

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

Draft Environmental Assessment

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Grazing Permit Renewal
For the
Enterprise Allotment
(11030)

Lincoln County, Nevada

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1.0 Introduction

This document identifies issues, analyzes alternatives, and discloses the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed term grazing permit renewal for Farnsworth Farms (operator 275002); Dwight and Shauna Dannelly (operator 2703578); Hilton and Mary Covington and Bob Bowler (operator 2703629) and authorize livestock grazing on the Enterprise Allotment (11030). There are no other permittees that hold grazing privileges on the allotment. This Environmental Assessment (EA) fulfills the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirement for site-specific analysis of resource impacts. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) considered both the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action.

This EA is tiered to and incorporates by reference the Ely District Resource Management Plan that was approved August 2008. The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council developed Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration that the Secretary of the Interior approved on February 12, 1997.

The BLM assessed the rangeland health during the permit issuance process. The BLM range staff conducted a review of the monitoring data. As a result of this review, the BLM did not identify any changes in the livestock management practices.

The BLM range staff will continue to collect monitoring data for the Allotment including utilization (use pattern mapping and key area), ecological condition, trend and cover. If a future assessment results in a determination that changes are necessary for compliance with the Standards and Guidelines, the BLM will reissue the permit or lease subject to revised terms and conditions.

1.1 Background

The Enterprise allotment is located within the Caliente Field Office in Lincoln County, Nevada. It is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Panaca, in the Clover Mountain Range. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) characterized the allotment as rolling hills within the clover mountain area (Standards and Determinations Document, Appendix II). The Enterprise allotment consists of about 21,090 acres and contains 1,261 Animal Unit Months (AUMS); divided evenly among the three permittees. The BLM completed chaining and seeding projects within the Enterprise Allotment in fiscal years 1964 and 1970. They are the Enterprise chaining and crested wheat seeding that is 3,375 acres in size and the Staheli chaining and crested wheat seeding, which is 2,893 acres in size. In 1998, the BLM conducted prescribed burn on both chainings to maintain the native and non-native perennial understory. The allotment is fenced to allow a three-pasture rest rotation system within the allotment.

Vegetative types on the allotment include mostly pinyon-juniper woodlands, with the bottoms in the center of the allotment previously seeded with crested wheat

The BLM range staff based the assessment on rangeland monitoring data that summarized within Appendix II of this document. Because of the assessment and monitoring data review, the BLM determined that the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health are currently being achieved on the Enterprise Allotment. A summary of this finding for the Enterprise Allotment follows:

Table 1.2 Summary of Assessment of the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for the Enterprise Allotment.

| Standard | Status |
|--|--|
| 1. Soils | Achieved |
| 2. Riparian and Wetland Sites Standard | Upland portion – Achieved Riparian Portion – Not Applicable |
| 3. Habitat and Biota Standard | Achieved |

(See Appendix II for Standards Determination Document)

Conclusions:

Standard #1: Soils

Standard met (achieved). Key Management Areas (KMA) 1 and 2 are within crested wheat seedings that the BLM conducted during the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. Though the ecological site descriptions would not apply here, the sites are reverting to native woodland communities with healthy diverse shrub-herbaceous understories as described within the ecological site descriptions. Small wildland fires have occurred sporadically throughout the allotment over the last ten years measuring several hundred acres or smaller. The result has been as described in the ecological site description as a reduction in overstory canopy or tree cover and a significant increase in herbaceous composition that transitions into shrub-herbaceous communities with pinyon/juniper re-establishing over time. Outside of the seedings areas, the Allotment is tree dominated with an understory of sagebrush and native grasses. The BLM will monitor these sites for future projects to ensure that canopy cover does not proceed to the point of elimination of the shrub-herbaceous understory as described within the ecological site description (see Appendix II).

A vast majority of the allotment shows no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. Grazing within the allotment occurs from May 1 to October 31 predominantly within the existing crested wheatgrass seedings. Grazing is not an issue that would prevent attainment of the stated objectives for soil stability. Monitoring will continue to ensure proper species composition and diversity.

Standard #2: Ecosystem Components

Standard met (achieved). Line Intercept Cover data collected at the Key Management sites indicates that the major plant communities are composed of appropriate plant species to meet ecological diversity standards (See pie charts 3 and 4 within Appendix II). The allotment is transitioning from prescribed burns that took place in 1998 as described within the ecological site descriptions. At KMA 1 and 2 there are plant species that were present but not included within the study plot. These included bitterbrush, needle-and-thread grass, and bottlebrush squirreltail. Utilization data collected on the allotment during the evaluation period indicate that use by livestock has been within acceptable limits of moderate use within the seedings. A majority of

the use occurs within the crested wheatgrass seedings. Use outside of the seedings is light to moderate.

Standard #3: Habitat and Biota

Standard met (achieved). Vegetation communities on the allotment are dominated by high altitude woodland type species. The main shrub species generally include sagebrush (*Artemisia spp.*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), cliffrose (*Purshia spp.*), and spiny hopsage (*Grayia spinosa*). The herbaceous species include blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), needle-and-thread (*Hesperostipa comate*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Sitanion hystrix*), Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), and small galleta (*Pleuraphis jamesii*).

Dominant species outside of the crested wheatgrass seedings that were not affected by recent fires are predominately pinyon/juniper woodlands with a diminishing understory of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, blue gramma and sagebrush. These areas are in danger of crossing a threshold of a predominantly woody community with little to no understory. This would cause loss of biodiversity and destabilized soils that would result in loss of vegetative resiliency when fire occurs.

1.2 Introduction of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue a new term grazing permit for Farnsworth Farms (operator 75002); Dwight and Shauna Dannelly (operator 2703578); Hilton and Mary Covington and Bob Bowler (operator 2703629) and authorize livestock grazing on the Enterprise Allotment. The current term permit and allotment information follows:

Changes to grazing management are recommended which would establish an Allowable Use Level (AUL) along with a Best Management Practice (BMP) within the allotment. Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration were developed by the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February 12, 1997. The AUL and BMP would assist in achieving and maintaining these standards.

BLM range staff collected and analyzed monitoring data; and completed an assessment of the rangeland health for the Enterprise Allotment in 2008, during the permit renewal process, through a Standards Determination Document (SDD) (Appendix II).

1.3 Need for the Proposed Action

The need for the proposal is to authorize grazing use on public lands in a manner which satisfies the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) while being consistent with multiple use, sustained yield and the Nevada's Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for Rangeland Health; to manage livestock in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies; and to renew the term livestock grazing permit on the Enterprise Allotment while introducing management practices, along with specific terms and conditions, directed toward the attainment and/or continued achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration.

1.3.1 Objectives for the Proposed Action

- To renew the grazing term permit for Farnsworth Farms (operator 275002); Dwight and Shauna Dannelly (operator 2703578); Hilton and Mary Covington and Bob Bowler (operator 2703629) and authorize grazing in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and land use plans (LUP) on 218,229 acres of public land.
- To improve and maintain vegetative health and growth conditions on the allotment while maintaining achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health as approved and published by Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC.

1.4 Relationship to Planning

The proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) signed August 20, 2008, which states, “Manage livestock grazing on public lands to provide for a level of livestock grazing consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and watershed function and health.” In addition, “To allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health (p. 85-86).”

Management Action LG-1 states, “Make approximately 11,246,900 acres and 545,267 animal unit months available for livestock grazing on a long-term basis.”

Management Action LG-5 states, “Maintain the current grazing preference, season-of-use, and kind of livestock until the allotments that have not been evaluated for meeting or making progress toward meeting the standards or are in conformance with the policies are evaluated. Depending on the results of the standards assessment, maintain or modify grazing preference, seasons-of-use, and type of livestock and grazing management practices to achieve the standards for rangeland health. Changes, such as improved livestock management, new range improvement projects, and changes in the amount and kinds of forage permanently available for livestock use, can lead to changes in preference, authorized season-of-use, or kind of livestock. Ensure changes continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including the standards for rangeland health.”

1.5 Relationship to Other Laws, Regulations, and Plans

The proposed action complies with the following:

- State Protocol Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Nevada and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (October 26, 2009)
- National Historic Preservation Act (Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C. 470 as amended through 2000)
- Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Standards and Guidelines (12 February 1997)
- Lincoln County Public Land Use Plan (2010)

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918 as amended) and Executive Order 13186 (see below)
- Executive Order 13186: Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds (2001)
- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended 1975 and 1994)
- The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. §§ 1701-1782, October 21, 1976, as amended 1978, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990-1992, 1994 and 1996)

1.6 Tiering

This document is tiered to the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Ely PRMP/FEIS, Volumes I and II) (November 2007).

1.7 Relevant Issues and Internal Scoping/Public Scoping

The Ely District Office mails an annual Consultation, Cooperation, and Coordination (CCC) letter to individuals and organizations who have expressed an interest in rangeland management related actions. Those receiving the annual CCC letter have the opportunity to request, from the District Office, more information regarding specific actions (e.g., term permit renewals).

On December 16, 2011, the Ely BLM mailed the annual CCC letter which notified interested parties of the livestock grazing term permit renewals scheduled for 2012.

On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes requesting comments regarding the permit renewal process for the Enterprise Allotment.

On February 14, 2012, a BLM internal meeting was held in coordination between the Caliente Field Office the Ely BLM District Office. The term permit renewal proposal for the Enterprise Allotment was presented and scoped by resource specialists to identify any relevant issues. No potential issues were identified.

On March 02, 2012, the BLM sent the three permittees a letter informing them of the proposed term permit renewal process scheduled for their allotment during 2012. No comments were received.

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

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2.1 Proposed Action

The Bureau of Land Management, Caliente Field Office proposes to renew the term grazing permit for Farnsworth Farms (operator 275002); Dwight and Shauna Dannelly (operator 2703578); Hilton and Mary Covington and Bob Bowler (operator 2703629) on the Enterprise

Allotment (11030) and authorize livestock grazing on the Enterprise Allotment. The issuance of the term grazing permit would be for a period of ten years.

The Proposed Action is to maintain the Active Use of 1,269 AUMs from May 1 to October 31 grazing period in accordance with the current term permit. However, the authorization of 1,269 AUMs, during any given year, would be based on annual forage availability.

