

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION

CX No. DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2013-0033-CX

A. BACKGROUND

BLM Office: Four Rivers Field Office, Boise District

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: 1104349 and 1101649

Proposed Action Title/Type: Indian Creek FFR (00878) allotment Grazing Preference Transfer

Location of Proposed Action: The approximate center point of the Indian Creek FFR (00878) is located approximately 17 miles southeast of Boise, Idaho (Map 1).

Description of Proposed Action: Transfer 120 AUMs of active and 28 AUMs of suspended grazing preference for the Indian Creek FFR (00878) Allotment from Thomas T. Nicholson (Operator #: 1101649) to TFI, LP (Operator #: 1104349). The Terms and Conditions of the new permit would be consistent with the previous permit. Thomas T. Nicholson and Diana R. Nicholson have, through Warranty Deed, transferred legal title and control of the base properties to which the grazing preference within the Indian Creek FFR (00878) Allotment is currently attached. Per CFR 4110.2-3, TFI, LP has paid the appropriate fee and submitted an application for the grazing privileges within the allotment.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Land Use Plan Name: Kuna Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Date Approved or Amended: March 18, 1983

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions): Range Program Objectives and Recommendations within the Range Management Section of the Kuna MFP

C: COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA:

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9. D. Rangeland Management

Category Description: D. Rangeland Management, 1) Approval of transfers of grazing preference. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances that would introduce potential effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM6 apply.

The following list of Extraordinary Circumstances (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) was considered:

1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Comments/Explanation: 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 Kuna MFP.

Specialist Signature/Date /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

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.

Comments/Explanation: The allotment contains occupied and slickspot peppergrass habitat. Slickspot peppergrass (Type 1) is a proposed endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. This action would not have significant impacts on natural resources and/or unique geographic characteristics within the proposed action area or adjacent lands.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ J. Allen Tarter, Natural Resources Specialist, 1/13/14

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Joseph M. Weldon, Wildlife Biologist, 1/13/14

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mark E. Steiger Botanist, 1/13/14

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Dean C. Shaw, Archaeologist, 1/13/14

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].

Comments/Explanation: Alternative uses of available resources are set forth in the Kuna MFP. There would be no known unresolved conflicts as a result of the transfer of the grazing preference.

Specialist Signature/Date /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Comments/Explanation: Livestock grazing is an ongoing activity, the continuation of which would pose no unique or unknown environmental risks.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

5. Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Comments/Explanation: Livestock grazing under the current terms and conditions (kind, dates, AUMs) has been fully analyzed under the current MFP, and transfer of this preference without changes is considered an administrative action under both the MFP, and NEPA handbook. Further, the conditions for transfer of the current grazing preference are in conformance with CFR 4110.1, 4110.2, 4110.2-3 and 4120.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

Comments/Explanation: A grazing preference transfer would neither add to nor detract from current grazing practices in the allotment or adjacent areas. Therefore, cumulative impacts to the area would remain unchanged.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

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.

Comments/Explanation: This preference transfer would not affect historic properties listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Dean C. Shaw, Archaeologist, 1/13/14

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.

Comments/Explanation: Livestock management under the existing permit provides adequate protection to slickspot peppergrass and its habitat. Current management would not change with the implementation of the grazing permit transfer.

Plants Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mark E. Steiger, Botanist, 1/13/14

Comments/Explanation: The allotment supports potential habitat for sagebrush steppe/grassland associated special status wildlife species. This administrative action would not affect special status wildlife species.

Wildlife Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Joseph M. Weldon, Wildlife Biologist, 1/9/14

Comments/Explanation: There are no aquatic resources associated with the allotment.

Aquatics Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ J. Allen Zarter, Nat. Resource Spec. 1/13/14

9. Violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

Comments/Explanation: This routine administrative procedure would be consistent and compatible with all known Federal, State, local and Tribal laws or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Dean C. Shaw, Archaeologist, 1/13/14

10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).

Comments/Explanation: 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 preference would not be expected to have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on these populations.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Mike Barnum, Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

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 No

Comments/Explanation: This grazing transfer would not limit access to, or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands, or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sites.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Dean C. Shaw, Archaeologist, 1/13/14

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 No

Comments/Explanation: Transferring grazing preference, for the continuation of current authorized grazing, would not cause additional influences to existing noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Lonnie R. Huter, Weed Mgmt. Spec. 11/20/13

D: SIGNATURE

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.

