

SCOPING/INFORMATION PACKAGE
Four Rivers Field Office

Bennett Mountain Management Area Permit Renewal for Eleven Allotments
Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2011-0021-EA

This information package summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposal to issue livestock grazing permits in accordance with the Jarbidge Resource Management Plan (RMP). Federal actions must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences.

The purpose of this report is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. Analysis of the proposal is ongoing, and will be documented in an Environmental Assessment (EA) with an estimated completion date of May 15, 2012. Comments received in response to this solicitation will be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action and to identify alternatives to the proposed action that meet the purpose of and need for the project.

Purpose and Need for Action

Rangeland Health Assessments for 12 allotments in the Bennett Mountain Management Area (MA) were conducted in 2004 and 2006. In the 2010 Evaluations and Draft Determinations for Achieving Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health (Standards) and Conformance with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Guidelines), FRFO specialists determined the following:

- three allotments are not meeting one or more standards and current livestock grazing management practices are a suspected causal factor;
- two allotments are not meeting one or more standards due to factors other than current livestock management;
- one allotment is not meeting one or more standards for undetermined reasons;
- one allotment is meeting some applicable standards and making significant progress toward meeting the others; and
- five allotments are meeting all applicable standards (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of Applicable Rangeland Health Standards for the twelve Bennett Mountain MA allotments.

Allotment		Rangeland Health Standards*							
Number	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
01033	Hammett #1	L	L	L	L	n/a	n/a	M	L
01037	East Hammett #5	L	L	L	L	n/a	n/a	M	L
01038	Hammett #6	O	M	M	O	n/a	n/a	M	O
01039	Hammett #7	M	L	L	M	n/a	n/a	M	L
01043	South Camas	M	M	M	M	n/a	n/a	M	M
01044	North Slope	M	M	M	M	n/a	n/a	M	M
01091	Camas Creek Field	M	n/a	n/a	M	n/a	n/a	n/a	M

Allotment		Rangeland Health Standards*							
Number	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
01098	North Camas	M	SP	SP	M	n/a	n/a	M	SP
01101	East Bennett Mountain	U	M	n/a	U	n/a	n/a	n/a	M
01195	Hammett Livestock	M	M	M	M	n/a	n/a	O	M
01198	Ballantyne Section 15	M	M	M	M	n/a	n/a	M	M
01199	Joost	M	M	M	M	n/a	n/a	M	M

M = meeting standard; SP = not meeting standard, but making significant progress; L = not meeting standard, current livestock management practices are a suspected causal factor; O = not meeting standard, factors other than current livestock management practices are significant factors (e.g. fire, invasive plants, historic grazing practices, off-road vehicles); U = not meeting standard, cause undetermined; n/a = not applicable.

***Rangeland Health Standards**
 Standard 1: Watersheds; Standard 2: Riparian Areas and Wetlands; Standard 3: Stream Channel/Floodplain;
 Standard 4: Native Plant Communities; Standard 5: Seedings; Standard 6: Exotic Plant Communities, other than

Permits authorizing livestock grazing would ensure that livestock grazing would:

- maintain resource conditions where they are meeting Standards;
- make significant progress toward meeting Standards where resource conditions are not meeting Standards; and
- meet Guidelines and BLM policy.

Existing Condition

General

The allotments are located 8-40 miles north of Glens Ferry, Idaho (Map 1). Elevations range from 3,500 feet in the Hammett #1 Allotment to 7,400 feet in the East Bennett Mountain Allotment. General topographic features include moderate to steep canyons, plateaus, mountains, and prairies. The allotments include 50,684 acres of BLM-administered lands, 28,274 acres of private lands, and 7,960 acres of State lands (Table 2).

Table 2. Land ownership by allotment for twelve allotments in the Bennett Mountain MA, Idaho.

Allotment		BLM	Private	State	Forest Service	Total
Number	Name					
1033	Hammett #1	21,820	48	1,520	0	23,388
1037	East Hammett #5	10,471	694	638	0	11,803
1038	Hammett #6	6,228	226	1,698	0	8,152
1039	Hammett #7	2,268	16,232	3,307	13	21,820
1043	South Camas	949	221	39	547	1,756
1044	North Slope	896	4,464	408	0	5,768
1091	Camas Creek Field	201	722	127	2	1,052
1098	North Camas	558	181	218	708	1,665
1101	East Bennett Mountain	1,513	5,481	4	0	6,998
1195	Hammett Livestock	4,659	4	1	7	4,671
1198	Ballantyne Section 15	722	1	0	0	723
1199	Joost	399	0	0	0	399
<i>Total</i>		50,684	28,274	7,960	1,277	88,195

Soils

The soils on the allotments range from deep and loamy to very shallow. Presence of biological soil crusts varies across the allotments depending upon site characteristics and level of disturbance. Soil disturbance and/or degradation are most common in relation to water sources, mineral licks, gates, and along fence lines where livestock tend to trail and congregate.