The Proposed Action would also add other terms and conditions to the permit that would aid in achieving and maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards. No other changes to the permit would be made.

2.1.1 Current Permit

The current term grazing permit, for the Enterprise allotment (#11030) has been issued for the period May 1, 2006 to October 31, 2016. Table 2.1.1 and Table 2.1.2 below, display the current term grazing permit information in tabular format.

Table 2.1.1 Current Term Grazing Permit for the Enterprise Allotment

| Allotment Number Name 11030 Enterprise | Livestock Number/Kind | Grazing Period | | % Public Land | Type Use | AUMs |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|-----|------------------|----------|------|
| | | Begin | End | | | |
| Permittee Name | | | | | | |
| Farnsworth Farms | 70 Cattle | 05/1-10/31 | | 100 | Active | 423 |
| D. & S. Dannelly | 70 Cattle | 05/1-10/31 | | 100 | Active | 423 |
| H. &M. Covington/ Bob Bowler | 70 Cattle | 05/1-10/31 | | 100 | Active | 423 |

Table 2.1.2 Current Term Grazing Permit AUMs for the Enterprise Allotment

| Allotment Number Name 11030 Enterprise | Animal Unit Months (AUMs) | | |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | Active | Suspended | Preference |
| Farnsworth Farms | 420 | 289 | 709 |
| D. & S. Dannelly | 420 | 289 | 709 |
| H. &M. Covington/ Bob Bowler | 421 | 291 | 712 |

2.1.2 Proposed Term Permit

The new term permit would contain the same mandatory terms and conditions as the current term permit (Table 2.1.1).

The following Terms and Conditions would also be added to the Term Grazing Permit:

1. Allowable Use Levels on current year's growth of upland vegetation (grasses, forbs and

shrubs) within the Enterprise Allotment - during the authorized grazing use period (May 1–October 31) - will not exceed 45%.

2. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than five days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

In relation to grazing, there would be no additional terms and conditions needed management practices to conform to guidelines either to make progress toward or to maintain achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

The renewal of the term grazing permit would be for a period of up to ten years. If the grazing privileges associated with this term permit were transferred during this ten-year period - with no changes to the terms and conditions of the permit - the new term permit would be issued for the remainder of the 10-year period.

2.1.3 Invasive, Non-Native Species and Noxious Weeds

A Weed Risk Assessment was completed for this project (Appendix V). The term permit renewal area would also be monitored on a regular basis for noxious weeds or non-native invasive species. The measures listed in the Weed Risk Assessment will be followed, when grazing occurs on the allotment, to minimize the spread of weeds.

2.1.4 Monitoring

The Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) identifies monitoring to include, “Monitoring to assess rangeland health standards will include records of actual livestock use, measurements of forage utilization, ecological site inventory data, cover data, soil mapping, and allotment evaluations or rangeland health assessments. Conditions and trends of resources affected by livestock grazing will be monitored to support periodic analysis/evaluation, site-specific adjustments of livestock management actions, and term permit renewals” (p. 88).

2.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative, for livestock grazing, permit renewals is defined as “continuing to graze under current terms and conditions” in IM-2000-022, Change 1 (re-authorized by IM-2010-063)

Therefore, the No Action Alternative would reflect the status quo. The term permit would be issued without changes to grazing management, or modifications to the existing terms and conditions of the permit.

The renewal of the term grazing permit would be for a period of up to ten years. If grazing privileges were transferred during this ten-year period - with no changes to the terms and conditions of the permit - the new term permit would be issued for the remainder of the ten-year period.

2.3 No Grazing Alternative

Under this alternative a new term grazing permit would not be issued, once the current term permit expired, resulting in no authorized livestock grazing on the allotment.

This alternative was also considered and analyzed in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) which is addressed below.

2.4 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

The Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS) (November 2007) (Volume II) analyzes the Environmental Impacts of livestock grazing for the Proposed RMP and four alternatives (p.4.16-1 to 4.16-15.), including a no-grazing alternative (Alternative D). It also analyzes Environmental impacts on vegetative resources from livestock grazing under the Proposed RMP and the four alternatives (4.5-1 to 4.5-28), including the no-grazing alternative. No further analysis is necessary in this document for Alternatives A, B and C. However, the no-grazing alternative is additionally analyzed in this EA. The following is a list of the four Alternatives contained within the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS) (November 2007) (Volume II):

- Alternative A, The Continuation of Current Existing (No Action alternative)
- Alternative B, The Maintenance and Restoration of Healthy Ecological Systems
- Alternative C, Commodity Production
- Alternative D, Conservation Alternative (No-grazing Alternative)

3.0 Description of the Affected Environment and Associated Environmental Consequences

3.1 Allotment Information

Site-specific descriptions of portions of the affected environment are included, as needed, in the Environmental Consequences section of this EA to facilitate understanding of anticipated impacts. The Enterprise Allotment (11031) encompasses 21,090 acres of public land acres, and 120 private land acres occur within the Enterprise Allotment. The Allotment is situated in Clover Valley. The Allotment is located entirely within Lincoln County, in the north central portion of the Caliente/Ely BLM District approximately 15 miles southeast of Caliente, Nevada. The Enterprise Allotment is characterized by rolling hills and benches covered predominantly by Pinyon/Juniper woodlands. Elevation ranges from 2,500 feet above sea level (ASL) in Clover valley to 7,500 feet ASL along the foothills of the Clover Mountain Range. Generally, the precipitation level is between 10-18 inches on the allotment. Precipitation occurs primarily as winter snow or spring and fall thunderstorms and rains. Cattle are the type of livestock grazed on the allotment.

Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within a Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA), Wilderness Study Area, sage grouse habitat, or within desert tortoise habitat. There are no known riparian areas located within the allotment on BLM managed lands. There are several livestock watering locations on the allotment (see Appendix I). Elevations range from approximately 6,450 feet within the mountainous terrain to 5,900 feet in the lower portions of the allotment.

3.2 Resources Concerns Considered for Analysis - Proposed Action

The following items have been evaluated for the potential for significant impacts to occur, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively, due to implementation of the proposed action.

Consideration of some of these items are to ensure compliance with laws, statutes or Executive Orders that impose certain requirements upon all Federal actions. Other items are relevant to the management of public lands in general and to the Ely BLM in particular.

| Resource Concern Considered | Issue(s) Analyzed | Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Air Quality | No | <p>Air quality in Lincoln County is classified by the State of Nevada as being “unclassifiable” since no monitoring has been conducted to determine the classification and National Ambient Air Quality Standards; violations would not otherwise be expected in the county.</p> <p>The proposed action would not have a measurable effect on the air quality of Lincoln County. Any dust created would be expected to be ephemeral.</p> |
| Cultural Resources | No | <p>Impacts from livestock grazing on Cultural Resources are analyzed on page 4.9-5 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).</p> <p>According to the Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan, August 2008, it is the goal of the Ely District to identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations. They are to protect and maintain these cultural resources on BLM-administered land in stable condition. To accomplish this they are to seek to reduce imminent threats and resolve potential conflicts from natural or human-caused deterioration or potential conflict with other resource uses by ensuring that all authorizations for land use and resource use will comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106. In accordance with this act, “any material remains of past human life or activities which are of archaeological interest” shall be assessed and secured “for the present and future benefits of the American People”.</p> <p>Therefore, all ground disturbing activities related to livestock grazing (such as fence construction, road construction, water developments, etc.) within the allotment(s) associated with these Term Permit(s) will be subject to Section 106 review and, if needed, SHPO consultation as per BLM Nevada’s implementation of the Protocol for cultural resources. A Cultural Resources Inventory Needs Assessment was completed on April 9th, 2012; a copy of this assessment is in the project file at the Caliente Field Office of the BLM.</p> <p>Livestock grazing has been an historic use of federal lands, now managed by the Caliente Field Office, since the mid-19th century. The extent of effects from livestock grazing on archeological sites is difficult to determine, since extensive livestock grazing has occurred in this region for over 150 years.</p> |

| Resource Concern Considered | Issue(s) Analyzed | Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis |
|---|-------------------|---|
| | | <p>However, it is likely that the majority of the livestock-related impacts on cultural resources occurred prior to the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934.</p> <p>The BLM conducts field investigations and maintains files of archeological sites on public lands. Analyses of existing documentation indicates that concentrated livestock activities near water sources, along fences, and in areas where livestock seek shelter, could adversely affect cultural resources.</p> <p>The cultural staff will identify cultural properties being impacted by grazing activities to be monitored in order to determine condition, impacts, deterioration, and use of these properties. BLM archeologists, law enforcement rangers, and trained site stewards, to identify impacts and evaluate site conditions, conduct site monitoring. As necessary, strategies are developed and implemented in order to reduce threats and resolve conflicts to the property.</p> |
| Paleontological Resources | No | No currently identified paleontological resources are present in the project area. |
| Native American Religious Concerns and other concerns | No | On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes requesting comments regarding the permit renewal process for the Enterprise Allotment. Direct impacts and cumulative impacts would not occur, because there were no identified concerns through coordination. |
| Noxious and Invasive Weed Management | No | <p>Livestock grazing has the potential to spread noxious and invasive weeds. A Weed Risk Assessment was completed for this project (Appendix V).</p> <p>The design features of the proposed action in addition to the vigilant practices described in the Noxious Weed Risk Assessment will help prevent livestock grazing from spreading noxious and non-native, invasive weeds.</p> <p>No additional analysis is needed.</p> |
| Vegetative Resources | Yes | Impacts from livestock grazing on Vegetation Resources were analyzed on page 4.5-9 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Beneficial impacts to vegetative resources are consistent with the need and objectives for the proposed action. |
| Rangeland Standards and Health | Yes | <p>Impacts from livestock grazing on Rangeland Standards and Health are analyzed on pages 4.16-3 through 4.16-4 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Beneficial impacts to rangeland standards and health are consistent with the need and objectives for the proposed action.</p> <p>Analysis of the proposed action and alternatives is provided in the affected environment and environmental impacts sections.</p> |
| Forest Health ¹ | No | Cattle do not graze pinyon-juniper. |
| Wastes, Hazardous or Solid | No | No hazardous or solid wastes exist on the permit renewal area, nor would any be introduced by the proposed action or alternatives. |
| Wilderness | No | A portion of the Tunnel Springs Wilderness is within the Enterprise Allotment, but is excluded from grazing by a boundary fence. There are no Wilderness areas that are being grazed within the Enterprise Allotment. |
| Special Designations other than Designated Wilderness | No | No Special Designations occur within the project area. |
| Wetlands/Riparian Zones | No | No wetland/riparian resources occur on public land in the analysis area. |
| Water Quality, Drinking/Ground | No | The Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) disclosed effects to Water Resources from livestock grazing on page 4.3-5. |

