

MCKAY FFR 0457

INITIAL ALLOTMENT AND PERMIT/LEASE REVIEW and RANGELAND HEALTH ASSESSMENT

2013 Supplement to the McKay FFR Allotment Initial Allotment Review and Rangeland Health Assessment

The Initial Allotment Review and Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines Assessment for the McKay FFR allotment was drafted in 2006 as a portion of the grazing permit renewal process. Until 2013, no rangeland health determination was completed and the permit authorizing grazing use in this allotment has not been fully processed for renewal. The current document consists of the 2006 RHA, in full, supplemented by new information available since the 2006 document was completed. Portions of this 2013 document that supplement the 2006 document are presented in this two-field table format with the header above, while those portions carried forward unchanged from the 2006 document are outside the two-field tables. The 2013 Supplement to the document includes data compiled between 2006 and 2013, as well as the completion of the 2013 evaluation report and determination consistent with the Livestock Grazing Permit Renewal Desk Guide for Idaho Bureau of Land Management, May 2009. The 2013 determination for the McKay FFR allotment is compiled at the end of this document.

Field Office: **Owyhee**

Date: **December 2006**

1. Allotment Name/Number: **Mckay FFR - 0457**
2. Name(s) of Permittee(s)/Preference Code: **LU Ranching Company - 1101429**
3. Permit Expiration Date(s): **02/28/2007**
4. Acres in Allotment: Public Land- **26** Private-**782** State-**0** Other:
5. Percent of public land in the allotment: **3**

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Updated Land Status Acreage and Percent Public Land

Table ALLOT-1: Land status acreage* on the McKay FFR allotment

Public	State	Private	Total
261 (24%)	0	821 (76%)	1,082

*Acreages represent best available estimates

The estimated land acreages are based on corrected fence locations and GIS mapping information.

Currently, the grazing permit authorizes 20 AUMs at the permittee's discretion. The ORMP has allocated 2 AUMs. However, based on billing from 1988 to 2013, the McKay allotment has been billed at 20 AUMs.

6. Is public land large contiguous block(s) of public land, isolated parcel(s) or both?
The public lands are in two separate tracts which are isolated parcels.
7. Is the public land fenced separately from the private land? **No**
8. Is any public land within the allotment identified for exchange/disposal in the land use plan?
YES Percent of Public Land? **100** If yes, Has two year notification been sent? **No**
9. Does BLM have administrative access separate from the grazing permit/lease? **NO**
10. Does public have legal access to the allotment? **NO**
11. Is the public land physically isolated from the adjoining public land?

The public land is isolated by allotment boundary fences.

12. What is the livestock grazing management category (M, I, or C)? **C**
13. List all Land Use Plan (LUP) objectives and decisions (consider resource list, No. 14, for objectives and decisions in the LUP), other grazing decisions and other NEPA Documents pertaining to the allotment:

Owyhee RMP (December 30, 1999) and Proposed Owyhee RMP and EIS (July 1999) - See Land Use Plan Review below.

Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (August 12, 1997) - see guidelines 1-20 below.

14. Check the Standards, Guidelines and Resources that are applicable to this allotment. Following ID Team disclosure of information and data (monitoring data, studies, inventories Etc, information from other agencies, local governments, and the public) and the ensuing discussions, briefly describe in the comment section any issues (with supporting information). This information will be used to determine if existing data is adequate, or if More information is needed to determine compliance with the Idaho Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health.