The allotments meeting Standard 1 (Table 1) are typically in or near reference condition (based upon Ecological Site Descriptions), or may have some localized disturbance but are stable overall and capable of properly cycling water, nutrients, and energy. For allotments not meeting Standard 1, it is primarily due to erosion in the form of pronounced water flow paths, pedestalled bunchgrasses and terracettes; and secondarily due to more bare ground than expected and/or shifts in vegetative components expected to affect infiltration and runoff of water (Assessments, BLM 2010).

Upland Vegetation

In general, Wyoming big sagebrush communities occur below 4,000 feet. Mountain big sagebrush communities typically occupy rangelands above 4,000 feet and commonly include other mountain shrubs above 5,000 feet. Inclusions of low sagebrush communities are also found between 4,000 and 5,500 feet where soils are shallow and rocky. Forested areas dominated by Douglas-fir or aspen are present at higher elevations – typically above 6,500 feet in the more southern allotments and 5,500 feet in the northern two allotments.

Standard 4 was applied to vegetative communities maintaining approximately 25 to 30% composition of sagebrush (regardless of the understory); that range matches or nearly matches the Ecological Site Descriptions for sagebrush respective to each ecological site. Native plant communities meeting Standard 4 (Table 1) have experienced only minor shifts in vegetative attributes, or issues are localized and small in scale, and are maintaining productive and diverse native plant communities overall. Significant reductions in the amount of larger more palatable bunchgrasses in vegetative communities and poor vigor of these bunchgrasses are common where allotments are not meeting Standard 4 (Table 1). Perennial forbs are also often lacking in these communities, either in terms of diversity, abundance, or both.

The majority of Wyoming big sagebrush communities exhibit two common scenarios: 1) dominant understory grasses have shifted from larger, native perennial bunchgrasses (namely bluebunch wheatgrass) to smaller native perennial bunchgrasses (namely Sandberg bluegrass); or 2) exotic annuals (e.g. cheatgrass, medusahead) dominate the shrub understory and/or the vegetative community. Larger bunchgrasses and perennial forbs may be present to varying degrees – from trace amounts to common – depending upon past disturbance.

Mountain big sagebrush communities typically occupy rangelands above 4,000 feet elevation and commonly include other mountain shrubs above 5,000 feet. Similar to Wyoming big sagebrush communities, vegetation in shrub understories and interspaces varies with the level of past disturbance. Most of these vegetative communities have been altered/undergone disturbance in some form. However, some areas remain in near reference condition; typically at

elevations above 5,500 feet in the more southern allotments, and all mountain big sagebrush communities in the three northernmost allotments.

Inclusions of low sagebrush communities are also found in the more southern allotments between 4,000 and 5,500 feet where soils are shallow and rocky. These communities have undergone similar shifts as Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush communities; however, the rocky nature of many of these areas generally minimizes disturbance.

Noxious Weeds

Noxious is a legal designation given by the Director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) to any plant having the potential to cause injury to public health, crops, livestock, land or other property (Idaho Statute 22-2402). The Boise District BLM has an active weed control program that annually updates the locations of noxious weeds and treats known weed infestations utilizing chemical, mechanical, and biological control techniques. Infestations of noxious weeds are treated contingent upon the BLM annual weed budget, employee availability, and noxious weed priority.

Rush skeletonweed is the most prevalent noxious weed in the MA, followed by diffuse knapweed, whitetop, and a handful of others. Weeds are widely scattered in varying degrees and densities. BLM specialists and the South Fork Cooperative Weed Management Area have identified the following noxious weeds as priority/focus species targeted for control: Scotch thistle, diffuse knapweed, and rush skeletonweed (where densities are low or it is newly present). Many of the known noxious weed occurrences have been treated over the past several years (2004 to present). Weed treatments are ongoing and will continue as new infestations of these species are discovered.

Forest Vegetation

There is approximately 710 acres of forest on BLM-administered lands in East Hammett #5 and 940 acres in East Bennett Mountain. The forest cover is over 95% Douglas-fir and a small amount of aspen. Aspen clones are dying out due to severe competition from the conifer overstory. Herbaceous vegetation is often very sparse due to heavy conifer shading. Aspen clones and understory vegetation are important sources of forage for big game.