| Resource Concern Considered | Issue(s) Analyzed | Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis |
|--|-------------------|---|
| | | The proposed action would not affect water quality (surface or groundwater sources) or drinking water in the project area. No surface water in the project area is used as human drinking water sources and no impaired water bodies of the State on Nevada are present in the project area. |
| Water Resources (Water Rights) | No | The Proposed Action would not affect existing or pending water rights in the project analysis area. |
| Floodplains | No | The project analysis area is not included on FEMA flood maps. The resource does not exist in the proposed project area. |
| Migratory Birds | No | <p>The migratory bird species that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix IV. This list includes BLM Sensitive species.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the portion of the Proposed Action, regarding rotational spring grazing in the south half of the allotment, and the establishment of Allowable Use Levels would aid in maintaining achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health; thereby, maintaining or improving habitat conditions for all migratory birds of concern.</p> <p>There is always a possibility that cattle or horses could trample the nests, and/or developing young, of ground nesting birds during the spring nesting period. However, the potential for nest trampling is anticipated to be remote and upon occurrence, would be limited to an occasional individual or nest. If nests were lost due to trampling, birds would likely re-nest.</p> <p>Grazing would also reduce the height of existing vegetative structure and cover to some degree. However, with the establishment Allowable Use Levels it is anticipated that vegetative structure and cover would be negligibly affected.</p> <p>In view of the aforementioned, it is anticipated that the impacts to migratory bird populations, as a whole, would be negligible; thereby, having no adverse affect.</p> <p>Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed action would not have a measurable effect on this resource.</p> |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Listed or proposed for listing Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat.* | No | There are no known Threatened or Endangered Species that are listed or are proposed for listing or critical habitat within the Enterprise Allotment. |
| Special Status Plant Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered | No | There are no BLM Special Status Plant Species known to occur within the Enterprise Allotment. |
| Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered | No | There are no BLM Special Status Animal Species known to occur within the Enterprise Allotment. |
| Fish and Wildlife | No | There are no lentic or lotic riparian areas located within the Enterprise Allotment on BLM managed lands. However, wildlife species (plant and animal) – including sensitive species – that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix IV. |

| Resource Concern Considered | Issue(s) Analyzed | Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| | | <p>Impacts from livestock grazing on Fish and Wildlife are analyzed on pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-11 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).</p> <p>Grazing would reduce the amount of available forage (grass and forbs); however, compliance with Ely Resource Management Plan standards for utilization percentages ensures that forage is present in the allotment after cattle are removed.</p> <p>Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed action would have no a measurable affect this resource.</p> |
| Wild Horses | No | Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within a Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA). |
| Soil Resources | No | <p>The Ely Proposed resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) disclosed effects to Soil Resources resulting from livestock grazing actions on page 4.4-4.</p> <p>Soils in the project analysis area are not prone to compaction or erosion problems; infiltration rates and soil permeability are high and soil textures are coarse throughout the area</p> <p>It is expected that the proposed action would not measurably affect soil resources.</p> |
| Mineral Resources | No | There would be no modifications to mineral resources through the proposed action or alternatives; therefore, no direct or cumulative impacts would occur to minerals. |
| VRM | No | The proposed action is consistent with the VRM classification objectives for VRM classes 2, 3 and 4 within the allotment; therefore, no direct or cumulative impacts to visual resources would occur. |
| Recreation Uses | No | Design features identified in the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to recreational activities |
| Grazing Uses | Yes | <p>Wildlife species (plant and animal) that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix IV.</p> <p>Livestock grazing is analyzed in the EA.</p> |
| Land Uses | No | <p>There would be no modifications to land use authorizations through the proposed action, therefore no impacts would occur.</p> <p>No direct or cumulative impacts would occur to access and land use.</p> |
| Environmental Justice | No | No environmental justice issues are present at or near the project area. No minority or low-income populations would be unduly affected by the proposed action or alternatives. |
| Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) | No | Resource not present in allotment. |
| Farmlands (Prime or Unique) | No | No unique farmlands occur in the State of Nevada. If the proposed project analysis area contains soils classified as potential Prime Farmlands, the Proposed Action would not alter the physical or chemical soil characteristics that affect farmland status. |

¹ Healthy Forests Restoration Act projects only

* Consultation required, unless a “not present” or “no effect” finding is made.

The resources listed within the above table, that are not present within the Enterprise Allotment and, therefore, do not require a detailed analysis include: Cultural Resources; Paleontological Resources; Native American Religious Concerns; Wastes-Hazardous or Solid; Wilderness; Special Designations other than Designated Wilderness; Wetlands/Riparian Zones; Floodplains; USFWS Listed or proposed for listing Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat; Special Status Plant Species-other than those listed or proposed by the FWS as Threatened or Endangered; Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered; Fish and Wildlife; Wild Horses; Soil Resources; Mineral Resources; Land Uses and Environmental Justice and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

The resources, listed within the above table, that are present within the Enterprise Allotment and were assigned a “No” under the “Issue(s) Analyzed” column, because they are negligibly affected by the proposed action, include: Noxious and Invasive Weed Management; Forest Health; Water Quality-Drinking/Ground; Water Resources (Water Rights); Migratory Birds; VRM and Recreation Uses and Farmlands (Prime or Unique).

The following are the remaining resources, listed within the above table, which are also present within the Enterprise Allotment and which were assigned a “No” under the “Issue(s) Analyzed” column, because they are negligibly affected by the proposed action. However, an analysis of grazing impacts on these resources may be found in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007), on the noted pages, and include: Air Quality; Cultural Resources (page 4.9-5); Water Resources (page 4.3-5); Watershed Management (page 4.19-8); Fish and Wildlife (pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-11); Soil Resources (page 4.4-4). Consequently, these resources do not require a further detailed analysis.

However, the following is a detailed analysis regarding Vegetative Resources, Rangeland Standards and Health, and Grazing Uses. These three resources were assigned a “Yes” under the “Issue(s) Analyzed” column in the above table; and have been identified by the BLM interdisciplinary team as resources within the affected environment that merit a detailed analysis. An analysis of grazing impacts on the former two resources may be found in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007), on the following noted pages: Vegetative Resources (page 4.5-9); Rangeland Standards and Health (pages 4.16-3 through 4.16-4).

3.3 Resources/Concerns Analyzed

The resources/concerns analyzed include Vegetative Resources, Rangeland Standards and Health, and Grazing Uses.

3.3.1 Vegetative Resources, Rangeland Standards and Health, and Grazing Uses

3.3.1.1 Affected Environment

Section 3.1, above, describes some basic information about the Enterprise Allotment.

An assessment and evaluation of livestock grazing managements achievement of the standards and conformance to the guidelines (Standards Determination Document or SDD) was completed in conjunction with this project (Appendix II).

Standard 1 is being achieved. The upland portion of Standard 2 is being achieved, while the riparian portion of this Standard 2 is not applicable. Standard 3 is being achieved.

3.3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the season of use would remain the same. It is anticipated and reasonable to expect, then, that Standard 1, the upland portions of Standard 2, and Standard 3 would continue to be achieved.

The Proposed Action would also add other terms and conditions, regarding Allowable Use Levels, to the permit that would aid in achieving and maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards.

No Action Alternative

All of the mandatory terms and conditions of the current permit, as displayed under section 2.1.1, would remain unchanged. Therefore, the impacts of continued grazing would not be anticipated to change the attainment of standards in the Enterprise Allotment.

No Grazing Alternative

For a short period of time following implementation, this may accomplish the same desired result as allowing periodic rest during the spring critical growing period for plants by allowing perennial forage plants rest during the vital phenological stages of their annual growing cycle. However, according to studies this benefit would be short-lived.

In fact, it is realized in the scientific community that, over time, grasses may become woody (too coarse to be palatable) from lack of grazing use. If this occurs, substantial forage can become wasted, because current year's growth is intermixed with older, cured materials that are nutritionally deficient and present a physical barrier to cattle grazing. Such plants would also lose vigor and become less palatable, thereby contributing to less productive rangelands for either wildlife or domestic livestock that depend on such a forage base.

Anderson (1993) elaborated on the consequences of choosing a No Grazing option. He states: "After a period of time, ungrazed herbaceous fibrous-rooted plant species become decadent or stagnant. Annual aboveground growth is markedly reduced in volume and height. Root systems likely respond the same. The result is reduction in essential features of vegetational cover, including the replacement of soil organic matter and surface residues, and optimum capture of precipitation." He also lists two other consequences: "(1) loss of quality herbaceous forage for wild herbivores, causing them to move to areas where regrowth following livestock grazing

provides succulent forage (Anderson 1989), and (2) increased hazard from wildfires that can be devastating from a rangeland watershed standpoint.”

Courtois et. al. (2004) found that 65 years of protection from grazing on 16 exclosures, at different locations across Nevada, resulted in relatively few differences between vegetation inside the exclosures and that exposed to moderate grazing outside the exclosures. Where differences occurred, total vegetation cover was greater inside the exclosures while density was greater outside the exclosures. Protection from grazing failed to prevent expansion of cheatgrass into the exclosures (Ely PRMP/FEIS pg. 4.5–27).

4.0 Cumulative Effects

4.1 Past Actions

Livestock grazing operations in the planning area developed during the mid to late-1800s. The Ely PRMP/FEIS summarizes livestock grazing history in the region on pages 3.16–1 to 3.16–3. Range improvements have occurred on all allotments to improve grazing management and include fencing, stockwater developments, and vegetation treatments. The Ely PRMP/FEIS summarizes wild horse history in the west, specifically on the Ely District, on pages 3.8–1 to 3.8–7. Wild horse use has occurred throughout the project area since the 1800s, this area is not a wild horse management area.

