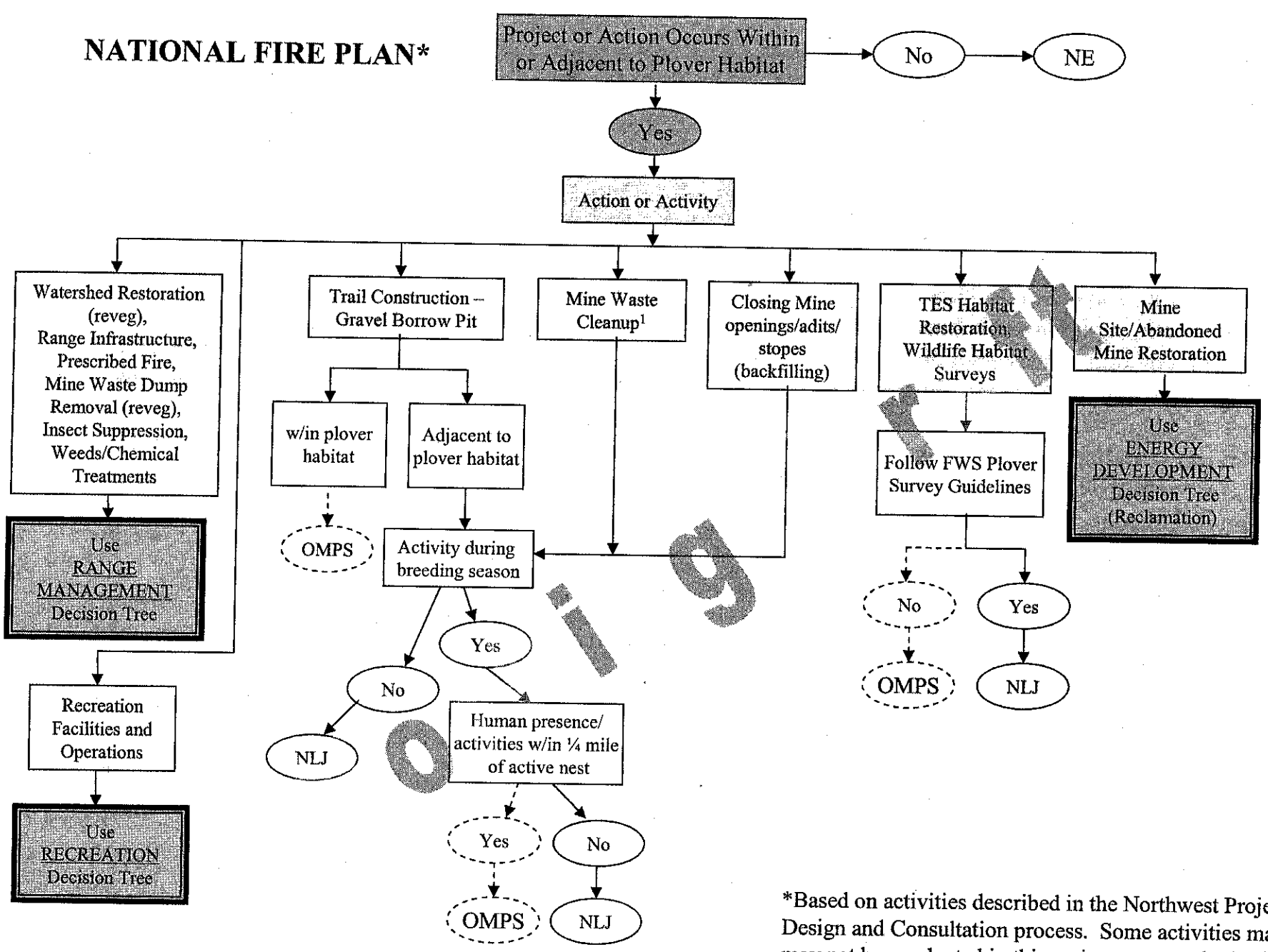
NATIONAL FIRE PLAN*



*Based on activities described in the Northwest Project Design and Consultation process. Some activities may or may not be conducted in this region on a regular basis.