About 40% of the Douglas-fir trees are infected with dwarf mistletoe. Dwarf mistletoe is a parasitic plant that reduces the vigor of the host trees, which in turn predisposes the trees to attack by western pine bark beetles. Healthy, mistletoe-free Douglas-fir is present throughout the project area but is highly susceptible to infection from nearby infected trees. Although disease and insects are natural components of the environment, mortality from disease and insects can lead to heavy fuel buildup and much greater potential for high severity and/or intensity wildfire.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) and Special Status Plants (SSPs)

Habitat or occurrences of T&E and SSPs are only known for Hammett #1. Approximately 300 acres of habitat for slickspot peppergrass, a threatened species, and two element occurrences (90

acres) of mourning milkvetch, a Type 3 (Regional/State Imperiled) species, occur in the southern part of Pasture 1.

Riparian Areas

There are 14 perennial and intermittent streams in the allotments (Map 1). Approximately 67 stream miles were evaluated for functioning condition. Of these, 56 miles (83%) were rated in proper functioning condition (PFC), and 11 miles (13%) were rated as functioning-at-risk (FAR).

Lentic areas are defined as wetland-riparian areas adjacent to standing water habitats such as lakes, ponds, seeps, and meadows. Nineteen spring wetland areas were evaluated for condition. Seven (39%) were rated in PFC, nine (47%) were rated FAR, and three (16%) were rated as non-functioning (NF).

Perennial streams rated in PFC were mostly located in canyons, and were far less accessible to livestock grazing. PFC streams had good cover from willows, cottonwoods, and other woody vegetation. Bank stability in PFC streams was commonly greater than 85%. Intermittent streams and wet meadows rated in PFC had dense populations of wetland obligate sedges and rush species, with lesser populations of willows.

Functioning-at-risk (FAR) streams had obligate wetland plant species present, but at far lesser density than in PFC streams. The plant communities were often dominated by less palatable Baltic rush, shallow-rooted Kentucky bluegrass, and annual weeds. Streambank stability in FAR streams was generally less than 75%, and ranged as low as 50%. Wet meadows rated in FAR or NF had moderate to extreme levels of soil disturbance, high to extreme hummocking, and at some springs, soils were actually liquefied.

Water Quality

All perennial and intermittent streams on BLM-administered lands are meeting the applicable Idaho Department of Environmental Qualities (DEQ) water quality standards.

Threatened and Endangered and Special Status Animals (SSAs) – Fish

T&E Fish

Bull trout, a threatened species, are not present in any BLM-managed streams evaluated in the MA.

SSA Fish

All but two streams segments in salmonid bearing perennial streams fully support viable populations of native redband trout, a Type 2 (Rangewide/Globally Imperiled) species. Redband trout are uniquely adapted to tolerate a wide range of water temperature regimes, from higher water temperatures and lower oxygen levels commonly found in desert ecosystems, to cold water temperatures and high oxygen levels in mountain streams. In the Snake River Watershed, redband trout occur in Cold Springs, West Fork Cold Springs, Bennett, Dive, Little Canyon (upper portion), and King Hill (upper canyon sections) creeks. In the Boise River watershed, redband trout are present in Lime Creek.

Threatened and Endangered and Special Status Animals – Wildlife

T&E Wildlife

No listed species are known to occur in the area. The area provides potential habitat for 27 special status wildlife species. Breeding, early/late brood rearing, and winter habitat for greater sage-grouse, a candidate species, occurs in all or parts of 11 allotments (Ballantyne Section 15 and portions of Hammett Livestock Company allotments are outside of identified habitat). Key habitat (sagebrush with perennial grass understory) occurs in eight allotments. Type 1 (perennial grass dominated) and Type 2 (annual grass dominated habitats) occur in seven and two allotments respectively. Seven allotments occur within four miles of leks. Since 2007, fires in the Hammett #1, Hammett #6, and adjacent areas outside the permit renewal area reduced or eliminated sagebrush cover in 50,000 acres of Key and Type 2 habitats. The remaining habitat is important for sage-grouse population viability. Sage-grouse populations can recover after large fires when sagebrush and understory components return.

Raptors

A suspected nesting pair of golden eagles is known to forage over the lower end of the Hammett #1 Allotment. Sagebrush is an important component of eagle prey species habitat; therefore, recovery of sagebrush in this area would benefit golden eagles.

Winter Range

The area provides important winter range for Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, and pronghorn antelope (in the southern portions). Fires have reduced bitterbrush an important forage component for mule deer. Browse transects conducted in bitterbrush stands found heavy utilization prior to deer winter use and no seedling recruitment. Big game movement is impeded by fences which are not constructed to wildlife standards..

