



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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### **Final Determinations Barton Allotment Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health August 2014**

This document makes final determinations regarding:

- A. Progress towards or attainment of the standards for rangeland health,
- B. Whether livestock management is in conformance with the guidelines, and
- C. Whether existing grazing management or levels of grazing use are significant factors in failing to achieve the standards or conform to the guidelines.

**Standard 1. Upland Sites:** Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate and landform.

**This standard is being met.**

Rangeland monitoring along with professional observations indicate that overall soil condition is meeting the Standard and being maintained on the Barton Allotment. Soils are stable and the topsoil is holding in place.

The soils found in the Barton are moderately deep to deep and well drained. Surface soils are moderately fine to medium textured and more than 10" thick to the subsoil or underlying material. The water holding capacity is moderate to high. Runoff is slow to medium. The potential for sheet and rill erosion is slight to moderate depending on slope. A rangeland health evaluation done in 2005 found no departure from the ecological site description in terms of soil and site stability.

Recent monitoring information including key area point sampling cover data accompanied by field observations indicate that sufficient vegetative cover, litter and rock fragments are present to meet the requirements of this standard given the potential of the sites monitored.

Currently no signs of erosion are apparent on the allotment and the soils appear stable. All indications are that the soil is stable and appropriate for the soil type, climate, and land form.

Furthermore, the utilization objectives for key forage species on the allotment have largely been achieved since 1986. The attainment of the utilization objectives in conjunction with the appropriate season of use has resulted in healthy and vigorous native plant communities. The

vegetative cover required to stabilize soils and ensure appropriate infiltration and permeability rates is being maintained.

**Standard 2. Riparian and Wetland Sites:** Riparian and wetland areas exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria.

**This standard does not apply to the Barton Allotment.** There are no riparian areas on public ground within the allotment.

**Standard 3: Habitat:** Habitats exhibit a healthy, productive, and diverse population of native and/or desirable plant species, appropriate to the site characteristics, to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for animal species and maintain ecological processes. Habitat conditions meet life cycle requirements of threatened and endangered species.

**This standard is not being met.** However, livestock grazing is not a factor of non-attainment.

Due to the recent, ubiquitous wildfire occurrence within and surrounding the allotment, the resulting early seral stage of the majority of vegetation does not currently meet the habitat Standard. However, rangeland monitoring data and professional observation indicate that native sagebrush plant communities are progressing toward a healthy, productive and diverse condition following recent, widespread wildfires within the allotment. The habitat is able to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for some animal species during some portion of their life cycle (including Special Status Species) and maintain ecological processes within the constraints imposed by the recent fires. Although not currently meeting the Standard, habitat conditions are progressing as expected toward meeting all life cycle requirements of sage-grouse, a candidate species, and other sagebrush obligate or sagebrush associated species that fall under the sage-grouse umbrella.

The improving habitat trend is evidence that livestock management is in conformance with the guidelines and not a causal factor of non-attainment.

**Standard 4: Cultural Resources.** Land use plans will recognize cultural resources within the context of multiple use.

**This standard is being met.**

Rangeland management plans, including term grazing permit renewals will consider listings of known sites that are National Historic Register eligible or considered to be of cultural significance as well as new eligible sites as they become known. Based on the evaluation of existing information pertaining to range improvements and grazing, cultural resources are being recognized within the context of multiple use management in the Barton Allotment.

**Standard 5. Healthy Wild Horse and Burro Populations:** Wild horses and burros exhibit characteristics of a healthy, productive, and diverse population. Age structure and sex ratios are appropriate to maintain the long term viability of the population as a distinct group. Herd management areas are able to provide suitable feed, water, cover and living space for wild horses and burros and maintain historic patterns of habitat use.

**This standard does not apply to the Barton Allotment.** The Barton Allotment is not located within a wild horse Herd Management Area.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_8/7/14\_\_\_\_\_  
Date