Standard, Guideline, or Resource Issue	Check (if applicable)	Comments
Watershed (Standard 1)	X	In 2001, one Rangeland Health Evaluation was completed for the allotment. There was slightly more bare ground than expected but litter amounts were as expected. Water flow patterns were common on exposed slopes and pedestals were common in the interspaces. There were no gullies or rills observed. Based on this evaluation, some reduction in soil surface stability was observed. Stabilizing agents that assist in providing for proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type were reduced below what was expected for this site.
Riparian Areas, Wetland (Standard 2)		NA
Stream Channel, Flood Plains (Standard 3)		NA
Native Plant Communities (Standard 4)	X	In 2001, one Rangeland Health Evaluation was completed for the allotment. Bulbous bluegrass was common at this site. Although western juniper was more common than expected, bluebunch wheatgrass dominates the site. Plant vigor and seed production of bluebunch wheatgrass appeared

Standard, Guideline, or Resource Issue	Check (if applicable)	Comments
		to be good with some recruitment occurring. Litter amount was as expected for this site. There is no utilization or trend information for the allotment.
Seedings (Standard 5)		NA
Exotic Plant Communities (Standard 6)		NA
Water Quality (Standard 7)		NA
Threatened & Endangered Plant & Animals (Standard 8)		<p>Most of the uplands of the allotment are near reference conditions, deviation being in “None to Slight” and “Slight to Moderate” categories. The functional and structural groups are generally close to what is expected for the site and are likely to be providing habitat that is marginally adequate for the needs of most dependant special status and other wildlife species. Historic grazing, recent drought, and juniper encroachment are factors contributing to the “Slight to Moderate” deviations from reference conditions. Juniper encroachment is limiting cover, structure, and forage for sage grouse, numerous song birds, pygmy rabbits and others including a diversity of insects, rodents, birds and others that are critical prey for most raptors including prairie falcons, northern harriers and ferruginous hawks. Site stability is being provided by ground cover, litter and microbiotic crusts.</p> <p>This allotment is within mule deer and elk spring/summer/fall habitats. As previously mentioned, it appears that resource conditions are providing for adequate big game habitat.</p> <p>Mckay Allotment is unclassified habitat that is considered to be unsuitable for sage grouse. The habitat has juniper encroachment areas. Active leks have been found in the vicinity.</p> <p>Botany - No federally listed plant species are known to occur in this allotment although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) considers all of Idaho to be within the potential range of Ute ladies'-tresses (<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>), a federally threatened orchid species (USFWS 2002). No BLM special status plants are known to occur within this allotment.</p>

Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management		Data Adequacy, Comments, Concerns
1	Use grazing management practices and/or facilities to maintain or promote significant progress toward adequate amounts of ground cover to support infiltration, maintain soil moisture storage and stabilize soils.	Adequate data exists and Stabilizing agents that assist in providing for proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type were reduced below what was expected for this site.

Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management		Data Adequacy, Comments, Concerns
2	Locate livestock management facilities away from riparian areas wherever they conflict with achieving or maintaining riparian-wetland functions	NA
3	Use grazing management practices and/or facilities to maintain or promote soil conditions that support water infiltration, plant vigor, and permeability rates and minimize soil compaction appropriate to site potential.	See Number 1, above
4	Implement grazing management practices that provide periodic rest or deferment during critical growth stages to allow sufficient regrowth to achieve and maintain healthy, properly functioning conditions, including good plant vigor and adequate vegetative cover appropriate to site potential.	See Number 1, above
5	Maintain or promote grazing management practices that provide sufficient residual vegetation to improve, restore, or maintain healthy riparian-wetland functions and structure for energy dissipation, sediment capture, ground water recharge, streambank stability, and wildlife habitat appropriate to site potential.	NA
6	The development of springs, seeps or other projects affecting water and associated resources shall be designed to protect the ecological functions, wildlife habitat, and significant cultural and historical/ archaeological/ paleontological values associated with the water source.	NA
7	Apply grazing management practices to maintain, promote, or progress toward appropriate stream channel and streambank morphology and functions. Adverse impacts due to livestock grazing will be addressed.	NA
8	Apply grazing management practices that maintain or promote the interaction of the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow that will support the appropriate types and amounts of soil organisms, plants and animals appropriate to soil type, climate and landform.	See Number 1, above
9	Apply grazing management practices to maintain adequate plant vigor for seed production, seed dispersal, and seedling survival of desired species relative to soil type, climate and landform.	See Number 1, above
10	Implement grazing management practices and/or facilities that provide for complying with the Idaho Water Quality Standards.	NA
11	Use grazing management practices developed in recovery plans, conservation agreements, and Endangered Species Act, Section 7 consultations to maintain or improve habitat for federally listed threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants and animals.	See discussions under Standard 8 and Number 1 (above).
12	Apply grazing management practices and/or facilities that maintain or promote the physical and biological conditions necessary to sustain native plant populations and wildlife habitats in native plant communities.	See discussions under Standard 8 and Number 1 (above).
13	On areas seeded predominantly with non-native plants, use grazing management practices to maintain or promote the physical and biological conditions to achieve healthy rangelands.	NA
14	Where native communities exist, the conversion to exotic communities after disturbance will be minimized.	See Number 1, above

Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management		Data Adequacy, Comments, Concerns
15	Use non-native plant species for rehabilitation only in those situations where: a) native species are not readily available in sufficient quantities, b) native plant species cannot maintain or achieve the standards or c) non-native plant species provide for management and protection of native rangelands Include a diversity of appropriate grasses, forbs, and shrubs in rehabilitation efforts.	NA
16	On burned areas, allow natural regeneration when it is determined that populations of native perennial shrubs, grasses, and forbs are sufficient to re-vegetated the site. Rest burned or rehabilitated areas to allow recovery or establishment of perennial plant species.	NA
17	Carefully consider the effects of new management facilities (e.g., water developments, fences) on healthy and properly functioning rangelands prior to implementation.	NA
18	Use grazing management practices, where feasible for wildfire control, and to reduce the spread of targeted undesirable plants (e.g., cheatgrass, medusahead wildrye, and noxious weeds) while enhancing vigor and abundance of desirable native or seeded species.	NA
19	Employ grazing management practices that promote natural forest regeneration and protect reforestation projects until the Idaho Forest Practices Act requirements for timber stand replacement are met.	NA
20	Design management fences to minimize adverse impacts, such as habitat fragmentation, to maintain habitat integrity and connectivity for native plants and animals.	NA

Land Use Plan Review		
Livestock Grazing	X	<p>This allotment is identified as a "Custodial" category allotment in the 1999 Owyhee RMP. Custodial category allotments are also referred to as Fenced Federal Range (FFR) allotments. Generally, these allotments include less than 50% public lands intermingled with unfenced private and State lands. Livestock grazing is generally authorized as season long (3/1 - 2/28) and at the grazing permittee's discretion, as long as grazing management guidelines are adhered to.</p> <p>Active Permitted Use – 2 AUM's</p> <p>Grazing permittees submitted Actual Use in 1992. Cattle numbers were 140, season of use was from 6/5 to 6/29, and total AUMs used equaled 115 AUMs.</p> <p>LVST 1: Provide for sustained level of livestock use compatible with meeting other resource objectives. VEGE 1: Improve unsatisfactory and maintain satisfactory vegetation health/condition on all areas. SOIL 1: Improve unsatisfactory and maintain satisfactory watershed health/condition on all areas. SOIL 2: Achieve stabilization of current, and prevent the potential for future, localized accelerated soil erosion problems (particularly on streambanks, roads, and trails).</p>
Botanical	X	SPSS1: Manage special status species and habitats to increase or maintain populations at levels where their existence is no longer threatened and there is no need for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.
Cultural	X	There are no recorded sites within the allotment boundaries.
Fire, Fuel		NA

Fisheries		NA
Forestry		NA
Land		Under Objective LAND 2 of the Owyhee RMP these lands are in Zones 3 and 4 and may be made available for potential disposal.
Minerals		NA
Recreation		NA
Special Status Species	X	SPSS1: Manage special status species and habitats to increase or maintain populations at levels where their existence is not longer threatened and there is no need for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.
Wild Horses		NA
Wildlife	X	WLDF1: Maintain or enhance the condition, abundance, structural stage and distribution of plant communities and special habitat features required to support a high diversity and desired populations of wildlife.
Water Quality		NA
Riparian		NA
Soils/Watershed	X	SOIL 1-Improve unsatisfactory and maintain satisfactory watershed health/condition on all areas.