Special Designations/Recreation

The majority (90%) of Hammett #1 Allotment is in the King Hill Creek Wilderness Study Area (Map 1). King Hill Creek and the adjacent canyon is designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) because of a genetically pure redband trout population, mourning milkvetch populations, scenic values, and near pristine riparian conditions. The ACEC is available for grazing, but not very accessible to livestock (Map 1). Allotments in the MA provide a variety of recreational opportunities including hunting, off-highway vehicle use, hiking, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Preliminary Issues

- Soils – Potential to increase soil erosion in areas recently burned by wildfire and soil compaction when soils are saturated.
- Native Plant Community Health – Potential effects of grazing to native plant community conditions.
- Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plants – Livestock grazing and vegetation community health could influence spread of noxious weeds and invasive plants.
- Forest Management – Treated areas could be unavailable for grazing until recovery objectives are met.
- Special Status Species – Livestock grazing could affect the species and their habitat.

- Big Game - Potential impacts in areas where current fencing does not meet wildlife standards for passage.
- Raptors – Changes in vegetation communities could affect prey populations.
- Vegetation Treatments – Potential impacts to recent vegetation treatments.
- Riparian Areas - Potential effects of grazing to riparian vegetation and channel form.
- Water Quality - Potential effects of grazing to water quality.
- Fish- Potential effects of grazing to special status fish and aquatic organisms.

Preliminary Alternative Development

The following alternatives have been identified through the internal scoping process:

- Alternative A – Extended Rest (No grazing for the term of a 10-year permit)
- Alternative B – Continue Current Use (No change to existing grazing permit)
- Alternative C – Permittee Applications
- Alternative D – BLM Proposals

Alternative A – Extended Rest

Livestock grazing permits would not be issued for the 12 allotments. No livestock grazing would occur for a 10-year period on BLM-administered lands. Rangeland management projects would remain in place, but normal maintenance would not be expected to occur.

Alternative B – Continue Current Use

Eleven permits would authorize 7,597 AUMs on 11 allotments (Table 3, Map 1). Seasons of use would include spring (Hammett #6, Ballantyne Section 15), spring and fall use (Hammett #1, East Hammett #5, and Hammett Livestock Company), late-spring through fall (Hammett #7, Camas Creek Field), summer (East Bennett Mountain, North Camas, South Camas), and spring through fall (North Slope). Stocking rates would vary from 3.9 acres/AUM (North Slope Allotment) to 12.9 acres/AUM (Hammett Livestock Company Allotment).

Table 3. Permittee, allotment, and terms and conditions (livestock type and number, season of use, percent public land, and preference) for 11 allotments, Alternative B, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment		Livestock		Season of Use		% PL	Preference		
	No.	Name	Type	No.	Start	End		Active	Sus- pended	Total
McCallum (1101651)	01033	Hammett #1	C	609	04/01	06/30	100	1,822	0	1,822
				906	10/01	11/30	100	1,817		1,818
	01039	Hammett #7	C	27	07/01	11/30	100	136	0	137
McCallum (1102221)	01033	Hammett #1	C	32	04/10	07.09	100	95	0	95
Riggs (1101847)	01037	East Hammett #5	C	320	04/10	06/30	100	863	0	1,493
				314	10/01	11/30	100	630		
	01101	East Bennett Mountain	C	49	07/01	09/30	100	148	0	146
Owen (1101849)	01038	Hammett #6	C	563	03/27	05/25	76	911	0	911

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment		Livestock		Season of Use		% PL	Preference		
	No.	Name	Type	No.	Start	End		Active	Sus- pended	Total
Barber- Caven (1101868)	01039	Hammett #7	C	54	07/01	07/31	100	55	0	66
				3	06/15	09/15	100	9		
Barber- Caven (1101603)	01039	Hammett #7	C	117	07/01	09/30	40	142	0	142
Barber- Caven (1101633)	01098	North Camas	C	76	07/01	08/15	100	115	0	115
Blackwell (1101784)	01043	South Camas	C	50	07/01	08/15	100	76	0	76
Tree Top Ranches (1101879)	01044	North Slope	C	29	04/01	11/30	100	231	0	231
Aldecoa and Sons (1101604)	01091	Camas Creek Field	C	14	06/16	07/31	100	21	0	42
				6	08/15	11/15	100	21		
Faulkner Land & Livestock (1101884)	01195	Hammett Livestock Co.	S	800	05/24	07/07	100	237	0	361
				1,200	10/01	10/15	100	118		
L.G. Davison & Sons, Inc. (1101643)	01198	Ballantyne Section 15	C	144	06/01	06/30	100	142	0	144
Vacant	01199	Joost	S	NONE				0		40

Rangeland Management Projects

No projects would be constructed. Normal maintenance of existing projects (primarily fences) would occur.

