

Worksheet
Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

OFFICE: Humboldt River Field Office, LLNVW01000

TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2014-0010-DNA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: 2703880

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Change in Season of Use in the Daveytown Allotment

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Daveytown Allotment:

T 40 N, R 35 E; Sections: 1-36.

T 39 N, R 35 E; Sections 1-36.

T 40 N, R 36 E; Sections 1-36.

T 41 N, R 35 E; Sections 19, 20, 25-36

T 41 N, R 36 E; Sections 25-36

T 39 N, R 36 E; Sections 1-24, 29-31

T 38 N, R 35 E; Sections 1-10

APPLICANT (if any): Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

A. Description of the Proposed Action with attached map(s) and any applicable mitigation measures.

John Falen of Jordan Meadows LLC has requested a change in season of use with additional animal unit months (AUMs) within the Daveytown Allotment. He has requested to graze his cattle from March 1, 2014 through April 30, 2014 for a total of 1,687 AUMs. Beginning March 1, the herd of 1,305 cattle would gradually be reduced at the rate of approximately 8% per week. Prior to April 30, 2014, all livestock would be removed from the Daveytown Allotment. Jordan Meadows LLC current permitted use for the Daveytown Allotment is November 1 through February 28 for 5,148 AUMs.

Mr. Falen's request would result in grazing on the Daveytown Allotment beginning November 1, 2013 and ending April 30, 2014 spanning two grazing fee years. The beginning of a new grazing fee year (March 1 through February 28) is also the reset date for tracking permitted AUMs. Therefore, the 1,687 AUMs that would be permitted from March 1 to April 30 would be in addition to the 5,184 AUMs permitted under Mr. Falen's current grazing permit.

Throughout the month of April 2014, Mr. Falen would submit actual use on a weekly or more frequent basis to track the number of livestock removed from the allotment and to ensure livestock are being reduced at an appropriate rate.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name: Paradise Denio Management Framework Plan (MFP)

Date Approved: 1982

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 decisions (objective, terms, and conditions):

Paradise-Denio MFP (1982)

Although the issuance of a change in season of use authorization/TNR grazing permit is not specifically addressed, the proposal is consistent with the decisions that:

- Future adjustments in grazing will be based on monitoring data (RM 1.1) and,
- Accepted initial stocking levels will be based on current data, but will not preclude the future establishment of other management practices that may be necessary to obtain proper management of the rangeland resources (RM 1.11).

C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

- **Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Issuance of a Temporary Nonrenewable Grazing Permit for the Daveytown Allotment.**
EA #: NV-020-06-EA-07, Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact
2/23/2006
- **Change in Season of Use in the Daveytown Allotment Determination of NEPA Adequacy.**
DNA#: DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2013-0022-DNA

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA documents(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes: the new proposed action is essentially similar to an alternative analyzed in an existing NEPA document (NV-020-06-EA-07). The proposed action is within the same analysis area as the 2006 EA. While the 2006 EA analyzed additional grazing on the Daveytown Allotment for three consecutive years beginning in 2006, conditions have not substantially changed, as is further detailed below.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA documents(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes: The 2006 EA analyzed the proposed action, a second action alternative that would have permitted 1,305 cattle to graze on the Daveytown Allotment through May 30 with a similar reduction in numbers over time, and a no action alternative. The 2006 EA analyzed a reasonable range of alternatives appropriate to the new proposed action.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes: The existing analysis is valid and relevant to the proposed action in light of new information and circumstances. Since the 2006 EA was completed, new guidance has been implemented regarding sage grouse (United States Department of Interior determination of warranted but precluded status [2010]). Sage grouse and sage grouse habitat were analyzed in the 2006 EA. New guidance from the warranted but precluded determination should not substantially change the analysis of the proposed action since Preliminary Primary Habitat (PPH) or Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) for the Greater Sage Grouse does not occur in the Daveytown Allotment.

There is potential for suitable habitat for Pygmy rabbits within the Daveytown Allotment. Pygmy rabbits are a designated BLM Special Status Species; current BLM policy regarding special status species is as follows: “actions authorized by the BLM shall further the conservation and/or recovery of federally listed species and conservation of Bureau sensitive species...Bureau sensitive species will be managed consistent with species and habitat management objectives in land use and implementation plans to promote their conservation and to minimize the likelihood and need for listing under the ESA” BLM Manual 6840.06 (2008). Pygmy rabbits and their habitat were not addressed within the Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Issuance of a Temporary Nonrenewable Grazing Permit for the Daveytown Allotment. Pygmy rabbits may be injured or burrows may be damaged by livestock; however pygmy rabbits burrow under shrubs and livestock tend to walk around shrubs rather than walk over them, making the Proposed Action less likely to affect Pygmy rabbit populations as a whole.

During the summer and fall of 2013, the permittee’s consultant (Y2 Consultants Inc.) conducted a monitoring program and subsequently produced a report on the Daveytown Allotment. Y2 Consultants Inc. coordinated with the BLM to establish monitoring locations and protocols in order to ensure that fair and accurate data was collected on the allotment. Those monitoring results suggest that extending the period of use through April 2014 and permitting additional AUMs on the Daveytown Allotment should allow for attainment of allotment specific utilization objectives. The 2013 Monitoring Report for the allotment indicated slight to moderate utilization on key forage species; which suggest that extending the period of use in 2014 would result in meeting the utilization objectives for the allotment. A summary of the utilization data collected

on the allotment in 2013 is provided in the subsequent table; as well as a table summarizing the allotment specific utilization objectives outlined in the 2006 EA for the Daveytown Allotment:

Maximum Allowable Utilization for Daveytown Allotment

Species Name	Percent Utilization
Bottlebrush Squirreltail	40%
Indian Ricegrass	50%
Winterfat	50%
Basin Wildrye	50%
Sandberg Bluegrass	50%

Summary of Utilization Data collected in 2013

Species Name	Percent Utilization
Indian Ricegrass	13%
Forage Kochia	18%
Sandberg Bluegrass	18%
Crested Wheatgrass	19%
Winterfat	31%

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

Yes: the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action are similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, the public involvement and interagency review associated with this existing NEPA document is adequate for the current proposed action. A letter describing the proposed action was sent to the interested publics for the Daveytown Allotment on January 20, 2006 to solicit their comments on the EA.

Letters were sent to the interested public on February 26, 2013 stating that the Proposed Decision for extending the season of use for the 2013 grazing year on the Daveytown Allotment was available for public review and comments.

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.