

Categorical Exclusion Review

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Boise District Office
Four Rivers Field Office

Grouse Creek & Three Springs Allotments Grazing Preference Transfer

CE No.: DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0031-CX Lease/Serial/Case File Number: 1100151, 1103945, 1103946

Purpose and Need for Action: To address the Grazing Preference Application and Preference Transfer Application filed by Timothy L. and Donna M. Cobb in accordance with the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4110.2-3 Transfer of grazing preference) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Timothy L. and Donna M. Cobb. (Authorization # 1103945) purchased the base property attached to the grazing preference AUMs for the Grouse Creek Allotment, and they also have a base property lease agreement with Wayne Burkhardt for grazing use on the Three Springs Allotment (Authorization # 1103946). Loss of ownership and control of the base property along with cancellation of the base property lease agreement for Three Springs Allotment with Leverenz Ranch terminates the previous grazing permit immediately (43 CFR 4110.2-1. (d), (Authorization #1100151). Therefore, the acceptance and approval of the valid Application for Transfer of Grazing Preference (Form 4130-1a) would transfer the grazing preference from Leverenz Ranch (Authorization #1100151) to Timothy L. and Donna M. Cobb (Authorization #1103945, #1103946).

Description of Proposed Action: Transfer of the active grazing preference within the Grouse Creek Allotment (#00194) and Three Springs Allotment (#00053) from Leverenz Ranch to Timothy L. and Donna M. Cobb, due to a base property purchase and base property lease agreement. This transfer would result in two authorization numbers for the two allotments identified above. The terms and conditions of the new permits (authorizations: 1103945, 1103946) would be consistent with the existing permit that was issued on December 16, 2003 (authorization: 1100151), and are identified below. Issuance of two grazing permits is a separate action from the transfer and is addressed in the Determination of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA) # DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0032-DNA; in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.2 and 4160.1.

Permittee	Allotment	Livestock	Season of Use	Percent Public Lands	Grazing Preference AUMs		
					Active	Suspended	Total
Timothy L. or Donna M. Cobb	(Authorization # 1103945)						
	Grouse Creek (#00194)	352 Cattle	03/15-10/14	44	1090	0	1090
	(Authorization # 1103946)						
	Three Springs (#00053)	3	04/16-09/15	100	15	0	15

1. Livestock turnout dates are subject to Boise District Readiness Criteria.
2. You are required to properly complete, sign, and date an actual grazing use report (Form 4130-5) for each allotment. The completed form(s) must be submitted to this office within 15 days from the last day of your authorized annual grazing use.
3. Supplemental feeding is limited to salt, mineral, and/or protein in block, granular, or liquid form. If used, these supplements must be placed at least one-quarter ¼ mile away from any riparian area, spring, stream, meadow, aspen stand, playa, or water development.
4. You are prohibited from disturbing items of cultural, archeological and historic value on federal lands,

including, but not limited to, petroglyphs, ruins, historic buildings, artifacts, human remains, items placed intentionally with or near human remains, items devoted to traditional Native American religious ceremonies, or items having ongoing historical, traditional or cultural importance to Indian tribes. If you discover any of these items on federal lands, you must immediately stop ongoing activities connected with the discovery, make a reasonable effort to protect the discovered remains, items, or objects, and notify the BLM Field Manager of the discovery.

5. Grouse Creek (#00194) will be managed under a deferred rotation grazing system. Dates of pasture moves are outlined below and are to be used as a guide. Permittee will need to contact the rangeland management specialist responsible for administering this permit prior to making changes.
6.

Date	Approx ½ the herd	Approx ½ the herd
03/15 to 06/01	West Pasture(Mostly PL)	Handy Trap Pasture(Mostly PVT)
06/01 to 07/15	Crawford Pasture(Mostly PVT)	Beacon Light Pasture(PL&PVT)
07/16 to 10/14	Walker Basin Pasture(Mostly PL)	Crawford Pasture(Mostly PVT)
7. Utilization of perennial grass species will not exceed 50% of current year's growth as determined by the Quantitative Assessment Landscape Appearance Method (formally known as the key plant method).
8. Utilization on all shrubs will not exceed 30% of current year's production as determined by browse removal methods identified in chapter V in Interagency Technical Reference (1996) titled Utilization studies are Residual Measurements.
9. On annual rangelands, leave at least 30% of the current year's production of all grasses and forbs at the end of the scheduled use period for watershed protection and to discourage further invasion of noxious weeds and invasive plants.
10. On the Three Springs Allotment (#00053), season of use and livestock numbers will be at permittee's discretion provided overuse and watershed damage does not occur to the public lands.

Project Location: The Grouse Creek Allotment (#00194) and Three Springs Allotment (#00053) are located approximately 9 miles northwest of Weiser, Idaho. Public land is found in T. 12 N., R.7 W., Sections 6,7,16,17,18,20,21,22,23,26,27,28,33,34,35,36, T. 11 N., R. 7 W., Sections 1,2,3,4,10,11, T. 11 N., R. 6 W., Section 6 (See Attachment 1-Map of Grouse Creek and Three Springs Allotments)

Applicant (if any): Timothy L. or Donna M. Cobb (1103945, 1103946)

Part I – Plan Conformance Review

This proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan: Cascade Resource Management Plan (CRMP)
Date Plan Approved: July 1, 1988

Remarks: The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, because it is clearly consistent with the Range Program Objectives and Recommendations within the Range Management Section of the Cascade RMP.