There have been limited previous actions occurring in the project area. Historical mineral mining has been common in the area of the Enterprise Allotment. There has been no historical oil or gas production and minimal oil exploration in the area. Woodcutting and pinyon nut gathering have been minimal on Enterprise Allotment. Hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and other recreational activities including OHV use have also been minimal. Small two track roads associated with these activities are not extensive and have not altered the landscape. Wildfire within the Enterprise Allotment is a naturally occurring event that is part of the ecological structure as described within the ecological site descriptions (see Appendix II). Wildlife use has not been intensive in the area and has not fundamentally altered the plant communities. Livestock grazing has taken place in this area since the late 1800's. There are a number of rangeland improvements to help in the distribution of livestock and ensure that an effective rest rotation system is in place to ensure standards and guidelines are met and will continue to be met. Two prescribed burns took place in 1998 to maintain the crested wheatgrass seedings that were put back in during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Precipitation in southern Nevada is highly variable with frequent drought periods. Precipitation data collected at the Enterprise BLM rain gage, for the years 1999-2007 (8 years) is displayed in Table 1 in Appendix II. The variability of precipitation ranged from four inches in 2002 to 18 inches in 2004.

4.2 Present Actions

There are three permittees holding grazing privileges on the Enterprise Allotment; Farnsworth Farms (operator 275002); Dwight and Shauna Dannelly (operator 2703578); Hilton and Mary

Covington and Bob Bowler (operator 2703629). All three permittees share the same season of use (May 1 to October 31).

Current activities or projects occurring in the project area are very limited. There is no current mineral mining or oil and gas exploration. Woodcutting and pinyon nut gathering are minimal. The seedings are currently progressing as described within the ecological site descriptions (see Appendix II). Current livestock grazing and wildlife use are not intensive in the area. Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within an HMA, Wilderness Study Area or within desert tortoise habitat. There are no known riparian areas located within the allotment on BLM managed lands.

Widely dispersed incidental recreation occasionally occurs within the allotment in the form of hunting, trapping, four-wheeling (OHV) and wildlife viewing. There is only occasional use of the small two track roads in the area.

4.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Widely dispersed incidental recreation will continue into the future. Livestock grazing will continue under the existing grazing permit on the allotment. Upon expiration, the permit will be considered for renewal through site-specific NEPA analysis.

4.4 Cumulative Effects Summary

4.4.1 Proposed Action

According to page 36 of the 1994 BLM publication *Guidelines for Assessing and Documenting Cumulative Impacts*, the cumulative analysis should be focused on those issues and resource values where the incremental impact of the Proposed Action results in a meaningful change in the cumulative effect from other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions within the Cumulative Effects Study Area (CESA). In addition, a comprehensive cumulative impacts analysis can be found in section 4.28 of the Ely RMP/FEIS.

The CESA for this project is defined as the Enterprise Allotment.

Additionally, the guidance provided in The National BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1 (2008), for analyzing cumulative effects issues states, “determine which of the issues identified for analysis may involve a cumulative effect with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions. If the proposed action and alternatives would have no direct or indirect effects on a resource, you do not need a cumulative effects analysis on that resource” (p.57).

A comprehensive cumulative impacts analysis can be found on pages 4.28-1 through 4.36-1 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).

The proposed action in conjunction with the past, present and reasonable foreseeable future actions would result in no noticeable overall changes to the affected environment. Grazing under the proposed permit renewal would aid in maintaining achievement of the Standards for

Rangeland Health, with the understanding that adjustments to grazing management would occur when any of the Standards are not being achieved. Appropriate action would be taken as soon as practicable but not later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on public lands are significant factors in failing to achieve the standards and conform with the guidelines (43 CFR §4180.2 (c)).

No cumulative impacts of concern are anticipated as a result of the proposed action in combination with any other existing or planned activity.

4.4.2 No Action Alternative

The no action alternative has the same cumulative effect as the Proposed Action.

4.4.3 No Grazing Alternative

The No Grazing Alternative, in combination with interrelated projects, will have no known cumulative effects on rangeland health.

5.0 Proposed Mitigation and Monitoring

5.1 Proposed Mitigation

Outlined design features incorporated into the proposed action are sufficient. No additional mitigation is proposed based on the analysis of environmental consequences.

5.2 Proposed Monitoring

Appropriate monitoring has been included as part of the Proposed Action. No additional monitoring is proposed as a result of the impact analysis.

6.0 Consultation and Coordination

6.1 List of Preparers - BLM Resource Specialists

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Andy Daniels | Wildlife Biologist/Project Lead |
| Chris Mayer | Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist |
| Travis Young | NEPA Coordinator |
| Andrew Daniels | Wildlife, Special Status Species, Migratory Birds |
| Mark D'Aversa | Soil, Water, Wetlands and Riparian, Floodplains |
| Cameron Boyce | Noxious and Invasive, Non-native Species |
| Nick Pay | Cultural Resources |
| Elvis Wall | Native American Cultural Concerns |
| Melanie Peterson | Hazardous & Solid Waste/Safety |
| Lisa Domina | Recreation, Visual Resources |
| Samuel Styles | Wilderness |

6.2 Persons, Groups or Agencies Consulted

This Final EA is being sent to the Interested Publics included on the annual Range Actions Interested Public Mailing List for 2011.

Public Notice of Availability

On December 16, 2011, the Ely BLM mailed the annual Consultation, Coordination and Cooperation (CCC) letter which notified interested parties of the livestock grazing term permit renewals scheduled for 2012.

On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes requesting comments regarding the permit renewal process for the Enterprise Allotment. No comments were received.

On February 14, 2012, a BLM internal meeting was held in coordination between the Caliente Field Office the Ely BLM District Office. The term permit renewal proposal for the Enterprise Allotment was presented and scoped by resource specialists to identify any relevant issues. No potential issues were identified.

On March 02, 2012, the BLM sent the three permittees a letter informing them of the proposed term permit renewal process scheduled for their allotment during 2012. No comments were received.

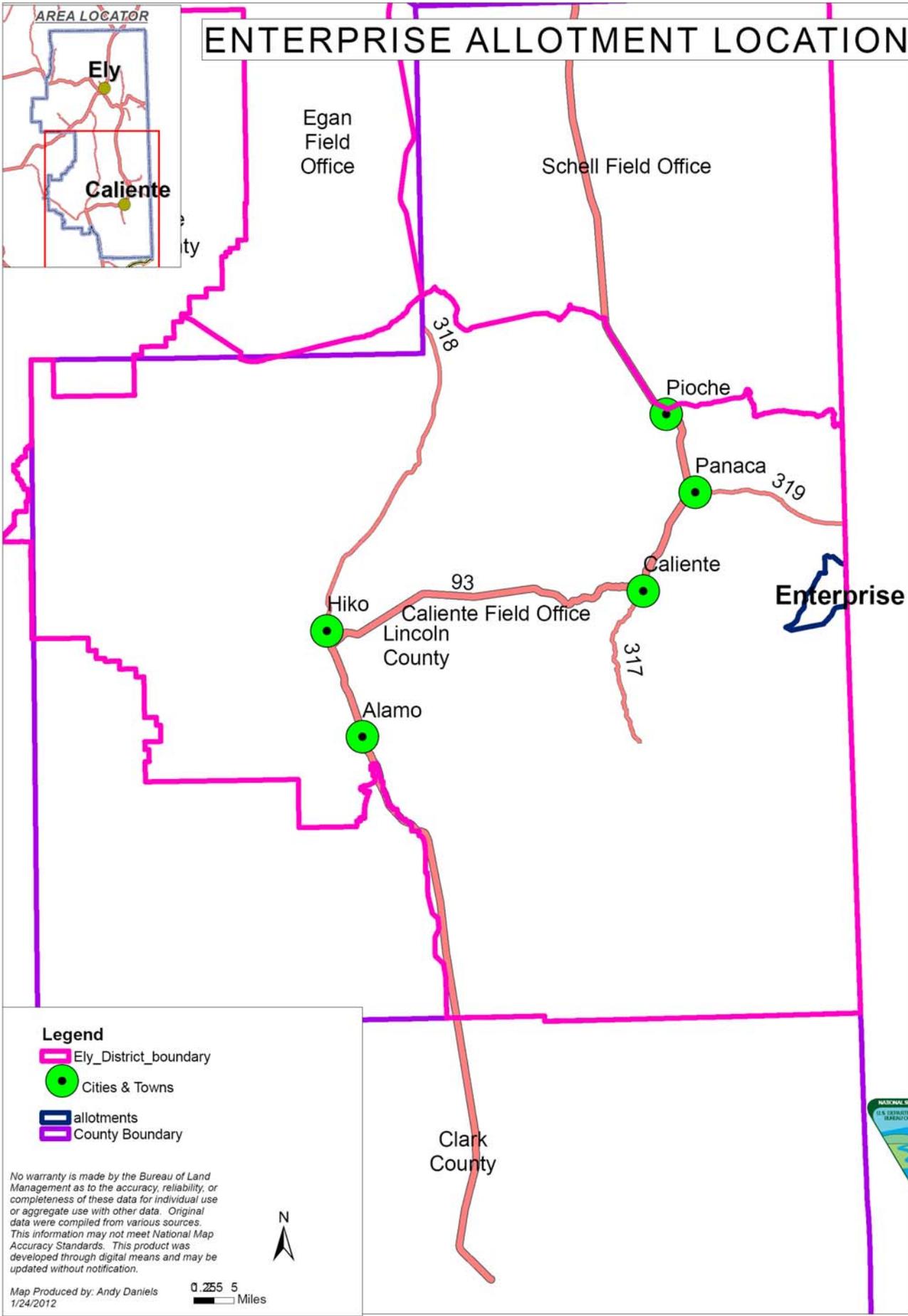
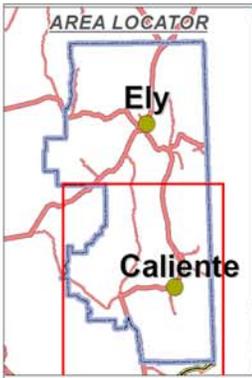
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APPENDIX I
(EA)

