

MAR 23 2016

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
BURNS DISTRICT OFFICE

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

**A. Background**

**Title of Proposed Action:** Livestock Grazing Permit #3602576 Renewal      **Grazing Permit Number:** 3602576  
**Categorical Exclusion Number:** DOI-BLM-ORWA-B060-2016-0021-CX      **Subject Function Code:** 4130  
**Preparer/Title:** Justin DeCroo, Rangeland Management Specialist      **Date:** March 8, 2016

**Legal Description:** North Catlow Allotment and Rock Creek Fenced Federal Range (FFR) are located approximately 14 air miles from Frenchglen in the Andrews Resource Area. See attached vicinity map (A) and location map (B).

**Description of Proposed Action:** The permittee has applied to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to renew the existing term livestock grazing permit #3602576 on the North Catlow and Rock Creek FFR Allotments. The proposal is to renew (fully process) the term grazing permit/lease with the same terms and conditions as the expiring permit. The BLM would authorize grazing by livestock under grazing permit/lease as shown in the following table for a term not to exceed 10 years:

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	Livestock Type	Livestock Number	Season of Use	% Public Land Forage (%PL)	Active Animal Unit Months (AUM)
North Catlow	06001	Cattle	517	02/01-01/31	85	4,424
Rock Creek FFR	06114	Cattle	25	04/01-09/27	15	148

The proposed action is a continuation of the current grazing management of the allotment since current management is consistent with BLM regulatory guidance and land use plan objectives.

**B. Conformance with Land Use Plan (LUP)**

**LUP Name and Date Approved/Amended:** Andrews Management Unit (AMU) and Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA) Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Record of Decision (ROD) (August 2005) as amended by the Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Approved RMP Amendment (ARMPA) and the ROD for the Great Basin Region including the Greater Sage-Grouse Sub-regions of Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, Oregon, and Utah (approved September 2015).

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): The AMU/Steens Mountain CMPA RMP identifies North Catlow Allotment as available for livestock grazing in appendix J, page J-9 and Rock Creek FFR as available for livestock grazing in appendix J, page J-58. The RMP expectation is continued livestock grazing at current levels, unless changes are shown to be warranted through rangeland monitoring and evaluation as analyzed in a standards and guidelines (S&G) determination. This allotment was assessed and determined to be achieving all standards and conforming with guidelines; therefore, no change in livestock grazing levels is warranted.

**C. Standards for Rangeland Health Assessment**

The Authorized Officer has made the determination that the allotment is achieving all S&Gs. The determination was based on indicators of rangeland health, photo monitoring, actual use, and professional observation and was completed in 2015 by an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT).

(b) 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 (WSR); national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); flood plains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

Recreation/Visual Resources

*Rationale:* No new impacts to recreation or visual resources would result from the renewal of the grazing permit as it currently exists.

*Specialist:* Mandy DeCree, Outdoor Recreation Planner

*Signature and Date:* Mandy DeCree 3/8/16

Wilderness/WSR Resources

*Rationale:* ~~No new impacts will result with the renewal of the grazing permit.~~

Not Present 3/14

*Specialist:* Tom Wilcox, Wilderness Specialist

*Signature and Date:* Tom Wilcox 3/8/2016

Water Resources/Flood Plains

*Rationale:* The proposed action to continue livestock grazing as it currently exists within the North Catlow Allotment and Rock Creek FFR would not negatively effect the flood plain or any of the available water resources on BLM-administered land.

*Specialist:* Jarod Lemos, Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) Riparian

*Signature and Date:* Jarod Lemos 3/8/16

Migratory Birds

*Rationale:* The proposed action to continue livestock grazing as it currently exists would not alter any of the available landscape; there will be no effect to migratory birds or their habitat.

*Specialist:* Andy Daniels, Wildlife Specialist

*Signature and Date:* Andy Daniels 3-9-16

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)/Research Natural Areas (RNA)

*Rationale:* There are no ACECs/RNAs within the North Catlow Allotment or Rock Creek FFR; therefore, there will be no effects with the renewal of the grazing permit.