15. Describe BLM’s ability or inability to manage the allotment by considering the following, as applicable: Whether or not there is legal access; does federal land comprises majority of the allotment; is the public land acreage small (less than 640 acres) and surrounded by private land (isolated) and whether or not the federal land is fenced separate from the private land; etc.

There are 26 acres of public land in the allotment, which constitute three percent of the allotment. The public land within the allotment is divided into two isolated parcels. The allotment was placed in the Custodial selective management category. The allotment is a Fenced Federal Range Allotment that has permittee discretion on livestock grazing.

<i>2013 Supplement to the Mckay FFR Allotment Initial Allotment Review and Rangeland Health Assessment</i>
There are 261 acres of public land in the allotment, which constitute 24 percent of the allotment.

BLM is unable to manage the allotment due to its limited land ownership and a lack of separation from private lands. The actions on the private lands determine how the allotment is used and managed.

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Although total public land and the percent public land may be minimal in an allotment, public and/or administrative access may be limited, and the absence of high value resources may lead to categorization of the allotment with a low priority for management attention, the BLM’s obligation is to manage public lands.

Based on the information above the following is recommended to the field manager: (check the appropriate category)

1. ___ Review of existing information indicates that there is no livestock grazing or other issue. Available information is adequate to complete the evaluation and determination, (see

numbers 5,6,7,8, 11, and 15 above). **This is the RHA. Complete the evaluation/Determination Form.**

2. X Review of available information indicates that grazing or other issues are known to exist. However, the allotment has no or limited potential for management (see numbers 5,6,7,8,11, and 15 above). Available information is adequate to complete the evaluation and determination. **This is the RHA for this allotment. Complete the Evaluation/Determination form and consider the public land for disposal.**
3. _____ Review of existing information indicates the physical characteristics (e.g., slope, rock, location on the landscape, and lack of livestock forage) of the tract deter livestock grazing use on the public land. **Consider not issuing a new livestock grazing permit or lease. Further documentation is not recommended.**
4. _____ Review of existing information indicates that an issue(s) may or may not exist. The allotment is considered manageable (see #s 5,6,7,8,11, and 15 above). **Available information is adequate to complete the RHA. Complete RHA and the evaluation/determination.**
5. _____ Review of existing information indicates that an issue(s) exists. The allotment is considered manageable (see #s 5,6,7,8,11, and 15 above). More information is needed to determine current conditions. **Gather additional information and data. Complete the RHA and evaluation/determination.**

List the names and title of the member of the ID team involved with this review:

Name	Title
Jake Vialpando	Supervisory Rangeland Management Spec.
Bruce Zoellick	Fisheries Biologist
John Doremus	Wildlife Biologist
Kathi Kershaw	Natural Resource Specialist
Mike Mathis (retired)	Wildlife Biologist
Dianna Sampson	GIS Specialist
Brian McCabe	Archaeologist
Kelley Moore	Lands/Realty
Zig Napkora	Hydrologist
Pam Druliner	Fisheries
Pat Kane	Weeds/Range
Ryan Homan	Recreation Specialist
Paul Seronko	Environmental Protection Specialist/Soils

<i>2013 Supplement to the Mckay FFR Allotment Initial Allotment Review and Rangeland Health Assessment – List of Reviewers</i>	
Name	Title
Jake Vialpando	Project Manager
Bonnie Claridge	Fisheries Biologist
Tim Carrigan	Wildlife Biologist
Jayson Murgoitio	GIS Specialist

Brian McCabe	Archaeologist
Peter Torma	Range Management Specialist
Ryan Homan	Recreation Specialist
Kavi Koleini	Soils
Gillian Wigglesworth	Botanist
Jessica Gottlieb	Writer-Editor

Prepared by: Ecosystem Management Inc., Contractor November 2006

Modified by: Jake Vialpando – Team Lead **Date:** December 15, 2006

Field Manager’s Finding and Rationale:

Field visits completed in 2000 indicate that a healthy, productive, and diverse plant community is being maintained as appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform to provide for nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow in this allotment. However, resistance to erosion, proper infiltration and juniper encroachment are issues for concern. Based on the monitoring information available, current livestock grazing management in the Mckay FFR is maintaining current resource conditions.