MAPS

ENTERPRISE ALLOTMENT LOCATION



Ely District Office



- Legend**
- Ely_District_boundary
 - Cities & Towns
 - allotments
 - County Boundary

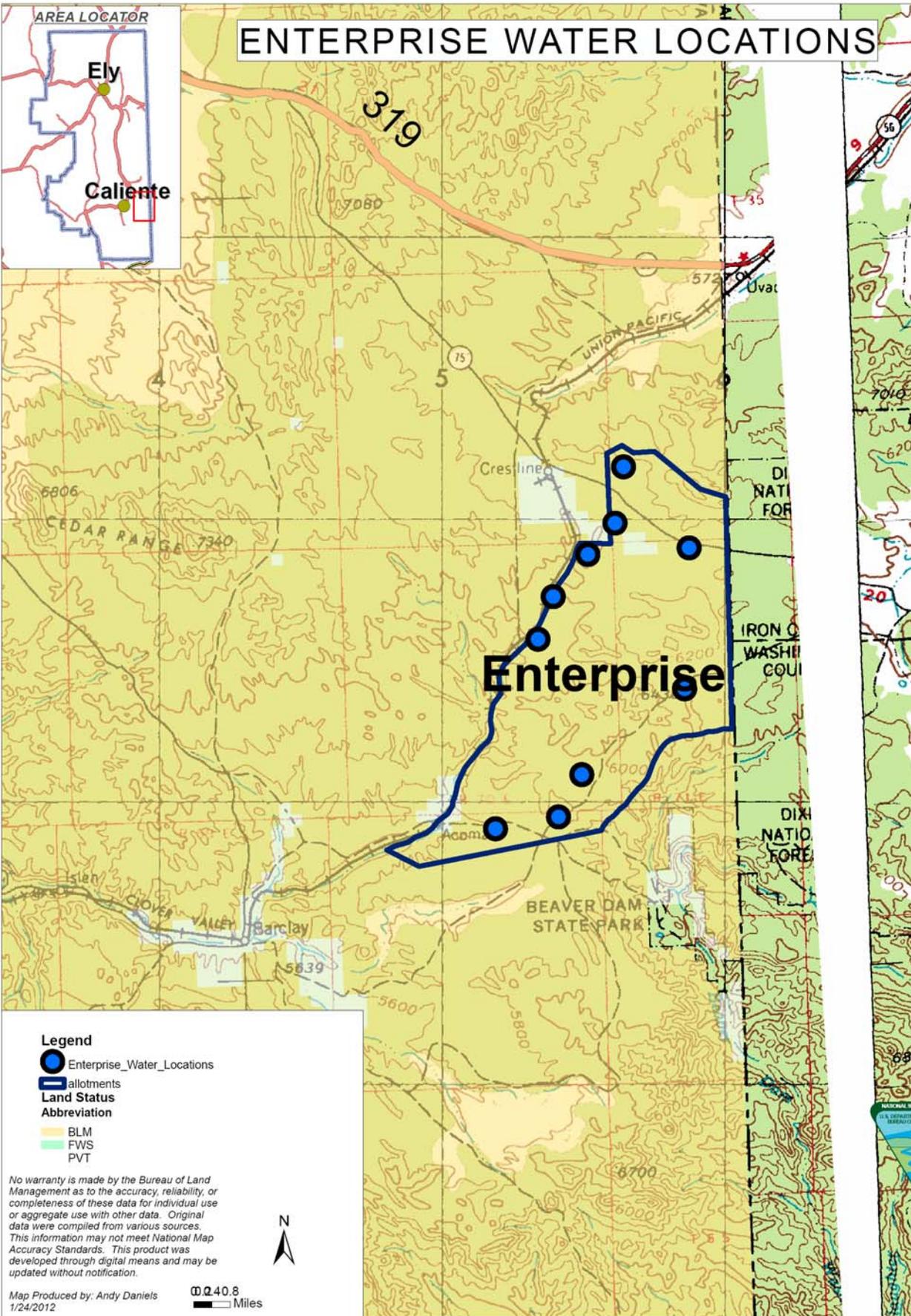
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.



0.25 5 Miles

Map Produced by: Andy Daniels
1/24/2012

ENTERPRISE WATER LOCATIONS



BLM

Ely District Office



Legend

- Enterprise_Water_Locations
- Allotments
- Land Status**
- Abbreviation**
- BLM
- FWS
- PVT

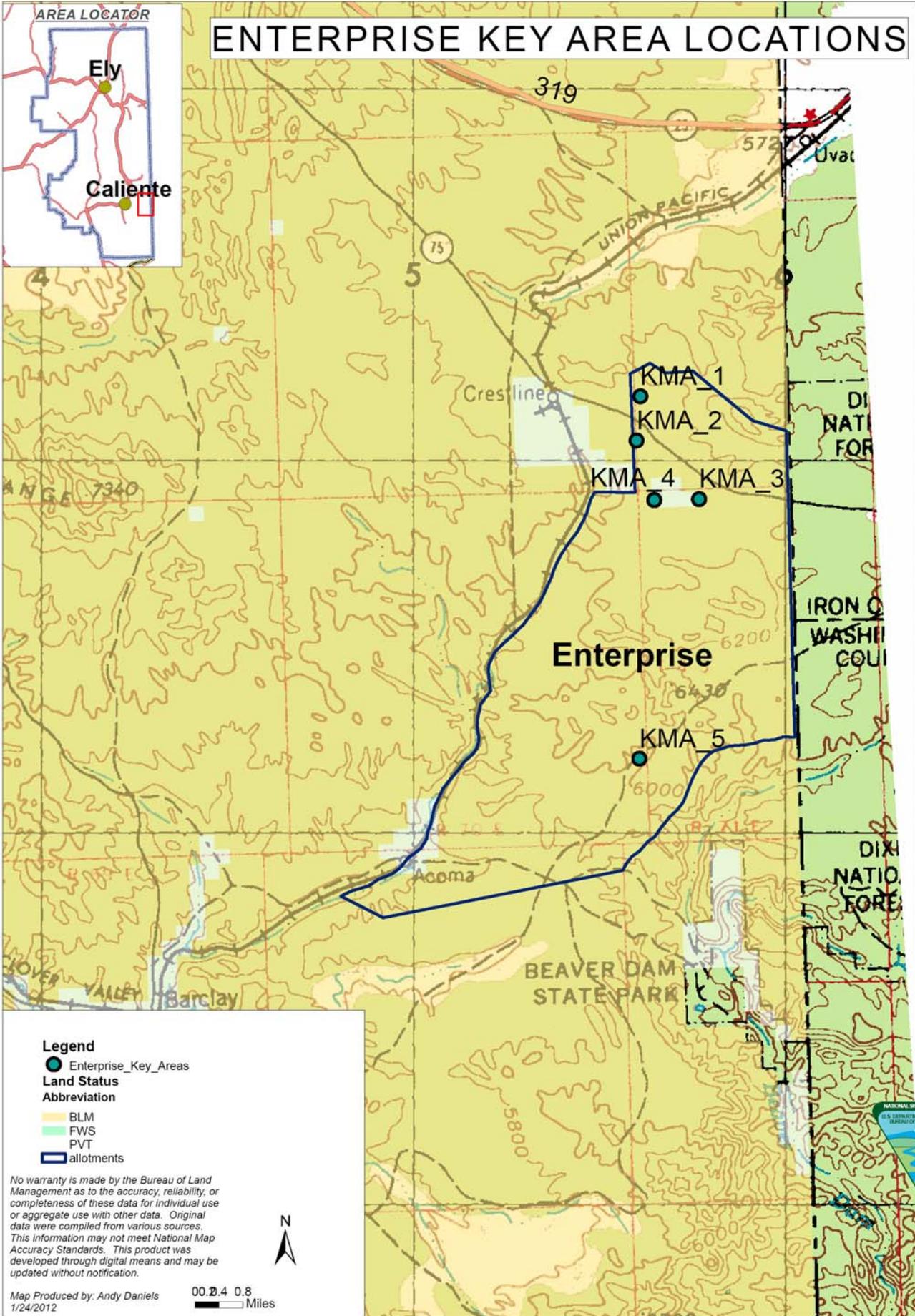
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Map Produced by: Andy Daniels
1/24/2012

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Miles

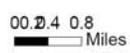
ENTERPRISE KEY AREA LOCATIONS



- Legend**
- Enterprise_Key_Areas
 - Land Status**
 - Abbreviation**
 - BLM
 - FWS
 - PVT
 - allotments

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1/24/2012



BLM

Ely District Office



APPENDIX II
(EA)

STANDARDS DETERMINATION DOCUMENT

Standards Determination and Evaluation Report
Enterprise Allotment
Prepared by Troy Grooms
May 2, 2008

STANDARDS DETERMINATION DOCUMENT

Farnsworth Farms Permit

Enterprise Allotment

Standards and Guidelines Assessment

The Standards and Guidelines for Nevada's Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area were developed by the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and approved in 1997. Standards and guidelines are likened to objectives for healthy watersheds, healthy native plant communities, and healthy rangelands. Standards are expressions of physical and biological conditions required for sustaining rangelands for multiple uses. Guidelines point to management actions related to livestock grazing for achieving the standards.

This Standards Determination Document evaluates and assesses livestock grazing management achievement of the Standards and conformance with the Guidelines for the Enterprise Allotment in the Ely Bureau of Land Management (BLM) District. This document does not evaluate or assess achievement of the wild horse and burro or Off Highway Vehicle Standards or conformance to the respective Guidelines.

The standards were assessed for the Enterprise Allotment by a BLM interdisciplinary team consisting of rangeland management specialists, wildlife biologist, weeds specialist, and watershed specialist. Documents and publications used in the assessment process include the Soil Survey of Lincoln County Nevada (NRCS year), Ecological Site Descriptions for Major Land Resource Area 29 (NRCS year) Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM et al. 2000), Sampling Vegetation Attributes (USDI-BLM et al. 1996), and the National Range and Pasture Handbook (USDA-NRCS 1997). A complete list of references is included at the end of this document. All are available for public review in the Caliente BLM Field Station. The interdisciplinary team used rangeland monitoring data, professional observations, and photographs to assess achievement of the Standards and conformance with the Guidelines.