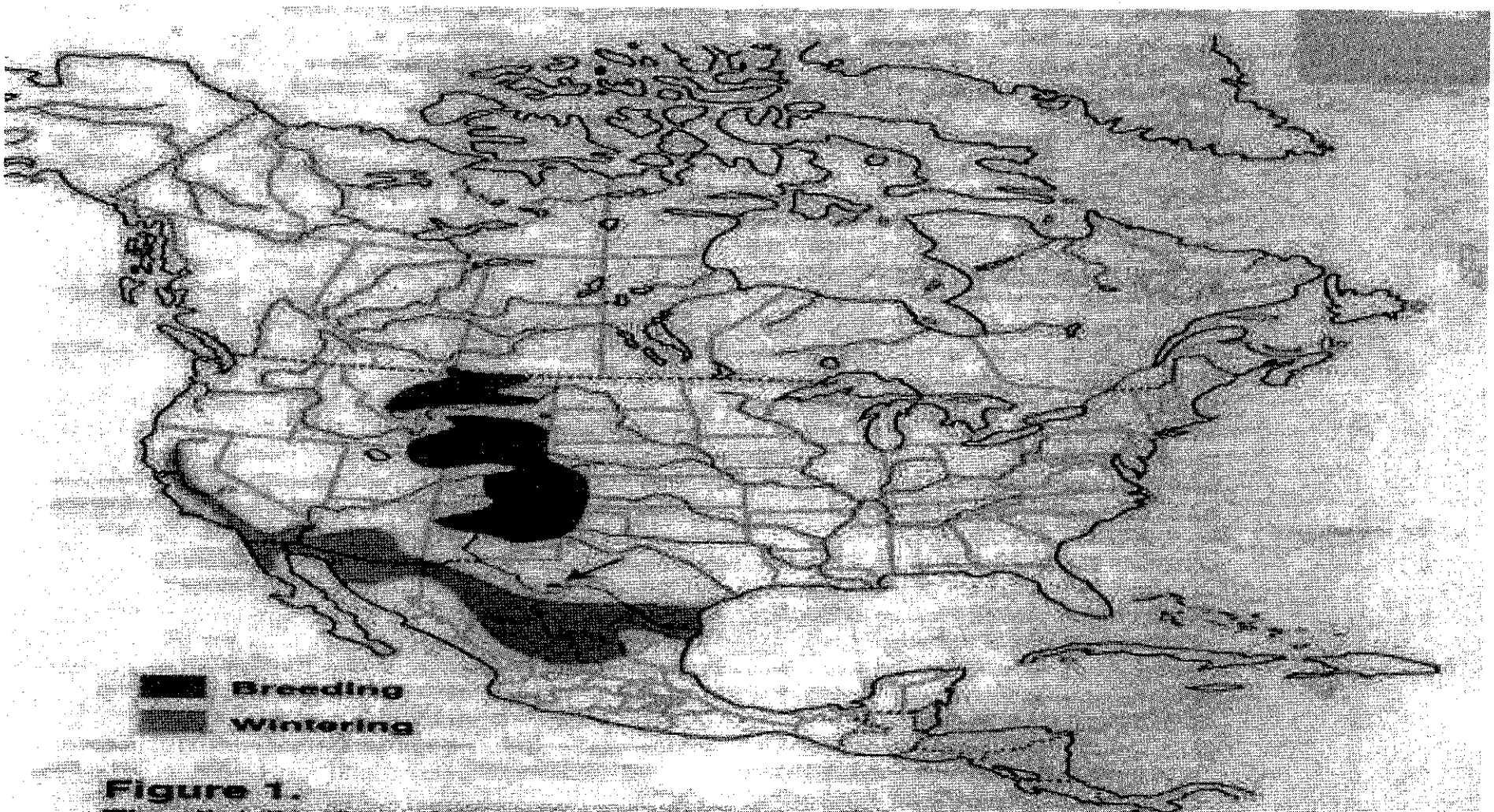
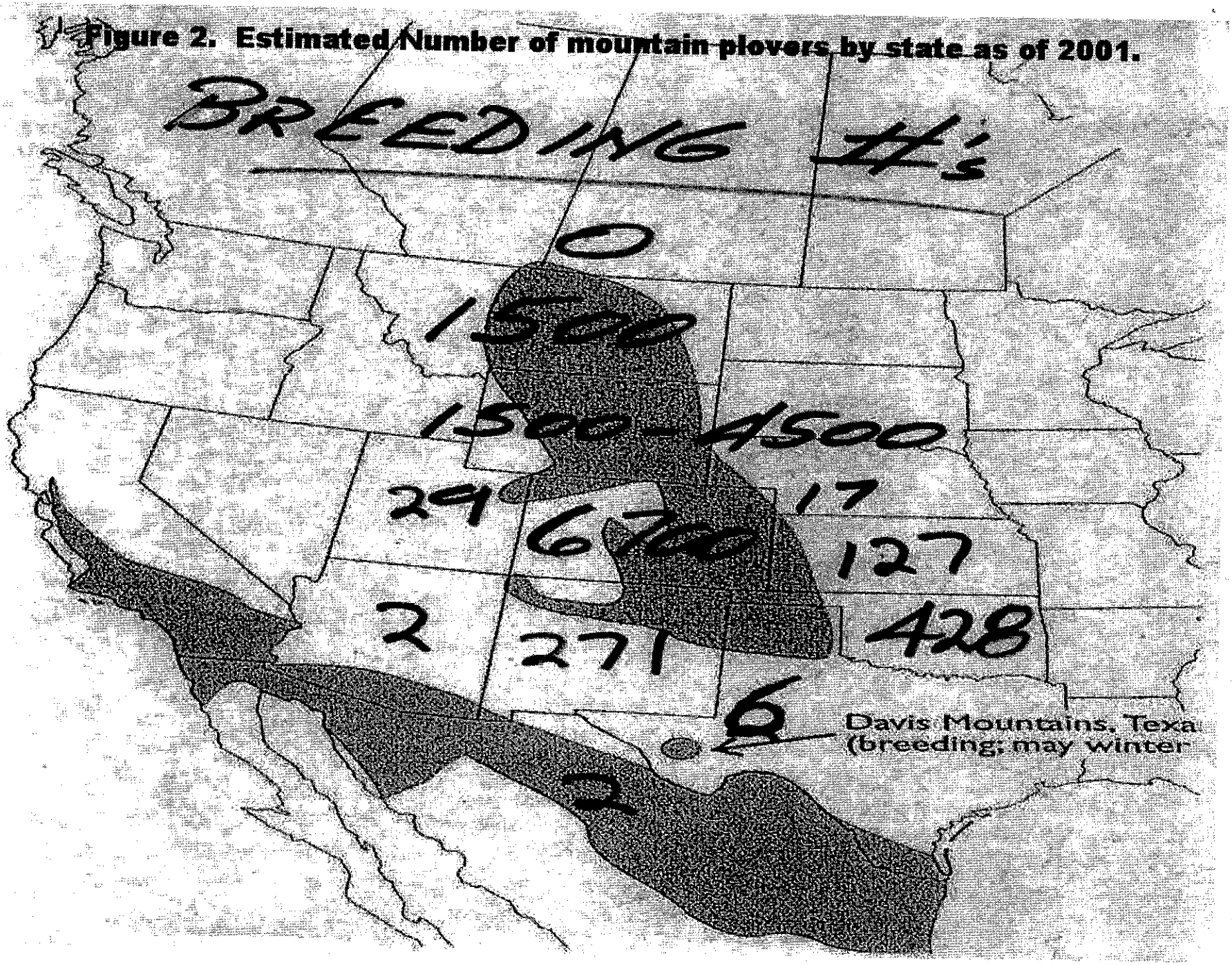


Figure 1.
The distribution of the Mountain Plover. The breeding population in Davis Mtns., TX, may not migrate. The northern limits of the winter range in Mexico are uncertain.

Figure 2. Estimated Number of mountain plovers by state as of 2001.



CONTRIBUTORS

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