This allotment includes only 3% Federal land (26 BLM acres versus 782 Private acres) and 100% of these lands are identified for disposal in the 1999 ORMP. BLM lands found within this allotment are isolated by private lands and allotment boundary fences, inaccessible, and BLM does not have the ability to appropriately manage this grazing allotment. Permitted (active) use is 20 AUMs.

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This allotment includes only 24 percent Federal land (261 BLM acres and 821 private acres) and 100 percent of these lands are identified for disposal in the 1999 ORMP.

Therefore, it is my conclusion to: (1) accept the above mentioned recommendation from the ID Team that there are livestock grazing or other issues in this allotment but conclude, however, that the available information is adequate to complete the evaluation and determination; (2) accept this Initial Allotment Review as the Rangeland Health Assessment; and (3), move forward and complete the Evaluation and Determination for this allotment.

Field Manager

Date

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Livestock Grazing Management
Table LVST-1 shows the reported actual use in the Mckay FFR allotment between 1997 and 2013

Table LVST-1: Reported actual use in the Mckay FFR allotment

Year	Date	AUMs
2012	7/15-10/14	390
2011	7/15-8/15	142

No data from 1997-2011

The AUMs are calculated as if the allotment were 100 percent public land, even though the allotment is mixture of private and public land. For this reason, actual use AUMs may exceed permitted AUMs.

Based on actual use and information from the permittee, livestock use (seasons and cattle numbers) within this allotment has varied depending on the year.

In 2012, upland utilization was collected. The utilization was 39 percent Poa species.

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Evaluation Findings and Determination

Standard 1 (Watersheds)

Watersheds provide for the proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate, and landform to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

Soils on the BLM-administered public land in the allotment are dominated by the Snell-Sharesnout complex (USDA NRCS, 2003). These upland soils occur on the foothills and flanks of South Mountain. The dominant ecological site associated with the Snell soils is the Loamy 13-16", Mountain big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass – Idaho fescue. Less common is the shallower Sharesnout soils, which support Shallow Claypan 12-16", Low sagebrush/ Idaho fescue ecological sites on convex sideslopes. In either reference plant community phase, juniper trees are only occasionally present, if at all.

An evaluation in 2001 documented rangeland health indicators at a location representative of the majority of BLM-administered public land in the allotment. The evaluation documents indicators of soil stability and hydrologic function on a Loamy 13-16" ecological site. Overall hydrologic function at the site is diminished by the over-abundance of juniper trees and under-representation of large-statured bunchgrass species. Water flow patterns, pedestals, and bare ground indicate a slight acceleration of erosion on localized areas of the allotment. Multiple age classes of juniper indicate a potential for downward trend in hydrologic function in the future.

Field observations from the 2013 site visit were consistent with 2001 findings. Juniper mortality was not apparent at near the levels of juniper recruitment, indicating an increasing population. The age-class distribution and location of juniper trees on this landscape suggest young trees establishing in the open sagebrush covered hillsides (Phase I), possibly from the older and denser juniper stands (Phases II and III) along draws and ridges. Hillsides and ridges are well armored in most places. Rock and gravel constitute major soil stabilizers on the BLM-administered

public land of this allotment.