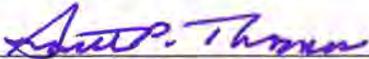
*Specialist:* Caryn Burri, NRS Botany

*Signature and Date:* Caryn Burri 3/8/16

(d) 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.

*Rationale:* There will be no additional effects to National Register eligible sites associated with this proposed action.

*Specialist:* Scott Thomas, District Archeologist

*Signature and Date:*  3-8-16

(e) 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).

*Rationale:* There will be no effects to access or integrity of Indian sacred sites associated with this proposed action because there are no known specific sacred sites in the project area.

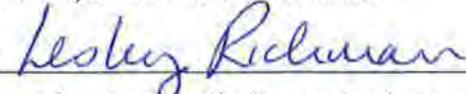
*Specialist:* Scott Thomas, District Archeologist

*Signature and Date:*  3-8-16

(f) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative 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).

*Rationale:* Noxious weeds are known to be present in and in close proximity to these allotments. Treatments are ongoing. The weeds are currently not present in sufficient quantity to be considered a significant impact in these allotments.

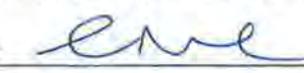
*Specialist:* Lesley Richman, District Weed Coordinator

*Signature and Date:*  3/8/2016

(g) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2) (E)).

*Rationale:* There are no highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. The permit renewal is for an existing permit within an existing allotment, the standards for rangeland health have been achieved, and there will be no change from current management.

*Specialist:* Emily Erwin, Planning and Environmental Coordinator

*Signature and Date:*  3/11/2016

(h) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

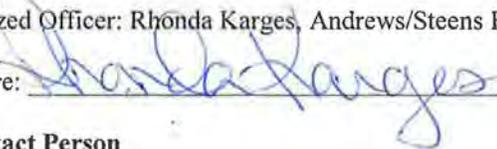
*Rationale:* There are no highly uncertain controversial environmental effects or involvement of unique or unknown environmental risks. The permit renewal is for an existing permit within an existing allotment, the standards for rangeland health have been achieved, and there will be no change from current management.

*Specialist:* Emily Erwin, Planning and Environmental Coordinator

*Signature and Date:*  3/11/2016

**Management Determination:** Based upon review of this proposal, I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, qualifies as a CX and does not require further NEPA analysis.

Authorized Officer: Rhonda Karges, Andrews/Steens Resource Area Field Manager

Signature:  Date: 3/21/16

**G. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Justin DeCree, Rangeland Management Specialist, BLM, Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, (541) 541-4400.

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North Catlow Allotment has 95,296 acres of GHMA and 81,983 acres of PHMA. Spatial data, including allotment boundaries and sage-grouse habitat are available online<sup>1</sup>.

Rock Creek FFR has 19 acres of GHMA and 1,031 acres of PHMA. Rock Creek FFR is within the Dry Valley/Jack Mountain PAC. The allotment is not in a SFA.

This Proposed Decision conforms to lek buffer distances listed in Table 2-3 of the GRSG ARMPA (page 2-8) and direction to not congregate livestock during the breeding season between March 1 through June 30 (GRSG ARMPA page 2-19). The existing fences within 1.2 mile of a lek are already marked, and the decision does not include upgrading existing primitive roads in the allotments (GRSG ARMPA page 2-31 and 2-32).

Grazing management monitoring typically focuses on livestock management and vegetation response. Livestock management will be monitored through use supervision, actual use reporting, and photo documentation. The BLM will follow the monitoring requirements in the Management Decisions for Livestock grazing identified in the September 18, 2015 Approved Resource Management Plan for Greater-Sage-grouse in Oregon (pages 2-17 to 2-21), as well as the Greater Sage-grouse Monitoring Framework Appendix D, the Adaptive Management Strategy Appendix J, The Andrews RMP/ROD, 2005.

Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas: The BLM has appropriately disclosed and analyzed the effects of the proposed action on designated wilderness areas, Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), and lands with wilderness characteristics. The CX concludes no new impacts to WSAs will result with the renewal of the grazing permit. Wilderness and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics are not present within either allotment.