Authorizing Official:

/s/ Matthew McCoy

1/15/2014

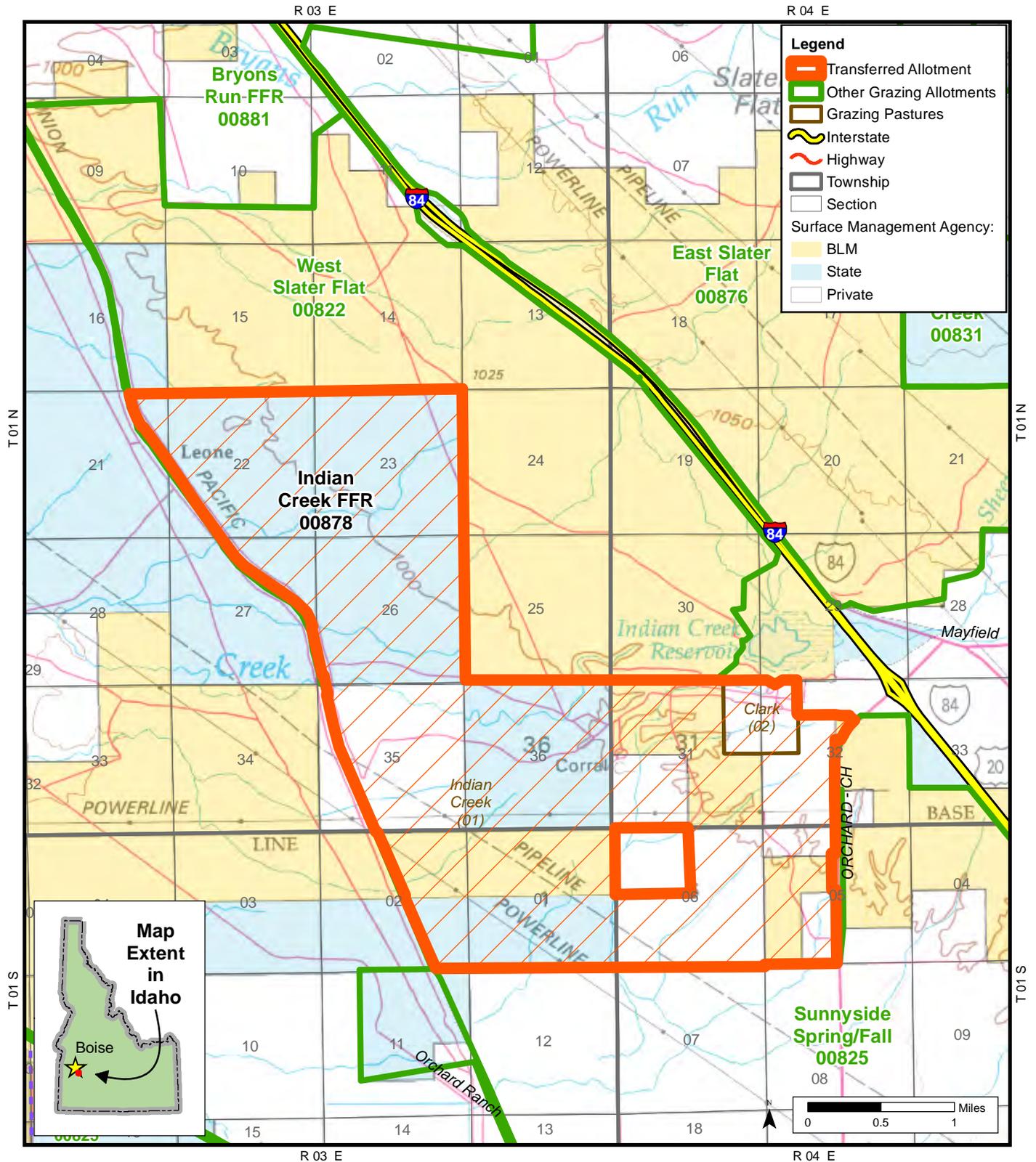
Name

Date

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Prepared By/Contact Person: J.M. Mike Barnum – 208-384-3218

Indian Creek FFR (00878) Allotment Grazing Preference Transfer: T. Nicholson to TFI, LP.



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Idaho
Boise District, Four Rivers Field Office
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