Standard

- Standard does not apply
- Meeting the Standard
- Not meeting the Standard, Livestock grazing management practices are significant factors
- Not Meeting the Standard; Making significant progress toward
- Not Meeting the Standard; Livestock grazing management practices are not significant factors

Rationale for Evaluation Finding and Determination

Juniper tree encroachment is affecting overland flow indirectly by shading out those plant assemblages that would otherwise provide for strong hydrologic function, nutrient cycling, and energy flow. Although evidence of accelerated erosion is not severe, juniper age class distribution and areas of high bare ground indicate a potential for downward trend in the future. Historic grazing pressure may have promoted juniper encroachment if utilization levels and seasons were unfavorable to persistence of herbaceous plant species. Despite its limited time span, recent grazing information suggests seasons of use avoid the critical growing period for many herbaceous plants in the allotment. This information provides the basis for determining that current grazing is not a significant factor in the allotment’s failure to meet the watershed standard.

Standard 2 (Riparian Areas and Wetlands)

This standard does not apply in this allotment.

Standard 3 (Stream Channel/Floodplain)

This standard does not apply in this allotment.

Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities)

Healthy, productive, and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants are maintained or promoted as appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.

Standard

- Standard does not apply
- Meeting the Standard
- Not meeting the Standard; Current livestock grazing management practices are significant factors
- Not Meeting the Standard; Making significant progress toward
- Not Meeting the Standard; Current livestock grazing management practices are not significant factors

Guidelines

- Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management
- Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management; Guideline No(s). ___

Rationale for Evaluation Finding and Determination

The 2006 Initial Allotment and Permit/Lease Review and Rangeland Health Assessments and 2011 aerial imagery are the basis for evaluation of the Native Plant Communities Standard. Actual use and utilization are limited to 2012 and, therefore, have minimal contribution to this evaluation. The 2006 assessment consisted of one field evaluation conducted in 2001 that was located in the southeastern corner of the BLM-managed portion of pasture 1. The overall biotic attribute summary was a slight to moderate departure from reference conditions, with the presence of juniper the main concern. This allotment is not meeting Standard 4, given the strong presence of juniper.

Those indicators drifting from reference condition included hydrologic and soil stability along with the biotic indicator of functional/structural groups. Bare ground amounts were higher than expected and biological crusts were reduced. Pedestals were evidence of historical soil loss. Juniper amounts are high and interspatial bunchgrass amounts are low. At reference conditions, this site should be dominated by Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass. Bluebunch wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass were reported as the dominant grasses and Idaho fescue was reported to be greatly reduced from the site. Juniper was noted to be too high of a presence. While trend data are not available for this site, the greater-than-expected presence of juniper and its highly competitive ability to maximize resources may be giving way to higher bare ground amounts and the lower-than-expected amounts of interspatial grasses that were observed.

Photos associated with the 2001 assessment indicate a diverse age class of juniper and, therefore, concern for continued invasion. Aerial imagery from 2011 (USDA FSA, 2011) identify a dominance of juniper on the Shallow Claypan 12-16" and Loamy 13-16" ecological sites that make up the entirety of BLM-administered lands. These ecological site descriptions identify juniper as an invasive species that when dominant, results in a new state requiring management inputs to restore ecological function of the reference site sagebrush/bunchgrass state.

Standard 4 is not met in the Mckay FFR allotment. As observed in the 2011 aerial imagery, juniper dominates the majority of public lands in this allotment. Invasive species are present with juniper invasion a concern in further compromising future ecological sustainability. Although precise dates of current livestock grazing management are unknown the permit currently allows for year round grazing. Incorporating rest years into the grazing management practices would potentially enhance recruitment of plants when favorable climatic events occur providing a more resilient plant community in response to environmental stressors such as invasive species increase. However, rest is not the only solution to enhance the vegetative health of the allotment.

Rangeland Seeding

This standard does not apply in this allotment.

Exotic Plant Communities

This standard does not apply in this allotment

Standard 7 (Water Quality)

This standard does not apply in this allotment.

Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals)

Habitats are suitable to maintain viable populations of threatened and endangered, sensitive, and other special status species.

