

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION

CX No. DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2014-0003-CX

### **A. BACKGROUND**

**BLM Office:** Four Rivers Field Office

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.:** 1103956 (Monroe Creek LLC) to 1104637 (Weiser Grazing LLC)

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Bezates Individual Allotment #00027 Grazing Preference Transfer

**Location of Proposed Action:** Bezates Individual Allotment is located approximately 10 miles north east of Weiser along Highway 95 and one mile west of Highway 95, in Washington County Idaho. Specifically, T. 12N-13N R. 05W various sections (Map 1).

**Description of Proposed Action:** The BLM would transfer of 148 AUMs of active grazing preference for the Bezates Individual Allotment from Monroe Creek LLC (Operator #1103956) to Weiser Grazing LLC (Operator #1104637). The Terms and Conditions of the new permit would be consistent with the previous permit. Weiser Grazing LLC has [through Warranty Deed and Grazing Preference Application (Form 4130-1a, pg. 1), signed by Transferee] legal control of the base properties to which the grazing preference in the Bezates Individual Allotment is attached. Per CFR 4110.2-3, Weiser Grazing LLC has paid the appropriate fee and submitted an application for the grazing privileges.

### **B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE**

**This proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan:** Cascade Resource Management Plan (CRMP)

**Date Plan Approved:** July 1, 1988

**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 Cascade Resource Management Plan (RMP) 1988, as shown on Pg. 6 of the Rangeland Program Summary.

### **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**

**Category Description:** D. Rangeland Management, 1) Approval of transfer 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 CRMP.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

**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 supports Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) for greater sage-grouse a Candidate Species for listing under the Endangered Species Act and a BLM Type 1 Special Status Species. PGH are areas outside of breeding habitat that support important seasonal (winter, summer, fall habitat, migration corridors) or year-round habitat for sage-grouse. The allotment also includes a portion of the Hixon Columbia Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). There are no other unique resources. This administrative action would not affect PGH habitat or the ACEC.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Joseph Weldon*, 1/8/2014

**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 CRMP. There would be no known unresolved conflicts as a result of the transfer of the grazing preference.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

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

*Comments/Explanation:* An administrative action to continue an existing, managed action under identical terms and conditions would not change or increase existing effects or risks identified in the land use plan.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

**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) was analyzed in the land use plan. A grazing preference transfer, without changes to the permit, is considered an administrative action. Further, the conditions for transfer of the

current grazing preference are in conformance with CFR 4110.1, 4110.2, 4110.2-3 and 4120. The transfer would not preclude subsequent changes in management.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

**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/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

**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 administrative action would not impact any listed or eligible sites.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Dean C. Shaw*, 1/8/2014

**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:* Wild crab apple (Type 3) has been documented on private lands in the allotment. Currently, no threatened, endangered, or Bureau sensitive species are known to occur on public lands; therefore, this administrative action would not affect known special status plant species.

Plants Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Mark Steiger*, 1/8/2014

*Comments/Explanation:* In addition to greater sage-grouse habitat, the allotment supports potential habitat for sagebrush steppe/grassland associated special status wildlife species. Columbia sharp-tailed grouse are a Type 3 species. This administrative action would not affect special status wildlife species.

Wildlife Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Joseph Weldon*, 1/8/2014

*Comments/Explanation:* Fir (intermittent) and Monroe (perennial) creeks occur in the allotment. Monroe Creek supports redband trout (Type 2). No federally listed, candidate, or other BLM special status aquatic species occur in the allotment. This administrative action would not affect special status aquatic species.

Aquatics Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *J. Allen Tarter*, 1/8/2014

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

*Comments/Explanation:* This administrative action 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/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/10/2013

**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/ *Martin M. Espil* 12/17/2013

**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).**

*Comments/Explanation:* The proposed action 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* 1/8/2014

**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).**

*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 Huter* *Weed Management Specialist* 1/8/14

