



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Twin Falls District Office  
Burley Field Office  
15 E 200 S  
Burley, ID 83318



In Reply Refer To:  
4160 (IDT020)

Pickett Ranch and Sheep Co.  
568 W. 1650 S.  
Oakley, ID 83346

January 18, 2013

### **Notice of Field Manager's Decision**

Dear Mr. Pickett:

I have received your application for a Crossing Permit to trail livestock across public lands within the Burley Field Office. Upon review, and in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.6-3 and Section 123 of the 2012 Appropriations Omnibus Act, this application for a Crossing Permit is approved as described in Alternative 2 of Environmental Assessment (EA) No. DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2012-0005-EA.

### **Background**

On October 19, 2011 your application was filed for a Crossing Permit. You requested authorization to trail livestock within the Burley Field Office to facilitate proper grazing management of BLM grazing allotments; as well as to facilitate movements of livestock to and from private, state, or other federally administered lands. In response to your application and several others, the BLM prepared DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2012-0005-EA to analyze the environmental consequences of trailing livestock within the Burley Field Office. After reviewing the applications and the EA, I determined that livestock trailing would not result in any significant impacts and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on April 10, 2012. DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2012-0005-EA and FONSI can be found at [https://www.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa\\_register.do](https://www.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do)

### **Decision**

I have decided to issue your Crossing Permit to trail livestock across public lands within the Burley Field Office as described in Alternative 2 of the EA. The authorized route, numbers and seasons are described in Table 1 below as well as the terms and conditions for your authorization.

My decision is in conformance with the 1985 Cassia Resource Management Plan.

BLM analyzed three alternatives and considered two additional alternatives that were not analyzed in detail (see Chapter 2 of EA No. DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2012-0005-EA). The Proposed Action included the trailing activities proposed by the applicants. Alternative 1 is the No Action alternative and would deny all applications for crossing permits. Alternative 2 was developed in response to public comments and minimizes environmental consequences while still authorizing livestock trailing.

**Table 1. Crossing Permit**

Trailing Route Number	Season	Allotment Name & Number	Livestock Number	Livestock Kind
8	Spring/ Summer	Buckhorn-Churchill #04067	1005	Sheep
		Marion Group #04075		
		Warr-Pickett #04110	3035	

As long as there is no deviation from Alternative 2 analyzed in the EA, this event will be authorized annually.

Your Crossing Permit, based upon Table 1 and the following terms and conditions, must be signed and returned prior to trailing livestock across BLM administered lands.

The applicant will be responsible for contacting the BLM annually concerning their trailing needs in order to initiate the process of locating potential avoidance areas prior to trailing.

Terms and conditions to reduce environmental effects that are specific to your permit include the following:

Terms and Conditions

- No overnight use within ½ mile of occupied ferruginous hawk nests from March 1 to July 15.
- Cross country trailing events within 250 meters of occupied ferruginous hawk nests from March 1 to July 15 would be limited to one event per week.
- When a trailing event occurs within a burn area, trailing would be in accordance with the applicable Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) Plans or as authorized by the Authorized Officer.
- Trailing events involving domestic sheep which occur within trailing route 8 will require the applicant to follow a BLM and Idaho Department of Fish and Game approved separation plan to protect bighorn sheep.

## **Rationale**

I have selected Alternative 2 of the Burley Field Office Crossing Permit Authorization EA because it provides for the orderly administration of the range by authorizing trailing events to occur for grazing permittees for the duration of their current grazing permit. These trailing events are associated with the permitted use, the same routes are used each year and the alternative is responsive to annual trailing requests. This alternative is capped at a maximum number per grazing year. Specific terms and conditions in this alternative address the special needs of sensitive wildlife species in the Burley Field Office. These species include ferruginous hawks and bighorn sheep.

Ferruginous hawks could be disturbed by Alternative 2 if trailing occurred near their nest during the nesting period. The result of such disturbance could vary from temporary flushing and return to the nest to total abandonment. As proposed, most trailing events occur outside the nesting period for ferruginous hawks or away from known occupied nests. Also, stipulations that prevent overnighting within ½ mile of occupied nests and frequency of events within 250 meters of nests should prevent nests from abandonment.

California bighorn sheep could be affected by trailing livestock through disturbance and potential disease transmission. While no specific stipulations or protective measures are established to prevent disturbance, there is no domestic sheep trailing within bighorn sheep PMUs. Disease transmission could occur if wild bighorn sheep contact infected domestic sheep. Pneumonia is the most virulent disease of concern and the result of transmission could lead to a die-off. Similar to disturbance, there is no expectation for disease transmission to occur based on the locations of the proposed trailing corridors outside bighorn sheep PMUs. However, the stipulation requiring sheep or goat operations to follow a BLM and IDFG approved separation plan will make the trailing events as safe as possible for bighorn sheep.

Cultural resource inventories have been conducted along these routes with special attention given to concentration areas, such as, watering and bedding sites. There will be no effect on cultural resources.

This alternative utilizes existing roads and trails to the maximum extent possible which was an issue identified in the public scoping process.

## **Authority**

My decision is issued under the authority found in:

Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subpart 4100 Grazing Administration, specifically sections 4100.0-3, 4130.6-3, 4130.3, 4160.1, 4160.3, and 4130.8-1b;

The 2012 Appropriations Omnibus Act Sec. 123; and

The 1985 Cassia Resource Management Plan.

## **Protest and/or Appeal**

Section 123 of the 2012 Appropriations Omnibus Act precludes protests and administrative appeals of crossing permit decisions until October 2014.

Sincerely,

/s/Michael Courtney

Michael C. Courtney  
Field Manager  
Burley Field Office

Enclosures:

- 1 - Crossing Permit (2 pp)
- 2 - Map of trailing event (2 pp)

CC:

Tugaw Ranches  
Eugene and Heidi Matthews