Allotment Specific Management

Eight allotments would operate as indicated on the terms and conditions for numbers and season of use. Management on three allotments follows more specific management within the general parameters of the permit (Table 4).

Table 4. Allotment specific management, Alternative B, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment	Specific Management Activities
McCallum (1101651 and 1102221)	01033	Between 2000 and 2009, average actual use was 1,426 AUMs in spring and 680 AUMs in fall. Since 2008, the permittee has used herding to implement a two-year deferred rotation system. In year one, the east half of the allotment is used in the spring and the west half in the fall. In year two, the west half is used in the spring and the east half is used in the fall.
Riggs (1101847)	01037	Between 2000 and 2009, average actual use was 891 AUMs in spring and 169 AUMs in fall. Since 2007, the permittee has used herding to implement a two-year deferred rotation system. In year one, the east half of the allotment is used in the spring and the west half in the fall. In year two, the west half is used in the spring and the east half is used in the fall.
Owen (1101849)	01038	Between 2000 and 2009, average actual use was 877 AUMs. Pastures are used for one to two weeks starting in Pasture 6 (southern end of allotment). Livestock are moved from south to north as forage availability and conditions allow. Pastures 1 or 2 are rested annually.

Alternative C – Permittee Application

Nine permits would authorize 7,638 AUMs on 13 allotments (Table 5, Maps 2a and 2b). Seasons of use would include spring (Hammett #6), spring and fall use (Hammett #1 and East Hammett #5), spring through fall (South Hammett #7, Camas Creek Field, Hammett Livestock Company, and Joost), and summer (East Bennett Mountain FFR, Ballantyne Section 15, North Camas, South Camas, and West Hammett #7). Every other year spring rest would occur in Hammett #1 and Bennett Mountain (a combination of East Hammett #5 and part of East Bennett Mountain allotments) allotments. A deferred spring use system would be implemented in the Hammett#6 Allotment. The North Slope would be permitted as described in Alternative B. The range of stocking rates would be the same as Alternative B. Short-term changes in livestock grazing management to accommodate potential vegetation treatments in the Hammett #6 and Bennett Mountain allotments would be evaluated.

Rangeland Management Projects

Five projects (three spring developments, up to 7.5 miles of fence) would be constructed and seven projects (six developed springs, one pond) would be maintained (Table 6, Map 2a). Normal maintenance of existing projects (primarily fences) would occur.

Allotment Specific Management

Allotment specific management would include allotment and pasture realignments to implement grazing systems, allow for exchange of use (EOU) for non-BLM-administered lands within allotments, and coordinated management with USFS allotments (Table 7).

Table 5. Permittee, allotment, and terms and conditions (livestock type and number, season of use, percent public land, and preference) for 11 allotments, Alternative C, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment				Livestock		Season of Use		% PL	Preference		
	No.	Name		Type	No.	Start	End	Active		Suspended	Total	
McCallum (1101651 and 1102221 combined)	01033	Hammett #1	East	Odd Yr	C	916	05/01	07/01	100	1,867	0	3,735
			West	Even Yr		916	05/01	07/01	100			
			All	Annual		916	09/30	11/30				
	01039	South Hammett #7	Black Hawk		C	100	06/01	11/30	19	114	0	137
			Long Draw			27	06/01	11/30	8	13		
			West Fork			80	06/01	11/30	2	10		
Riggs (1101847)	01037	Bennett Mountain	Odd Yr	East	C	322	04/15	07/27	92	968	0	1,629
				West		322	09/15	11/30	67	661		
			Even Yr	East	C	322	09/10	11/30	92	968		
				West		322	04/15	07/05	67	661		
	01101	E Bennett Mtn.FFR ¹ (formerly Middle Pasture)		C	105	07/01	08/31	3	10	0	10	
Owen (1101849)	01038	Hammett #6		C	419	03/01	07/01	76	911	0	911	
Barber-Caven (1101603, 1101633, 1101868 combined)	TBD	West Hammett #7		C	266	07/01	10/15	22	208	0	208	
	01098	North Camas		C	230	07/01	08/15	33	115	0	115	
Blackwell (1101784)	01043	South Camas		C	45	07/01	09/30	55	75	0	75	
Tree Top Ranches (1101879)	01044	North Slope		Same as Alternative B.								
Aldecoa and Sons (1101604)	01091	Camas Creek Field	South Pasture	C	55	06/01	06/30	29	16	0	16	
			North Pasture		200	05/30	08/17	4	21			21
			200		10/22	11/10	4	5	5			
Faulkner Land & Livestock (1101884)	01195	Hammett Livestock Co.		S	392	06/15	11/01	100	361	0	361	
	01199	Joost			43	06/15	11/01	100	40	0	40	
L.G. Davison & Sons, Inc. 1101643)	01198	Ballantyne Section 15		C	162	07/01	10/31	22	144	0	144	