PART 1. STANDARD CONFORMANCE REVIEW

Evaluation and Determination of Rangeland Health Standards for the Enterprise Allotment.

Standard 1. Soils

“Watershed soils and stream banks should have adequate stability to resist accelerated erosion, maintain soil productivity, and sustain the hydrologic cycle.”

Soil Indicators:

- Ground Cover (vegetation, litter, rock, bare ground).
- Surfaces (e.g., biological crust, pavement).
- Compaction/infiltration.

Riparian Soil Indicators:

- Stream bank stability.

Determination:

X Meeting the Standard

- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards
- Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

- Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.
- Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard
- Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

Guidelines Conformance:

X In conformance with the Guidelines

- Not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion: Standard Achieved

This woodland site occurs on mid to upper mountain sideslopes on all aspects. The soils on this site are shallow to bedrock and well drained. The average annual precipitation is about 14 to 18". The average annual growing season is 70 to 90 days. There are two chaining/seedings within the Enterprise Allotment that was completed in fiscal year 1964 and 1970. They are the Enterprise chaining/crested wheat seeding that is 3,375 acres in size and the Staheli chaining and crested wheat seeding which is 2,893 acres in size. In 1998 both chaining had prescribed burns on them to maintain the chaining and the native/non-native perennial understory.

The soils on the valley terrace and benches are gravelly silts, gravelly sandy loams, sandy loams, gravelly loams, or loams. The NRCS is currently in the process of finalizing soil mapping for the Clover Valley area.



UPLANDS: Vegetative cover collected at Key Management Area (KMA) 1 is within the Enterprise chaining that was completed during fiscal year 1964. The chaining was prescribed burned in 1998. Monitoring data collected March 2008 show that current cover is just over 30%. This KMA is within the crested wheat seeding so the ecological site description will not apply. (USDA-NRCS 6/91). The ecological site description for this site is a Pinyon/Juniper woodland site within a Precipitation Zone

(PZ) 14-18 inches 029XY102NV – PIMO/ARVA2/POFE/STIPA community. The approximate potential ground cover assuming a 25% overstory canopy cover of Pinyon/Juniper should have an understory vegetative composition of about 50% grasses, 10% forbs and 40% shrubs. Within the ecological site description it states “*Wildfire is recognized as a natural disturbance that strongly influenced the structure and composition of the climax vegetation of the woodland site.*” The soils on the site are stable and show no rill or gully formations. The vegetation on the range site shows good stature and vigor. The site is a shrub-herbaceous dominated site 10 years after the prescribed burn. The ecological site description describes this as “*Herbaceous vegetation and woody shrubs dominate the site. Various amounts of tree seedlings (less than 20 inches in height) may be present up to the point where they are obviously a major component of the vegetal structure.*”

The cover at KMA 1 was measured at 30.4% (see table 1) using line intercept method. Two perennial grasses accounted for a total of 66% composition representing 66% of the total cover measured while two perennial shrubs accounted for 34% of the composition. Crested Wheatgrass represented the majority of the vegetative cover at 40% composition. Other species present but not within the study plot were needleandthread grass, bottlebrush squirreltail and bitterbrush.



At KMA 2, this woodland site occurs on mountain summits and sideslopes on all aspects. The soils on this site are shallow to bedrock and well drained. The average annual precipitation is about 8 to 12". The average annual growing season is 90 to 130 days. KMA 2 is located within the Staheli chaining which was completed during fiscal year 1970. The chaining had a prescribed burn in 1998. Monitoring data collected in March, 2008 show that the current cover is 31.57%. Compared to the ecological site description (USDA-NRCS 11/93) the approximate potential ground cover

assuming an overstory of about 30% Pinyon/Juniper should have an understory vegetative composition of about 60% grasses, 10% forbs and 30% shrubs. Within the ecological site description it states “*Wildfire is recognized as a natural disturbance that strongly influenced the structure and composition of the climax vegetation of the woodland site.*” The soils on the site are stable and show no rill or gully formations. The vegetation on the range site shows good stature and vigor. The site is a shrub-herbaceous dominated site 10 years after the prescribed burn. The ecological site description describes this as “*Herbaceous vegetation and woody shrubs dominate the site. Various amounts of tree seedlings (less than 20 inches in height) may be present up to the point where they are obviously a major component of the vegetal structure.*”

The cover at KMA 2 was measured at 31.57% (see table 1) using line intercept method. Three perennial grasses accounted for a total of 21% composition representing 21% of the total cover measured while three perennial shrubs accounted for 79% of the composition. Bitterbrush represented the majority of the vegetative cover at 50% composition. Other species present but not within the study plot were Juniper and Blue gramma grass.

Although soils in the uplands are stable and exhibit no outward signs of erosion, vegetative cover appropriate for the site is essential for maintaining proper soil surface stability, reducing compaction and improving overall water infiltration. These are all indicators for the standard.

RIPARIAN: There are no riparian areas within the Enterprise Allotment and therefore will not be examined further within the document.

Monitoring Data Review

Table 1

| Line Intercept - 2008 | | | Ecological Site |
|---|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Key Area | Total Cover | Desired Cover | |
| KMA 1 | 30.44% | N/A | 029XY102NV |
| KMA 2 | 31.57% | N/A | 029XY120NV |
| Line Intercept measures the amount of vegetative cover intercepted in 100 feet. | | | |

Conclusion:

Standard Achieved.

KMA 1 and 2 are within crested wheat seedings that were put back during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Though the ecological site descriptions would not apply here, the sites are reverting to native woodland communities with healthy diverse shrub-herbaceous understories as described within the ecological site descriptions. Small wildland fires have occurred sporadically throughout the allotment over the last ten years measuring several hundred acres or smaller. The result has been as described in the ecological site description as a reduction in overstory canopy or tree cover and a significant increase in herbaceous composition that transitions into shrub-herbaceous communities with pinyon/juniper re-establishing over time.

Both sites show no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. Grazing within the allotment occurs from 5/1 to 10/31 predominantly within the existing crested wheatgrass seedings. Grazing is not an issue that would prevent attainment of the stated objectives for soil stability. Monitoring will continue to ensure proper species composition and diversity.

Standard 2. Ecosystem Components

Watersheds should possess the necessary ecological components to achieve State water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses.

Riparian and wetlands vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).

Upland Indicators:

- Canopy and ground cover, including litter, live vegetation, biological crust, and rock appropriate to potential of the ecological site.
- Ecological processes are adequate for the vegetative communities.

Riparian Indicators:

- Streamside riparian areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation, large woody debris, or rock is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows.
- Elements indicating proper functioning condition such as avoiding acceleration erosion, capturing sediment, and providing for groundwater recharge and release are determined by the following measurements as appropriate to the site characteristics:
 - Width/Depth ratio.
 - Channel roughness.
 - Sinuosity of stream channel.
 - Bank stability.
 - Vegetative cover (amount, spacing, life form).
 - Other covers (large woody debris, rock).
 - Natural springs, seeps and marsh areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation is present to facilitate water retention, filtering, and release as indicated by plan species and cover appropriate to the site characteristics.

Water Quality Indicators:

- Chemical, physical and biological constituents do not exceed the State water quality Standards.

The above indicators shall be applied to the potential of the ecological site.

Determination:

X Meeting the Standard

- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards
- Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

- Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.
- Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard

Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

Guidelines Conformance:

X In conformance with the Guidelines

Not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion: Standard Achieved

UPLANDS: Line Intercept Cover data collected at the Key Management sites indicates that the major plant communities are composed of appropriate plant species to meet ecological diversity standards (See pie charts 1 and 2 above). The allotment is transitioning from prescribed burns that took place in 1998 as described within the ecological site descriptions. At KMA 1 and 2 there are plant species that were present but not included within the study plot. These included Bitterbrush and Needleandthread grass and bottlebrush squirreltail.

| Vegetation Type | Composition using Cover | Potential Vegetative Composition |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Grasses | 66% | 50% |
| Forbs | 0% | 10% |
| Shrubs | 34% | 40% |

Potential vegetative composition according to the ecological site description at KMA 1. (029XY102NV)
Understory vegetative composition when the average overstory canopy is medium (20 to 35%).
The forb component is missing due to the time of year the data was collected (January 2008)

KMA 2

| Vegetation Type | Composition using Cover | Potential Vegetative Composition |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Grasses | 21% | 60% |
| Forbs | 1% | 10% |
| Shrubs | 77% | 30% |

Potential vegetative composition according to the ecological site description at KMA 2. (029XY126NV)
Understory vegetative composition when the average overstory canopy is medium (25 to 35%).
The forb component is missing due to the time of year the data was collected (January 2008)

Utilization data collected on the allotment during the evaluation period indicate use by livestock has been within acceptable limits of moderate use within the seedings. A majority of the use occurs within the crested wheatgrass seedings. Use outside of the seedings is light to moderate.

Standard 3. Habitat and Biota:

As indicated by:

- Vegetation composition (relative abundance of species);
- Vegetation structure (life forms, cover, height, or age class);
- Vegetation distribution (patchiness, corridors);
- Vegetation productivity; and

- Vegetation nutritional value.

Determination:

- Meeting the Standard
- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards
- Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

- Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.
- Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard
- Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

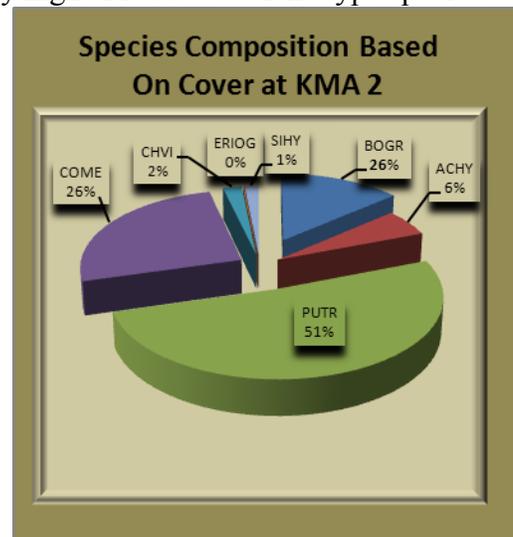
Guidelines Conformance:

- In conformance with the Guidelines
- Not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion: *Meeting the Standard*

Vegetation communities on the allotment are dominated by high altitude woodland type species. The main shrub species generally include sagebrush, bitterbrush, Cliffrose and spiny hopsage. The herbaceous species include blue gramma, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, and small galleta.