**Authority:** The authorities under which this decision is being issued include the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended; FLMPA of 1976, as promulgated through Title 43 CFR Subpart 4100, Grazing Administration – Exclusive of Alaska; and 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b). My decision is issued under the following specific regulations:

- 4100.0-8 Land use plans: The AMU and Steens Mountain CMPA RMP/ROD, August 2005, designate the Frazier Field Allotment available for livestock grazing, and the permit is in conformance with the LUP as defined at 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b);
- 4130.2 Grazing permits or leases: Grazing permits may be issued to qualified applicants on lands designated as available for livestock grazing. Grazing permits shall be issued for a term of 10 years unless the Authorized Officer determines that a lesser term is in the best interest of sound management;
- 4130.3 Terms and conditions: Grazing permits must specify the terms and conditions that are needed to achieve desired resource conditions, including both mandatory and other terms and conditions;
- 4180 Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration: The allotment(s) covered in this decision are meeting standards and guidelines, or if not meeting, the causal factor is not current livestock grazing.

#### **Protest and Appeal Procedures:**

Any applicant, permittee, lessee, or other interested public may protest a proposed decision under 43 CFR 4160.1 and 4160.2, in person or in writing, to Rhonda Karges, Field Manager, Andrews/Steens Resource Area, Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, within 15 days after receipt of such decision. The protest, if filed, should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) why the proposed decision is in error.

A written protest electronically transmitted (e.g., email, facsimile, or social media) will not be accepted; a written protest must be printed or typed on paper and delivered to BLM in person or by mail. A written protest must be received by the BLM no later than the end of the protest period by the ordinary close of business for the day. A protest made in person must be made to the Authorized Officer, or designee, by the end of the protest period by the ordinary close of business for the day.

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<sup>1</sup> Spatial data is available at the following website: <http://www.blm.gov/or/energy/opportunity/final/data.php>

Copies sent to:

Rock Creek Ranch Inc  
33123 Rock Creek Lane  
Frenchglen, Oregon 97736  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7705  
Return receipt requested

The Honorable Steven E. Grasty  
Harney County Courthouse  
450 N. Buena Vista Avenue #5  
Burns, Oregon 97720  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7699  
Return receipt requested

Rod Klus  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
P.O. Box 8  
Hines, Oregon 97738  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7682  
Return receipt requested

Charlotte Rodrique  
Tribal Council Chairperson  
Burns Paiute Tribe  
100 PaSiGo Street  
Burns, Oregon 97720  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7675  
Return receipt requested