**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

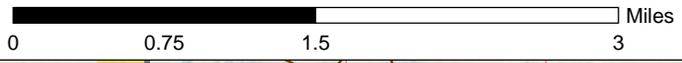
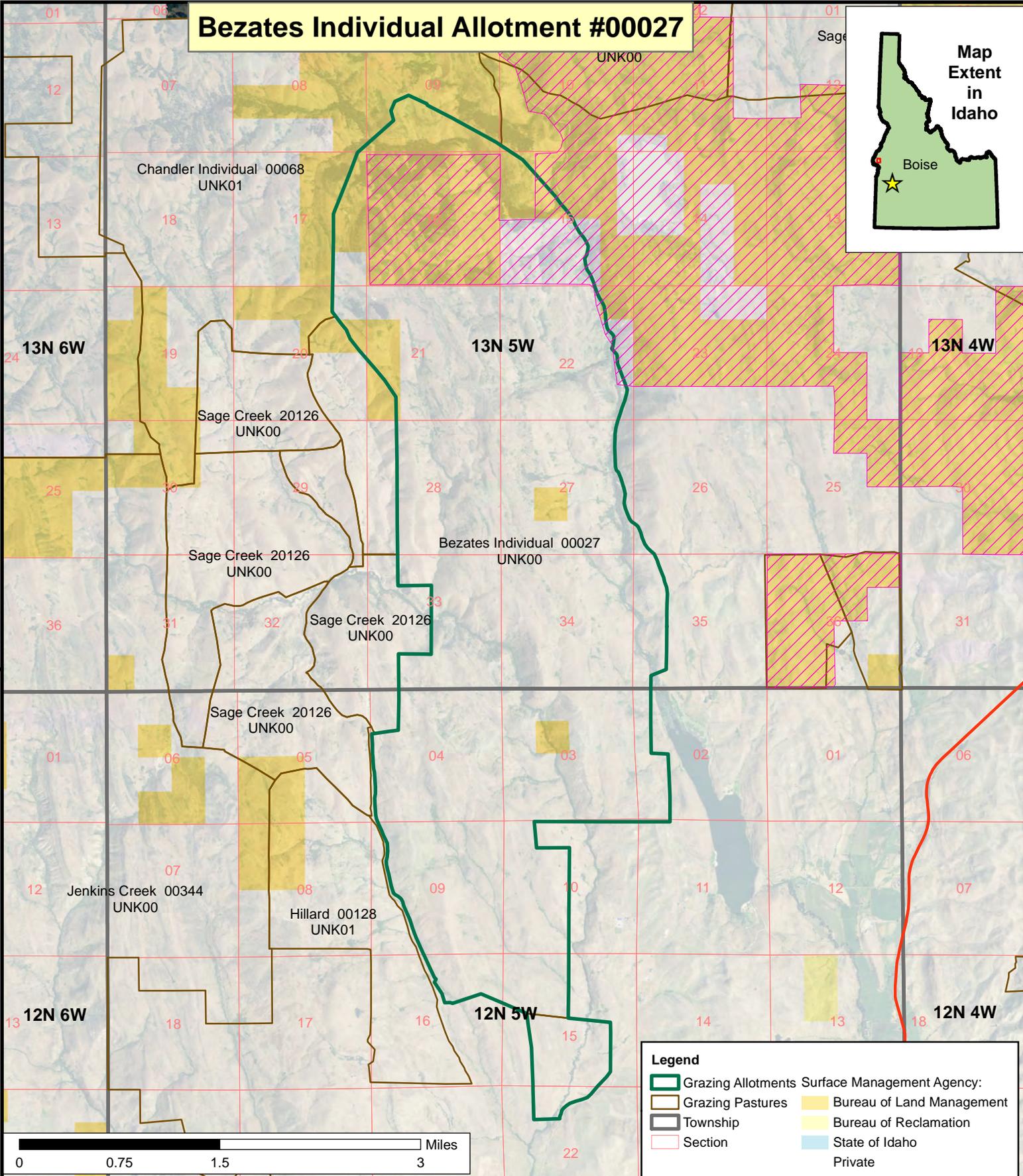
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Name

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Date

Matthew McCoy  
Assistant Field Manager  
Four Rivers Field Office

**Prepared By/Contact Person:** Martin M. Espil (208)384-3224

# Bezates Individual Allotment #00027



**Legend**

Grazing Allotments	Surface Management Agency:
Grazing Pastures	Bureau of Land Management
Township	Bureau of Reclamation
Section	State of Idaho
	Private



U.S. Department of the Interior  
 Bureau of Land Management, Idaho  
 Boise District  
 Map date: December 3, 2013



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 Bezates Individual Allotment