Pie Chart 3



Dominant species outside of the crested wheatgrass seedings that have not been affected by recent fires are predominately pinyon/juniper woodlands with a diminishing understory of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, blue gramma and sagebrush. These areas are in danger of crossing a threshold of a predominantly woody community with little to no understory. This would cause loss of biodiversity and destabilized soils that would result in loss of vegetative resiliency when fire occurs. The ecological site description states that; *In the absence of wildfire or other naturally occurring disturbance the tree canopy on this site can become very dense. This stage is dominated by trees that reached maximal heights for the site. Upper crowns are typically irregularly flat topped or rounded. Understory vegetation is sparse to absent due to tree competition. Tree canopy cover is at a maximum for the site and is commonly greater than 45%*

Pie Chart 4



Vegetation composition at KMA 1 is 34% shrubs with 66% herbaceous component and a small component of forbs. Vegetation potential according to the ecological site description is 50% grasses 40% shrubs and 10% forbs when the average overstory canopy is medium (20 to 35%). KMA 2 is 77% shrubs which include sagebrush, bitterbrush and cliffrose. The herbaceous component is about 21% with Indian ricegrass being the predominant specie within the monitoring plot. Blue gramma was present but outside of the monitored area. Vegetation potential according to the ecological site description is 60% grasses, 30% shrubs and 10% forbs when the average overstory canopy is medium (25 to 35%).

The invasive annual cheatgrass occurs in varying levels throughout the allotment but is most dominant along roads and disturbed areas by both livestock and wildlife.

Scotch thistle occurs along the roads that run along the border of the Enterprise Allotment (see Appendix V). The allotment borders Utah which does not have a weed survey for that area. The allotment will continue to be monitored for noxious weed species.

Utilization data shows the allotment has generally been grazed within the light to moderate range (21%-60% current year's growth) or less for the recent past years. The allotment is fenced into four pastures to allow for a rest rotation within the allotment. The fencing ensures that use is predominantly within the crested wheat grass seedings.

Since 2004 precipitation has been about average or above average resulting in increased stature and recruitment of new plants (see table 5).

In working with the BLM, the permittees have been grazing reduced livestock numbers of cattle on the allotment over the last three years. The reduction in use is a result of prolonged drought within the region during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Actual use on the allotment has been 10% to 70% percent of permitted use over the last three years.

The allotment is maintaining a diverse functioning ecosystem. The presence of annual grasses should be maintained at a minimum to reduce the threat of wildfire within the allotment.

PART 2. ARE LIVESTOCK A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO NOT MEETING THE STANDARDS? SUMMARY REVIEW:

Standard #1: Soils

Conclusion: Standard met (achieved). Both sites show no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. Grazing within the allotment occurs from 5/1 to 10/31 predominantly within the existing crested wheatgrass seedings. Grazing is not an issue that would prevent attainment of the stated objectives for soil stability. Monitoring will continue to ensure proper species composition and diversity.

Standard #2: Ecosystem Components

Conclusion: Standard met (achieved). Line Intercept Cover data collected at the Key Management sites indicates that the major plant communities are composed of appropriate plant species to meet ecological diversity standards (See pie charts 1 and 2 above). The allotment is

transitioning from prescribed burns that took place in 1998 as described within the ecological site descriptions.

Standard #3: Habitat and Biota

Conclusion: Standard met (achieved). Vegetation communities on the allotment are dominated by high altitude woodland type species. The main shrub species generally include sagebrush, bitterbrush, Cliffrose and spiny hopsage. The herbaceous species include blue gramma, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, and small galleta.

Dominant species outside of the crested wheatgrass seedings that have not been affected by recent fires are predominately pinyon/juniper woodlands with a diminishing understory of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, blue gramma and sagebrush. These areas are in danger of crossing a threshold of a predominantly woody community with little to no understory. This would cause loss of bio-diversity and destabilized soils that would result in loss of vegetative resiliency when fire occurs.

PART 3 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO CONFORM TO GUIDELINES AND ACHIEVE STANDARDS

Discussion:

Several management practices are recommended to conform to the Guidelines in order to continue meeting or make significant progress towards meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health. In general, livestock need to continue to be managed in a way to encourage even distribution throughout the allotment as well as continue with a rest rotation system.

Recommendations and terms and conditions for grazing use:

1. Maintain season of use as per the 1986 Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Enterprise Allotment. Up to 14 days extension (in accordance with 4130.3-2) for grazing may be permitted on a case-by-case basis and requires the approval of the authorized officer prior to use. Active use AUMs may not be exceeded.
2. Salt and/or mineral supplements for livestock shall be located no closer than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from water sources. Use of nutritional supplements (not forage) is encouraged to improve the ability of cattle to utilize forage in the winter months and to improve livestock distribution into areas previously slightly or occasionally grazed by livestock. Supplements are to be placed $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from existing waters.
3. Maximum allowable use levels would be established as follows:
 - Perennial grasses: 50% of current years' growth.

This use level is necessary to allow desirable key herbaceous species to 1) develop above ground biomass for protection of soils, 2) contribute to litter cover, 3) develop roots to improve carbohydrate storage for vigor, reproduction, and improve/increase overall cover.

- Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 45% use on current year's growth.

This use level is necessary to allow desirable perennial key browse species to develop woody stature able to withstand the pressure of grazing use. Use will be read in March or prior to the spring regrowth.

4. Wildlife escape ramps will be installed and maintained by the permittee at each trough used on the allotment (permanent or temporary).

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Date

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Invasive, Non-Native Species

Date

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**Soil, Water Quality, Air Quality, Flood Plains
Riparian/Wetlands**

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Cultural Resources

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Wilderness Values

Date

Melanie Peterson
Hazardous Materials

Date

Elvis Wall
Native American Concerns/Tribal Coordination

Date

I concur:

Ron Clementsen
Caliente Field Manager

Date

APPENDIX A

DATA ANALYSIS – ENTERPRISE ALLOTMENT

Grazing authorizations were examined for the permittee for grazing years 1999-2007. The licensed use ranged from 0 to 436 AUMs during the period. Reduced grazing use occurred due to both BLM and permittee initiative.

Table 1

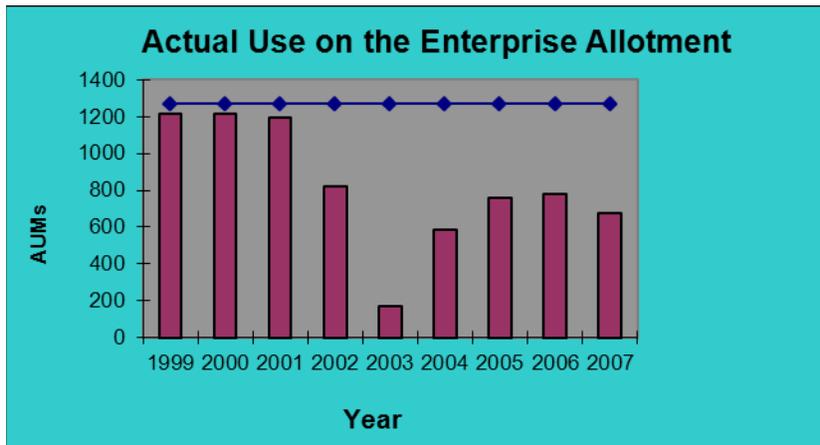
| Permittee | Allotment | Year | Period of Use | Permitted Use (AUMs) | Actual Use | Non-Use (AUMs) |
|------------------|------------|------|---------------|----------------------|------------|----------------|
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 1999 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 356 | 67 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 1999 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 436 | (13) |
| Preston | Enterprise | 1999 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 423 | 0 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2000 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 397 | 26 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2000 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 423 | 0 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2000 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 395 | 28 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2001 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 407 | 16 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2001 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 380 | 43 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2001 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 405 | 18 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2002 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 151 | 272 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2002 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 248 | 175 |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------|------|-----------|-----|-----|------------|
| Preston | Enterprise | 2002 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 426 | (3) |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2003 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 0 | 423 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2003 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 173 | 173 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2003 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 0 | 423 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2004 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 290 | 133 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2004 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 255 | 168 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2004 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 39 | 384 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2005 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 0 | 423 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2005 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 374 | 49 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2005 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 385 | 38 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2006 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 0 | 423 |
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2006 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 366 | 57 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2006 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 416 | 7 |
| Dannelly | Enterprise | 2007 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 0 | 423 |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------|------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|
| Farnsworth Farms | Enterprise | 2007 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 387 | 36 |
| Preston | Enterprise | 2007 | 5/1-10/31 | 423 | 292 | 131 |

***AUMs in parenthesis show areas where actual use exceeded active permitted use for the permittee, but not for the allotment.**

Table 2



Line Intercept Cover

Cover data was collected in 2008 at two Key Management Areas (KMA).

Current resource conditions related to the upland sites standard.