¹The 57 acres of unfenced PL comprising portions of 02S08E Sec. 01 SESE & 02S08E Sec. 12 NENE. The described public land is within a fenced pasture (Middle Pasture) comprising approximately 1,680 acres of private and 57 acres of public land. All of the private lands this pasture are held by the permittee and are not located outside the boundaries of the current East Bennett Mountain (01101) Allotment.

Table 6. Proposed rangeland management projects, Alternatives C and D, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Allotment	Project Name	Description	Location	Status ¹	Alt C	Alt D
Hammett # 1 (01033)	Ground Hog Spring	Remove & replace old stock water system, install new head box, piping, & trough.	03 S 11 E Sec. 30 SENW	E	X	X
	Muddy Spring	Remove & replace old stock water system, install new head box, piping, & trough.	04 S 10 E Sec. 03 NENW	E	X	X
	Twin Deer Spring	Remove & replace old stock water system, install new head box, piping, & trough.	03 S R 10 E Sec. 21 SENE	E	X	X
	Spring Enclosures	Electric fencing would be put around wetlands associated with Ground Hog, Muddy, and Twin Deer springs during use periods. Wires would be removed during non-use periods. Posts would be perch-proof.	03 S 11 E Sec. 30 SENW 04 S 10 E Sec. 03 NENW 03 S R 10 E Sec. 21 SENE	N		X
	01033 Division Fence	Construct two drift fences (approximately 4.5 miles total) from existing allotment boundary fences to rim rock on West Fork King Hill Creek. Fences would create two pastures to facilitate deferred rotation grazing system.	03 S 10 E Sec 36 and 03 S 10 E Sec. 10 & 14	N	X	
South Hammett #7 (01039)	Bourbon Spring	Remove & replace old stock water system, install new head box, piping, & trough.	03 S 10 E Sec 02 SWSE	E	X	
East Hammett #5 (01037)	Section 22 Spring	Remove & replace old stock water system, install new head box, piping, & trough.	03 S 09 E Sec. 22 SWSE	E	X	X
	Ryegrass Spring	Clean and repair or replace head box and piping. Replace trough.	03 S 09 E Sec. 20 SESE	E	X	X
	Craster Spring	Develop spring with head box, piping, and trough.	02 S 09 E Sec. 34 SENW	N	X	
	Section 5 Spring	Develop spring with head box, piping, and trough.	03 S 09 E Sec. 05 SWSE	N	X	
Bennett Mountain (01037)	Pasture Division Fence	Construct up to 3 miles of gap fencing at all locations where livestock could traverse between pastures to ensure rotation system could be effectively implemented.	02 S 09 E Sec. 32 03 S 09 E Sec. 05, 16, & 21	N	X	
	Forest Health/Aspen Regeneration ²	Thin approximately 850 acres of Douglas-fir forest to reduce the wildfire risk and the incidence of dwarf mistletoe.	02 S 08 E Sec. 13, 24, & 25 02S 09 E Sec. 18, 19, 30-32 03S 09 E Sec. 5 & 6	N	X	X
Hammett #6 (01038)	Habitat Restoration ²	Treat medusahead dominated areas to restore native grasses, forbs, and shrubs.	03 S 08 E Sec. 12	N	X	X
North Camas (01098)	SackRider (Section 18) Spring	Enclosure to reduce impacts on aspen stand.	02 S 10 E Sec. 18 NWSW	N		X
South Camas (01043)	Section 24 Pond	Reconstruct/improve existing pond.	02 S 09 E Sec. 24 SWNE	E	X	X

¹ E = existing project, N = new project

² Project would be analyzed in separate NEPA document. Changes in livestock management to accommodate the vegetation treatment objectives will be analyzed in this EA.

