APPENDIX L

GUIDELINES FOR GRAZING ADMINISTRATION

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The Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (referred to as Standards and Guidelines or S&Gs) (BLM 1997) are a series of management practices used to ensure that grazing meets the standards for rangeland health, which are referred to in this plan as Land Health Standards (see Section 2.7.2, Arizona Land Health Standards). Upland sites, riparian-wetland areas and desired resource conditions are each addressed by a standard along with associated guidelines. The guidelines are management approaches, methods, and practices that are intended to achieve a standard. Guidelines:

1. Typically identify and prescribe methods of influencing or controlling specific public land uses;

2. Are developed and applied consistent with the desired condition and within site capability; and

3. May be adjusted over time.

The following guidelines from the S&G are hereby adopted and apply to all areas where grazing occurs.

GUIDELINES FOR STANDARD 1: UPLANDS SITES

1-1. Management activities will maintain or promote ground cover that will provide for infiltration, permeability, soil moisture storage, and soil stability appropriate for the ecological sites within management units. The ground cover should maintain soil organisms and plants and animals to support the hydrologic and nutrient cycles, and energy flow. Ground cover and signs of erosion are surrogate measures for hydrologic and nutrient cycles and energy flow.

1-2. When grazing practices alone are not likely to restore areas of low infiltration or permeability, land management treatments may be designed and implemented to attain improvement.

GUIDELINES FOR STANDARD 2: RIPARIAN-WETLAND AREAS

2-1. Management practices maintain or promote sufficient vegetation to maintain, improve or restore riparian-wetland functions of energy dissipation, sediment capture, groundwater recharge and stream bank stability, thus promoting stream channel morphology (e.g., gradient, width/depth ratio, channel roughness and sinuosity) and functions appropriate to climate and landform.

2-2. New facilities are located away from riparian-wetland areas if they conflict with achieving or maintaining riparian-wetland function. Existing facilities are used in a way that does not conflict with riparian-wetland functions or are relocated or modified when incompatible with riparian-wetland functions.

2-3. The development of springs and seeps or other projects affecting water and associated resources shall be designed to protect ecological functions and processes.

GUIDELINES FOR STANDARD 3: DESIRED RESOURCE CONDITIONS

3-1. The use and perpetuation of native species will be emphasized. However, when restoring or rehabilitating disturbed or degraded rangelands, non-intrusive, non-native plant species are appropriate for use where native species (a) are not available, (b) are not economically feasible, (c) cannot achieve ecological objectives as well as non-native species, and/or (d) cannot compete with already established non-native species.

3-2. Conservation of Federal threatened or endangered, proposed, candidate, and other special status species is promoted by the maintenance or restoration of their habitats.

3-3. Management practices maintain, restore, or enhance water quality in conformance with State or Federal standards.

3-4. Intensity, season and frequency of use, and distribution of grazing use should provide for growth and reproduction of those plant species needed to reach desired plant community objectives (DPCs).

3-5. Grazing on designated ephemeral (annual and perennial) rangeland may be authorized if the following conditions are met:

- Ephemeral vegetation is present in draws, washes, and under shrubs and has grown to useable levels at the time grazing begins;
- Sufficient surface and subsurface soil moisture exists for continued plant growth;
- Serviceable waters are capable of providing for proper grazing distribution;
- Sufficient annual vegetation will remain on site to satisfy other resource concerns, (i.e., watershed, wildlife, wild horses and burros); and
- Monitoring is conducted during grazing to determine if objectives are being met.

3-6. Management practices will target those populations of noxious weeds which can be controlled or eliminated by approved methods.

3-7. Management practices to achieve DPCs will consider protection and conservation of known cultural resources, including historical sites, and prehistoric sites and plants of significance to Native American peoples.

DPC objectives would be quantified for each allotment through the rangeland monitoring and evaluation process. Ecological site descriptions available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other available data will be used as a guide for addressing site capabilities and potentials for change over time. These objectives are vegetation values the BLM manages over the long term. Once established, DPC objectives would be updated and monitored by the use of indicators for Land Health Standard 3.

IMPLEMENTING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The authorized officer will review existing permitted livestock use, allotment management plans, or other activity plans which identify terms and conditions for management on public land. Existing management practices and levels of use on grazing allotments will be reviewed and evaluated on a priority basis to determine if they meet, or are making significant progress toward meeting, the standards and are in conformance with the guidelines. The review will be interdisciplinary and conducted under existing rules which provide for cooperation, coordination, and consultation with affected individuals, federal, state, and local agencies, tribal governments, private landowners, and interested publics.

This review will use a variety of data, including monitoring records, assessments, and knowledge of the locale to assist in making the significant progress determination. Significance will be determined on a case by case basis, considering site potential, site condition, weather and financial commitment. It is anticipated there will be cases where numerous years will be needed to determine direction and magnitude of trend.

Upon completion of review, the authorized officer shall take appropriate action as soon as practicable but no later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that the existing grazing management practices or level of use on public land are significant factors contributing to failure to achieve the standards and conform with the guidelines that are made effective under 43 CFR 4180.2. Appropriate action means implementing actions that will result in significant progress toward fulfillment of the standards and significant progress toward conformance with guidelines.

Livestock grazing will continue where significant progress toward meeting standards is being made. Additional activities and practices would not be needed on such allotments. Where new activities or practices are required to assure significant progress toward meeting standards, livestock grazing use can continue contingent upon determinations from monitoring data that the implemented actions are effective in making significant progress toward meeting the standards. In some cases, additional action may be needed as determined by monitoring data over time.

New plans will incorporate an interdisciplinary team approach (Arizona BLM Interdisciplinary Resource Management Handbook, April 1995). The terms and conditions for permitted grazing in these areas will be developed to comply with the goals and objectives of these plans which will be consistent with the standards and guidelines.

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