Standard

- Standard does not apply
- Meeting the Standard
- Not meeting the Standard, Livestock grazing management practices are significant factors
- Not Meeting the Standard; Making significant progress toward
- Not Meeting the Standard; Livestock grazing management practices are not significant factors

Guidelines

- Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management
- Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management; Guideline No(s). ___

Rationale for Evaluation Finding and Determination

Botany

No Federally listed Threatened or Endangered plants or BLM special status plants are known to occur in the McKay FFR allotment.

Wildlife

No Federally listed threatened or endangered animals are known to occur in McKay FFR allotment. One candidate species, the Columbia spotted frog, could potentially occur in the allotment, as surveys have never been conducted in the allotment and potential habitat does exist on private lands. A second candidate species, the greater sage-grouse, has no designated Preliminary Priority Habitat in the allotment, but the majority of the allotment west of Juniper Creek is designated Preliminary General Habitat. As many as 11 mammal, 20 bird, two amphibian, two fish and three reptile species with BLM special status (including Watch List Species) potentially occur within the allotment. No special status species have been recorded in the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System within the allotment; however, redband trout are known to occur on private land in Juniper Creek and western toads were discovered nearby on BLM land in 2013. In fact, white-faced ibis, white-headed woodpecker, ferruginous hawk, and sage thrasher are the only other special status species that have been documented within 3 miles of McKay FFR allotment.

The evaluation and determination for special status animals (Standard 8) was based on evaluations for Standards 1 and 4, as their analyses directly reflect conditions of wildlife habitat on uplands in the allotment. McKay FFR was visited in 2013 to qualitatively evaluate BLM-administered lands on the allotment. The allotment contained heavy (Phases II and III) juniper along draws and ridges and lighter (Phase I) juniper on hillsides. Very few acres in the allotment serve as potential sage-grouse habitat.

Upland habitats were found to not be meeting Standard 4; however, it was determined that livestock grazing management practices were not significant factors leading to the determination. Livestock grazing may contribute to a decline in upland herbaceous vegetation as the current

permit allows for an unrestricted period for grazing; however, juniper expansion is the driving factor in the allotment not meeting Standard 8. Actual use grazing reporting has been limited in the allotment, but if use is restricted to mid-July to mid-October, plants would be late in their annual growth cycle and less affected by grazing. If unchecked, the prevalence of juniper and bulbous bluegrass invasion may continue and eventually affect special status species dependent on sagebrush communities. However, some special status species may benefit from juniper existence, such as bat species that can use the area for roosting sites.

Determination

I have determined that Standards 1, 4, and 8 of the applicable Standards for Rangeland Health are not being met in the Mckay FFR allotment. Standards 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 are not applicable to this allotment. Current livestock grazing management practices are not a significant factor in not meeting Standards 1, 4, and 8.

 _____ 8/29/13 _____
Field Manager Date
Owyhee Field Office

Works Cited (2013 Supplement)