Table 7. Allotment specific management, Alternative C, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment	Specific Management Activities
McCallum (1101651)	01033	Allotment would be split into two pastures (11,360 acres and 12,028 acres). Spring use would be alternated between pastures on a two-year rotation. Annual fall use would occur in both pastures. EOU credits would be granted for all non-BLM-administered lands (deeded/leased) controlled by permittee wherein the permittee holds preference AUMs.
	01039	The former Hammett #7 Allotment would be split into three allotments based on private lands and operating areas. The southern portion would become South Hammett #7 Allotment and would have three pastures based on existing fencing. EOU credits would be granted for all non-BLM-administered lands (deeded/leased) controlled by permittee wherein the permittee holds preference AUMs.
Riggs (1101849)	01037	Gap fencing would create two pastures to allow implementation of a deferred rotation with annual spring and fall use rotating between the pastures. Based on the allotment realignment, 1,639 adjudicated AUMs would be adjusted to reflect BLM-administered lands in each allotment.
Owen (1101849)	01038	A deferred rotation would be implemented wherein no individual pasture would be used for more than 45 consecutive days in any one year and no individual pasture would be grazed during the same period in successive years. EOU credits would be granted for all non-BLM-administered lands (deeded/leased) controlled by permittee wherein the permittee holds preference AUMs.
Barber-Caven (1101603/1101633)	TBD	The former Hammett #7 Allotment would be split into three allotments based on private lands and operating areas. The northwestern portion would become West Hammett #7 Allotment and would have two pastures based on existing fencing. EOU credits would be granted for all non-BLM-administered lands (deeded/leased) controlled by permittee wherein the permittee holds preference AUMs.
Blackwell (1101784)	01043	Exchange of use based on carrying capacity would be granted for the approximate 562 acres of USFS lands within the defined boundaries of the allotment. The allocated livestock carrying capacities for the BLM and USFS lands within the allotment would be 75 and 63 AUMs, respectively.
Aldecoa and Sons (1101849)	01091	Present allotment boundary lines would be redrawn to include all BLM-administered, USFS, State, and private lands located within that portion of the USFS Cat Creek C&H Allotment (00104) that is located south of Highway 20/Cat Creek Road. The allotment would consist of two pastures [North (#1) and South (#2)]. EOU based on carrying capacity would be granted for the USFS, State, and private lands within the defined boundaries of the allotment.
Faulkner Land & Livestock (1101884)	01191	Permit would be transferred from Faulkner L&L to Good Time Grazing Assoc. Application for Section 3 lease for 40 AUMs of grazing use on Joost Allotment (01199) would be approved and class of livestock would be changed from cattle to sheep.
L.G. Davison & Sons, Inc. (1101643)	01091	Allotment boundary lines would be redrawn to include all USFS lands located in the USFS Lester Creek Allotment (00109). Exchange of use based on carrying capacity would be granted for all USFS lands within the defined boundaries of the allotment. The allocated carrying capacities for the Ballantyne Section 15 and Lester Creek allotments would be 144 and 511 AUMs, respectively.

Alternative D – BLM Proposal

Ten permits would authorize 5,485 AUMs on 12 allotments (Table 8, Maps 2b and 3). Stocking rates on BLM-administered lands in three allotments would be adjusted based on ecological site guides or comparable State lands. The Hammett #1 Allotment would be grazed on a three-year spring-fall-rest rotation system and stocked at 10 acres/AUM. The Hammett #7 Allotment permit would be as described in Alternative C; however, turnout in the Black Hawk pasture

would be after July 15 at least one in three years. The Bennett Mountain Allotment (a combination of East Hammett #5 and part of East Bennett Mountain allotments) would be permitted for a spring-fall rotation and stocked at 7.8 acres/AUM. Hammett #6 pastures would be rested every second or third year and stocked at 8.8 acres/AUM. The North Slope Allotment would be permitted as described in Alternative B. The North Camas, South Camas, Camas Creek Field, Hammett Livestock Company, and Ballantyne Section 15 allotments would be permitted as described in Alternative C. Other than stocking rate changes for Hammett #1, Bennett Mountain, and Hammett #6, the range of stocking rates would be the same as Alternative B. Short-term changes in livestock grazing management to accommodate potential vegetation treatments in the Hammett #6 and Bennett Mountain allotments would be evaluated.