Part II – NEPA Review

- A. Categorical Exclusion Review: This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9 D (Rangeland Management) for the (1) approval of transfers of grazing preference. And 11a issuance of livestock grazing permits where the new grazing permit is consistent with the use specified on the previous permit.
- B. Exceptions Review (Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review): Review the 12 exceptions which apply to individual actions within categorical exclusion. Environmental documents (EA or EIS) must be prepared for any actions involving these exceptions. The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents **MUST BE PREPARED** for actions which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.)

List of Exceptions

1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> This administrative transfer would not have any significant impacts on public health or safety. Livestock grazing is a recognized and authorized use, as identified in the CRMP.		
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; or ecologically significant or critical areas, or is not in compliance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: Water Quality & Wetlands/Floodplains: /s/ <i>J. Allen Carter</i> 06/23/2010 Sensitive Plants: /s/ <i>Mark E. Steiger</i> 6/28/10
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The allotment contains no unique natural or cultural features that would be affected by this transfer, and no ecologically significant or critical areas occur in the general area of the allotment. Sensitive plants: No T&E or Bureau Sensitive plant species are known to occur within the confines, or within the immediate vicinity, of the Grouse Creek Allotment. and as a consequence this action is not expected to have any affect on any known T&E or Bureau sensitive plant species.		
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> This administrative action would not have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)]. All known conflicts and controversial effects (such as climate change and OHV/livestock grazing) are managed under the CRMP and the grazing permit's terms and conditions. The proposed transfer of grazing privileges would result in no changes to current livestock grazing management; this is a routine administrative procedure. (EA#ID-110-2002-EA-19)		
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Livestock grazing is an ongoing activity, the continuation of which poses no unique or unknown environmental risks. (EA#ID-110-095-EA-02019., pp. 10-14, Appendix 1 pp. 3-4, p. 12)		
5. Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Transfer of grazing preference without changes from the previous permit, is a routine administrative procedure. This action neither establishes a precedent for future actions nor represents a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. A Rangeland Health Assessment, Evaluation and Determination of conformance with Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management and NEPA Assessment (EA#ID-110-095-EA-02019) for grazing permit renewal were completed, January 2002, and a DNA# DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0032-DNA for issuance of the grazing permits will be completed July 2010).		
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> This administrative action does not have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects. The impacts of livestock grazing in conjunction or cumulatively with other on-the-ground activities are already occurring, and would continue at the current rate and intensity as the existing permitted actions. Transferring existing grazing preference with no changes from the current authorization is neither individually nor cumulatively significant. (EA#ID-110-095-EA-02019)		

7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Dean C. Shaw</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The affected grazing allotment contains no known properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.		
8. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date for Plants: /s/ <i>Mark E. Steiger</i> 6/28/10 Specialist Signature/Date for Wildlife: /s/ <i>Jill Holderman</i> 6/22/2010 Specialist Signature/Date for Fisheries/Aquatics: /s/ <i>J. Allen Jarter</i> 06/23/2010
Plants <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No known federally listed, candidate, or BLM special status plant species occur within the area of the proposed action. (EA#ID-110-095-EA-02019 p. 2-3)		
Wildlife <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Potential habitat occurs for greater sage-grouse and Southern Idaho ground squirrels or candidate wildlife species. Other BLM special status wildlife species may occur within the affected area as well; however, the proposed transfer would not be expected to result in adverse impact because the proposed transfer of grazing privileges would result in no changes to current livestock grazing management. (EA#ID-110-095-EA-02019 p. 3, Appendix 1 pp. 3-4,11-12)		
Aquatics <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No known federally listed, candidate, or BLM special status aquatic species occur within the area of the proposed action.		
9. Violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Dean C. Shaw</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> This routine administrative procedure is consistent and compatible with all known Federal, State, local and Tribal laws or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.		
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Christina Handy</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no known low income or minority populations in the area of the proposed action. However, if low income or minority populations do exist, the transfer of existing grazing privileges would not be expected to have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on these populations.		
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Dean C. Shaw</i> 6/21/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no known ceremonial and/or sacred sites on public land in this allotment. However if sites were to be discovered in the future, the continuation of an ongoing activity would not limit access for ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners; nor would there be adverse affects to the physical integrity of sacred sites.		
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ <i>Lonnée Huter</i> 7/1/2010
<i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Transferring grazing privileges, for the continuation of current authorized grazing, would not cause additional influences to existing noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.		
I certify that none of the Departmental exceptions (Extraordinary Circumstances) listed in the above Part II (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action; therefore, this categorical exclusion is appropriate for this situation.		
Remarks: The transfer of grazing preference would allow for continued management of an existing allotment, with no changes to the previous grazing authorization, terms and conditions, preference, or to on-the-ground		

management. Issuance of a grazing permit to Timothy L. or Donna M. Cobb would be under a separate action and is addressed in DNA# DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0032-DNA; in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.2 and 4160.1.

Authorizing Official: /s/ *Terry A Humphrey*

Date: July 15, 2010

Name: Terry A. Humphrey

Title: Four Rivers Field Manager

Part III – Decision

I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record statements above and have determined the Proposed Action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to approve the Grazing Preference Application and Preference Transfer Application submitted by Timothy L. or Donna M. Cobb

Mitigation Measures/Other Remarks: None

Remarks: None

Authorizing Official: /s/ *Terry A Humphrey*

Date: July 15, 2010

Name: Terry A. Humphrey

Title: Four Rivers Field Manager