LINE INTERCEPT COVER DATA ANALYSIS*

Table 3

| KEY AREA INFORMATION | | SPECIES | COMPOSITION BY SPECIES BASED ON COVER |
|--|----|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| KMA 1 | | Sagebrush | 33% |
| Range site: 029XY102NV | | Rabbitbrush | 1% |
| Desirable Cover For Site:N?A | | Blue Gramma | 26% |
| Percent Cover Measured 2007: 30.44% | | Crested Wheatgrass | 40% |
| | | Forbs | Present |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| COMPOSITION BY GROUPS | | | |
| SHRUBS | 34 | | |
| GRASSES | 66 | | |
| FORBS | P | | |
| KMA 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| Range site: 029XY126NV | | Bitterbrush | 50% |
| Desirable Cover For Site: N/A | | Cliffrose | 25% |
| Percent Cover Measured 2007: 31.6% | | Rabbitbrush | 2% |
| | | Crested Wheatgrass | 14% |
| | | Indian ricegrass | 5% |
| COMPOSITION BY GROUPS | | Bottlebrush Squirreltail | 2% |
| | | Buckwheat | 1% |
| SHRUBS | 77 | | |
| GRASSES | 21 | | |
| FORBS | 1 | | |

Table 4

| Key Area | Percent Cover | Species Composition Based on Cover | | |
|----------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| | | | | |
| | | Shrubs | Grasses | Forbs |
| KMA-1 | 6.02% | 63% | 37% | T% |
| KMA-2 | 10.3% | 96% | 1% | T% |
| KMA-3 | 18.89% | 63% | 36% | 1% |

Utilization

Utilization was last measured using the key forage plant method in January of 2008. Overall use levels for the vast majority of the allotment that has been measured shows moderate to heavy utilization within the crested wheatgrass seedings and light to moderate outside of the seedings. The majority of the utilization takes place within the crested wheatgrass seedings.

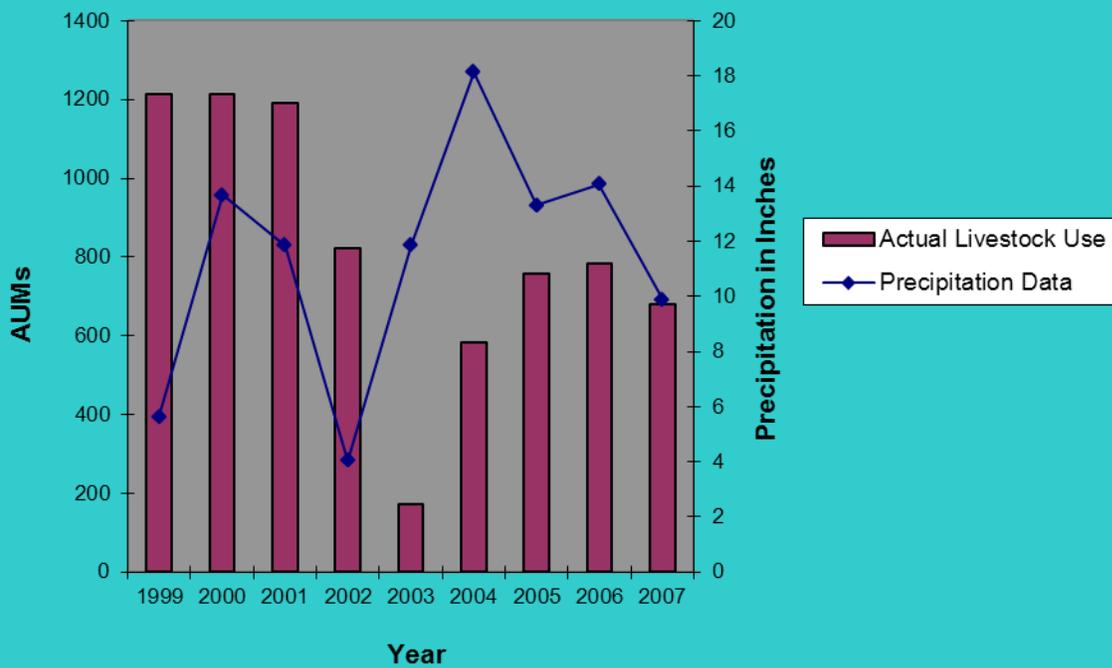
Rapid Riparian Assessment

There are no riparian areas within the Enterprise Allotment.

Precipitation Data

The precipitation data comes from the rain can on the Enterprise Allotment. Data is collected monthly (whenever possible) by the staff of the Caliente BLM Field Station.

Actual Use in Relation to Precipitation on the Enterprise Allotment



APPENDIX III
(EA)

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The following are required Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during the construction of fence enclosures around the Crescent, Blowfly and Cutler reservoirs:

1. Vehicle travel will only be permitted on existing, developed dirt roads.
2. Construction activities will be limited to times when soils are not wet or saturated, to lessen soil compaction by equipment.
3. No vegetation will be altered or removed during construction.
4. If possible, hand construction of the enclosure fences will not occur during the migratory bird nesting period (April 15 to July 15). If any fence construction is necessary during said period, a wildlife biologist will complete nest surveys - prior to construction - in order to avoid existing nests.
5. Construction will occur in coordination with a BLM project inspector (PI), according to BLM Handbook H-1741-1, along with current standard BLM fence construction specifications provided by BLM.
6. White flagging will be tied at each wire stay for visibility to animals. These will remain for a time sufficient to allow animals to see the newly constructed fence.
7. Maintenance of the fence enclosures will be the responsibility of the operator through cooperative agreement (Form 4120-6) with the BLM.
8. All equipment and assorted materials associated with the construction of the projects must be removed within 30 days after completion of the projects. All refuse must be removed from public lands immediately following project completion.
9. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(G) the holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer by telephone, with written confirmation immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4 (c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

APPENDIX IV
(EA)

WILDLIFE SPECIES LIST

Enterprise TPR Wildlife & Plants 1/23/12

According to the Ely RMP and the Nevada Natural Heritage Database, the following species may occur within the project area. **Highlighted species are BLM sensitive species in Nevada.**

Mammals/Avian

Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)

Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Elk (*Cervus elaphus*) general habitat

Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) crucial summer and general habitat

The project area is within hunt unit 242.

The project area is the Enterprise allotment.

The project area is with then Beaver Dam Wash (#215) and Clover Creek North (#212N) watersheds

The following data reflect survey blocks and/or incidental sightings of bird species within the project area from the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada (Floyd et al. 2007). These data represent birds that were confirmed, probably, or possibly breeding within the project area. These data are not comprehensive, and additional species not listed here may be present within the project area.

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*)

Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*)

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)

Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*)

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerine*)

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)

Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*)

Gray Vireo (*Vireo vicinior*)

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*)

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*)

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)
Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*)

Works Cited

Floyd T, Elphick CS, Chisholm G, Mack K, Elston RG, Ammon EM, and Boone JD. 2007. Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada. Reno: University of Nevada Press.

State of Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Nevada Natural Heritage Program. 2006. <http://heritage.nv.gov>.

USDOI. 2008. Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. BLM/NV/EL/PL-G108/25+1793.

APPENDIX V
(EA)

WEED RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS

Term Grazing Permit Renewal for Enterprise Allotment

Lincoln County, Nevada

On January 6, 2012, a Noxious & Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for the term grazing permit renewal for the Enterprise allotment in Lincoln County, NV. The proposal is to fully process the renewal of the grazing permit for Farnsworth Farms; Dwight & Shauna Dannelly; Hilton & Mary Covington, and Bob Bowler on the Enterprise Allotment (11031). The permit licenses Farnsworth Farms; Dwight & Shauna Dannelly; Hilton & Mary Covington, and Bob Bowler to graze up to 70 cows from 05/01-10/31 for a total of 423 active animal unit months (AUM) of use on the Enterprise Allotment. The issuance of the term permit would be for a period of 10 years. The allotment is located 23 miles east of Caliente, Nevada in Clover Mountains. The Enterprise allotment is located partially within the Tunnel Spring Wilderness area. The Enterprise Allotment encompasses 21,090 acres of BLM managed lands.

No field weed surveys were completed for this project. Instead, the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted. The following species are found within the boundaries of the Enterprise allotment:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Lepidium draba</i> | Hoary cress |
| <i>Onopordum acanthium</i> | Scotch thistle |

The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to the Enterprise allotment:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> | Bull thistle |
| <i>Conium maculatum</i> | Poison hemlock |
| <i>Lepidium draba</i> | Hoary cress |
| <i>Linaria dalmatica</i> | Dalmatian toadflax |
| <i>Onopordum acanthium</i> | Scotch thistle |
| <i>Tamarix spp.</i> | Salt cedar |

The Enterprise allotment has never been completely inventoried and was last partially inventoried for noxious weeds in 2008. It should be noted that the Enterprise allotment runs along the boundary with Utah and no weed inventory data for Utah is available. While not officially documented the following non-native invasive weeds probably occur in or around the allotment: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*).

Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| None (0) | Noxious/invasive weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious/invasive weed species in the project area. |
| Low (1-3) | Noxious/invasive weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be implemented and prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the project area. |
| Moderate (4-7) | Noxious/invasive weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious/invasive weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds within the project area. |
| High (8-10) | Heavy infestations of noxious/invasive weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area. |

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (4) at the present time. The proposed action could increase the populations of the noxious and invasive weeds already within the allotment and could aid in the introduction of weeds from surrounding areas. Within the allotment, watering and salt block sites are of particular concern of new weed infestations due to the concentration of livestock around those sites and the amount of ground disturbance associated with that. However, the proposed action would also increase the human presence in the area and the likelihood of weed detection.

Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious/invasive weed establishment in the project area.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Low to Nonexistent (1-3) | None. No cumulative effects expected. |
| Moderate (4-7) | Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited. |
| High (8-10) | Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious/invasive weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable. |

This project rates as High (8) at the present time. If new weed infestations establish within the allotment this could have an adverse impact those native plant communities since the allotment is currently considered to be mostly weed-free. Also, any increase of cheatgrass could alter the fire regime in the area.

The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| None (0) | Proceed as planned. |
| Low (1-10) | Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious/invasive weed populations that get established in the area. |
| Moderate (11-49) | Develop preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations. |
| High (50-100) | Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious/invasive weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations. |

For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (32). This indicates that the project can proceed as planned as long as the following measures are followed:

- Prior to entering public lands, the BLM will provide information regarding noxious weed management and identification to the permit holders affiliated with the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
- The range specialist for the allotment will include weed detection into project compliance inspection activities. If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriated weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations.
- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, hay/straw, or other organic products used for feed or bedding will be certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM Ely Field Office.
- Grazing will be conducted in compliance with the Ely District BLM noxious weed schedules. The scheduled procedures can significantly and effectively reduce noxious weed spread or introduction into the project area.
- Any newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds discovered will be communicated to the Ely District Noxious and Invasive Weeds Coordinator for treatment.

Reviewed by: _____

Cameron Boyce
Natural Resource Specialist

_____ Date