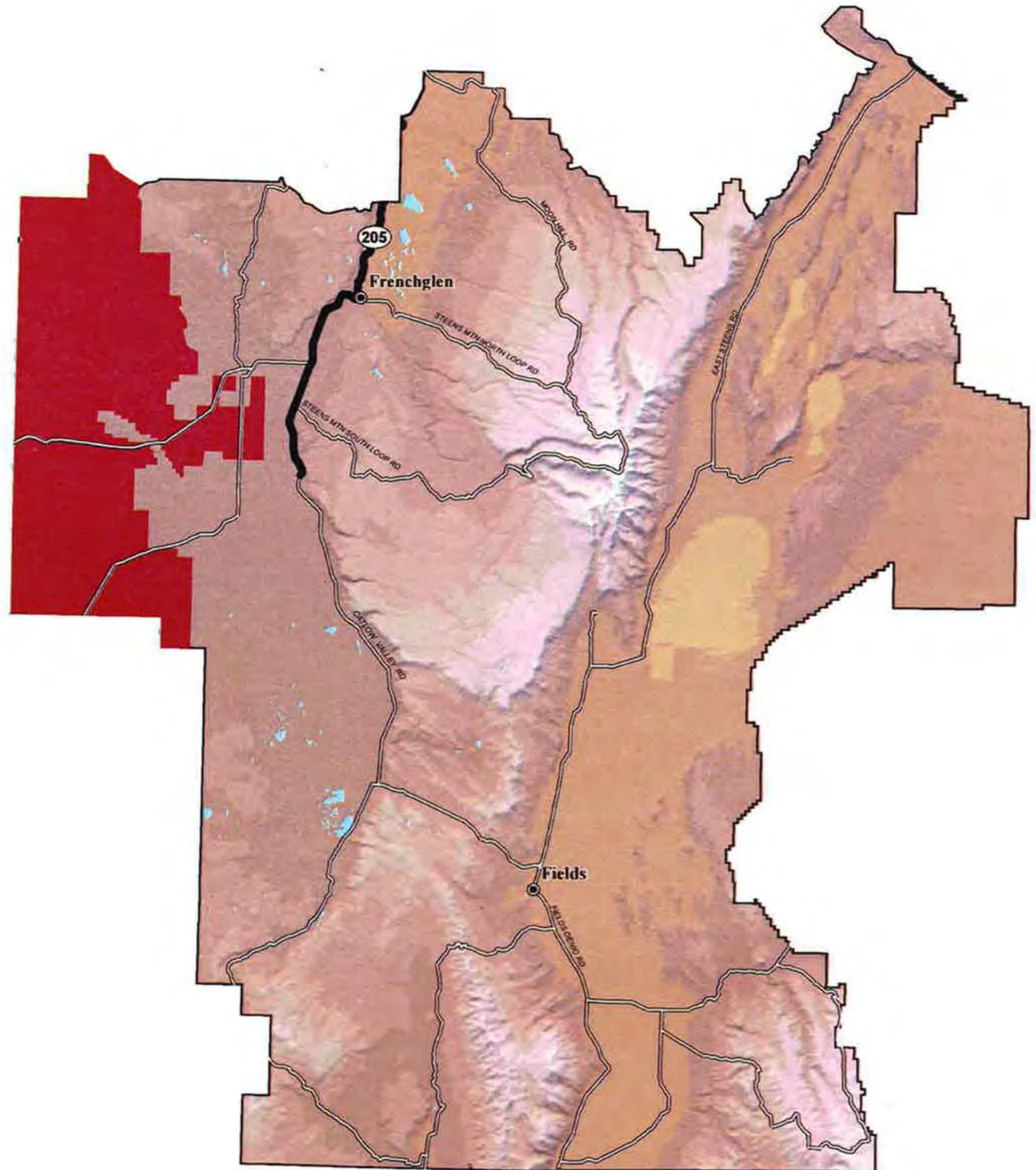
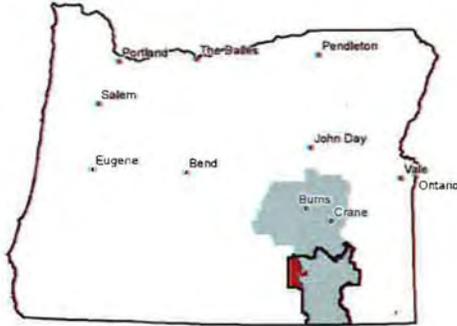
Dan Morse  
Oregon Natural Desert Association  
50 SW Bond Street, Suite E  
Bend, Oregon 97702  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7668  
Return receipt requested

Peter M. Lacey  
Oregon Natural Desert Association  
917 SW Oak Street, Suite 419  
Portland, Oregon 97205  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7651  
Return receipt requested

Western Watershed Project  
P.O. Box 1602  
Hailey, Idaho 83333  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7644  
Return receipt requested

Wildlands Defense  
P.O. Box 125  
Boise, Idaho 83701  
Certified mail – 7014-1200-0000-9403-7637  
Return receipt requested

Map A  
 North Catlow Allotment  
 Rock Creek FFR  
 Permit Renewals  
 Andrews Resource Area



- Allotment Boundary
- Andrews Resource Area Boundary
- Highways
- Not All Roads Are Shown

Note: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.



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# Map B

## North Catlow Allotment Rock Creek FFR Permit Renewal

- Well
- Reservoir
- Waterhole
- Spring Development
- Water Tank
- Trough
- Dam
- Allotments
- Pastures
- Fence
- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Private/Unknown
- Perennial Lake
- Intermittent Lake
- Playa
- Non-Paved Improved Road
- Primitive/Unknown Surface



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 Burns District, Oregon



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5 Miles