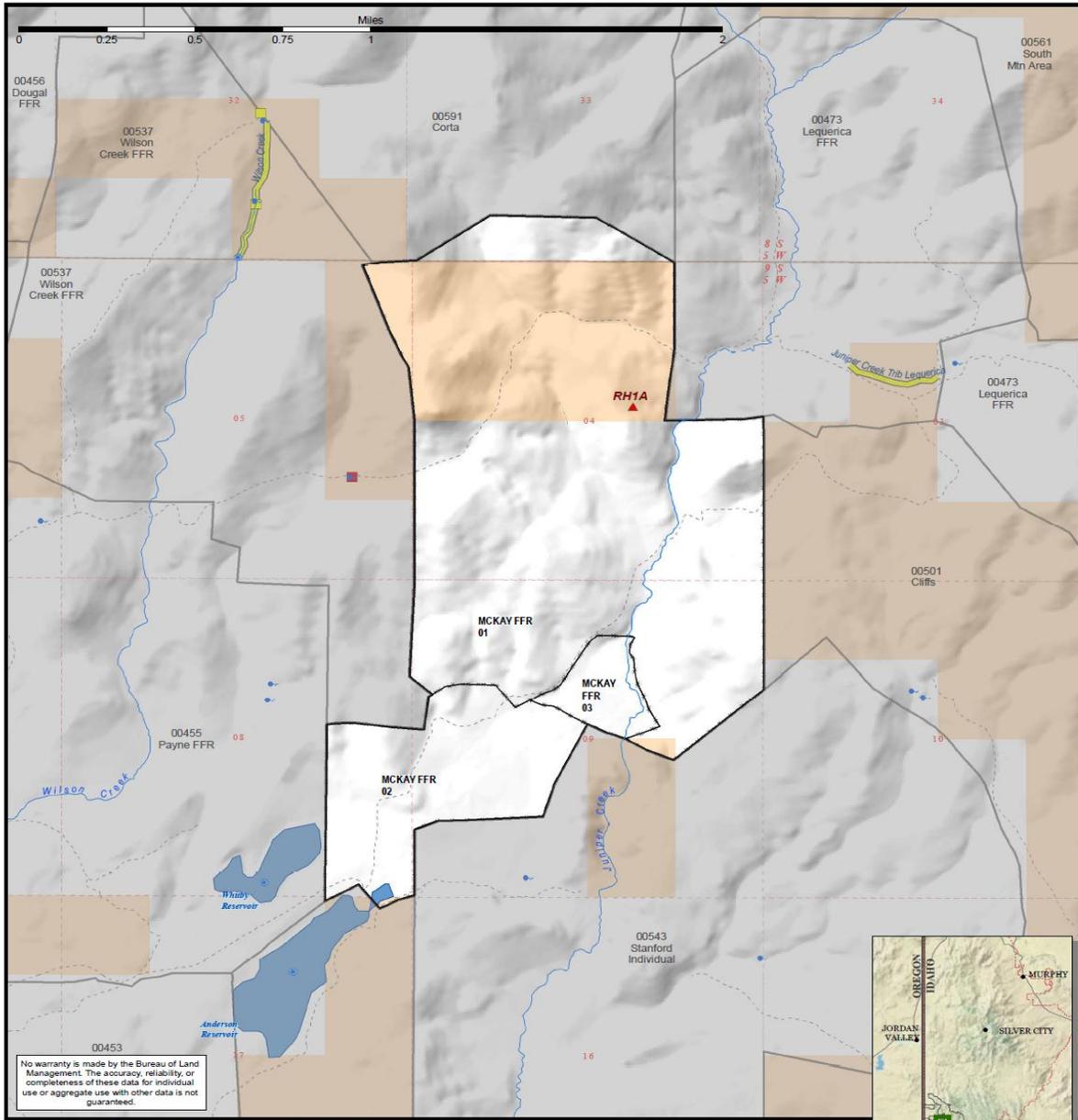
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- USDA NRCS. (2003). *Soil Survey of Owyhee County Area, Idaho*. Boise, Idaho: Natural Resource Conservation Service.

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Updated McKay FFR Map

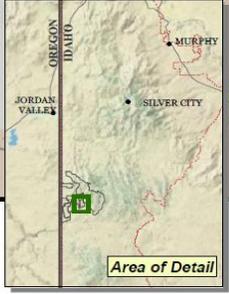


RNGE-1: Mckay FFR (00457) Range and Riparian Overview



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Nested Plot Frequency Trend | Spring/Stream Assessment Rating | Improved Road | Management |
| Rangeland Health Assessment Point | PFC (Proper Functioning Condition) | 4WD Road | BLM |
| Allotment of Interest Boundary | FAR (Functioning At Risk) | Gate | State |
| Pasture Boundary | NF (Non-Functioning) | Stock Pond | Private |
| Other Allotment Boundary | MIM Riparian Monitoring | Spring | Lake/Reservoir |
| Enclosure | Perennial Stream | Trough | |



1:24,000