Table 8. Permittee, allotment, and terms and conditions (livestock type and number, season of use, percent public land, and preference) for 11 allotments, Alternative D, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment			Livestock		Season of Use		% PL	Preference			
	No.	Name		Type	No.	Start	End		Active	Suspended	Total	
McCallum (1101651)	01033	Hammett #1	Year One	C	893	05/01	07/01	100	2,100	0	2,100	
			Year Two		893	09/30	11/30	100				
			Year Three		0	REST						0
	01039	Hammett #7	Black Hawk ¹	C	100	06/01	11/30	19	114	0	137	
		Long Draw	27		06/01	11/30	8	13				
		West Fork	80		06/01	11/30	2	10				
Riggs (1101849)	01037	Bennett Mountain ²	Odd Yr	C	322	04/15	07/27	92	909	0	1530	
					West	322	09/15	11/30	67			621
			Even Yr		East	322	09/10	11/30	92			909
					West	322	04/15	07/05	67			621
	01101	E Bennett Mtn.FFR (formerly Middle Pasture)			Same as Alternative C.							
Owen (1101849)	01038	Hammett #6 ³	Year One	C	563	04/01	07/01	77	536		700	
		Year Two	700									
		Year Three										
Barber-Caven (1101603, 1101633, 1101868 combined)	01098	North Camas		Same as Alternative C.								
Blackwell (1101784)	01043	South Camas		Same as Alternative C.								
Tree Top Ranches (1101879)	01044	North Slope		Same as Alternative B.								
Aldecoa and Sons (1101849)	01091	Camas Creek Field		Same as Alternative C.								
Faulkner Land & Livestock (1101884)	01195	Hammett Livestock Co.		Same as Alternative C.								
Joost	01199	Joost		C	43	06/15	11/01	100	40	0	40	
L.G. Davison & Sons, Inc. (1101643)	01198	Ballantyne Section 15		Same as Alternative C.								

¹ On date would occur after 7/15 at least one in three years.

² No fencing would be built; herding would be used to ensure animals followed rotation.

³ Pastures 1 and 3 would be run together and rotated with Pasture 2 with one year of use followed by a year of rest. Pastures 4 and 6 would each be rested one in three years.

Rangeland Management Projects

Four spring exclosures (three temporary and one permanent) would be constructed and six projects (five developed springs, one pond) would be maintained (Table 6, Map 3). Normal maintenance of existing projects (primarily fences) would occur. Existing fences would be brought into compliance with wildlife design standards.

Allotment Specific Management

Allotment specific management, where different from Alternative C, would include allotment and pasture realignments to implement grazing systems (Table 9).

Table 9. Allotment specific management, Alternative D, Bennett Mountain North, Idaho.

Permittee (Permit No.)	Allotment	Specific Management Activities
McCallum (1101651)	01033	A three-year spring-fall-rest rotation system would be implemented throughout the allotment. Temporary spring exclosures would be in place only during use periods. EOU credits would be as described in Alternative C.
	01039	Allotment realignment and pastures would be as described in Alternative C. Turnout into the Black Hawk Pasture would be after July 15 (post seed ripe) in at least one in three years.
Riggs (1101849)	01037	The East Hammett #5 and East Bennett Mountain allotments would be combined to form a new allotment (01037, Bennett Mountain) with two pastures. Because fencing would not be constructed to delineate pastures, herding would be required to keep animals in designated use areas. Each pasture would be used in a two-year spring-fall rotation.
Owen (1101849)	01038	A rest-rotation system would be implemented in lower (i.e. pastures 4 and 6) and upper (i.e. pastures 1-3) pastures. The upper pastures would be rested one in two years and the lower pastures would be rested one in three years.
Joost	01199	Allotment would be operated separately from the Hammett Livestock Company Allotment.

Decision to be Made

The Four Rivers Field Manager is the authorized officer responsible for allotment management decisions. Based on the NEPA analysis, the Field Manager will issue a decision document that includes a determination of the environmental effects' significance and whether an environmental impact statement (EIS) would be required. If he determines it is unnecessary to prepare an EIS, the Manager will decide which management actions, mitigation measures, and monitoring requirements will be prescribed for the allotments, including permitted number of animals, season of use, allowable utilization standards, and permit terms.

Public Input Needed

Comments are specifically requested on the proposed action, preliminary issues, and alternatives. Comments made on this proposal would be most helpful if they are received by April 20, 2012 and are directly relevant to the proposal and project area. The BLM will not reject public feedback outside established public involvement timeframes; however, these comments may be considered secondary to comments received in a timely manner and may only be assessed to determine if they identify concerns that would substantially alter the assumptions, proposal, design, or analysis presented in the EA. Comments sent electronically should be sent to matthewmccoy@blm.gov with the title of this project in the subject line. Please identify whether

4/4/2012

you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues that are outside the scope of the proposal will not be addressed at this planning level.

The primary contact for questions and comments for this analysis is Matthew McCoy, Assistant Field Manager, Four Rivers Field Office, (208) 384-3343.

MAPS