

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
SOCORRO FIELD OFFICE PERMIT RENEWALS
NEPA No.: DOI-BLM-NM-A020-2023-0003-CX**

BACKGROUND

BLM Office: Socorro Field Office, Albuquerque District, New Mexico

Proposed Action Title /Type: Permit Renewal

Location of Proposed Action: Socorro Field Office, Socorro & Catron County, New Mexico

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to renew the grazing permit or lease for a term of ten years for the allotments listed in Table 1 in accordance with 43 CFR §4130.2(d). All allotments have been evaluated to ensure they are meeting rangeland health standards by adhering to the Socorro Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

Table 1

Allot Name Auth No.	Allot No.	Livestock		Grazing Season		% Public Land	Type of Use-AUMs		Total AUMs
		Number	Kind	Start	End		Active	Suspended	
Agua Fria Creek 3026275	00092	258	Cattle	3/1	2/28	93	3,093	-	3,093
Agua Fria 3001979	00179	78	Cattle	3/1	2/28	98	956	-	956
Carrizo Creek North 3002054	10057	292 5	Cattle Horse	3/1	2/28	43	1,536	-	1,536
Jeremillas Lake 3001822	00162	136 2	Cattle Horse	3/1	2/28	34	555 8	-	557
Tip Top 3001637	01356	2	Cattle	3/1	2/28	100	24	-	24

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Land Use Plan Name: Socorro Field Office Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: 2010

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Socorro Field Office Resource Management Plan (2010). The Allotment has been designated as being open for livestock grazing and is within the authority for the 1934 Taylor Grazing Act, the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Code of Federal Regulations under 43 CFR 4100.

COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA:

As referred to in FLPMA of 1976 as amended in 2014 Section 402 (h) National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (1) In general: The issuance of a grazing permit or lease by the Secretary concerned may be categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) if—

(A) the issued permit or lease continues the current grazing management of the allotment; and (B) the Secretary concerned—(i) has assessed and evaluated the grazing allotment associated with the lease or permit; and (ii) based on the assessment and evaluation under clause (i), has determined that the allotment— (I) with respect to public land administered by the Secretary of the Interior—(aa) is meeting land health standards; or.

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the national Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 4, D Rangeland Management (11) Issuance of livestock grazing permits/leases where: (b) The grazing allotment has been assessed and evaluated and the Responsible Official has documented in a determination that the allotment (s) is (i) meeting rangeland health standards, or.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR Part 46.215 apply.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

(No) Rationale: The proposed action, which would continue livestock grazing on the allotments, would not have any impacts on public health or safety.

- 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; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.**

(No) Rationale: There are no proposed changes to the current grazing permits. The proposed action is an administrative action and therefore, there are no impacts to any of the aforementioned natural and cultural resources because the terms and conditions (kind and number of livestock, period of use, area to be used, and amount of use) of the current term grazing permits will remain the same. Since there are no additional changes other than a name change, there will be no change from the baseline for natural resources and no further analysis are warranted.

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

(No) Rationale: Current and past livestock grazing within the allotments have not had highly controversial environmental effects or involved unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. The allotments are currently meeting BLM Standards for Rangeland Health and no additional resource concerns were identified on the allotments that would require changes to the authorized use. Under the proposed action, livestock grazing would continue in a manner consistent with current livestock grazing on the allotment.

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

(No) Rationale: There would be no significant environmental effects or risks. Livestock grazing is well established and a highly analyzed use of public lands. Based on the interdisciplinary review, new circumstances were not identified, and the consequences of the proposal remain certain.

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

(No) Rationale: The action is not connected to another action that would require additional environmental analysis.

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

(No) Rationale: There would be no cumulative impacts from this project and all allotments have been evaluated to ensure they are meeting rangeland health standards by adhering to the Socorro Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

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.

(No) Rationale: The proposed action is an administrative name change and will not have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.

8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.

(No) Rationale: There will be no effect on threatened or endangered species or critical habitat because this action is an administrative name change only. The terms and conditions (kind and number of livestock, period of use, area to be used, and amount of use) of the current term grazing permits will remain the same.

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

(No) Rationale: The proposed action is an administrative name change and will not violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment because it complies with current Federal Regulations (43CFR §4100), The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and will not authorize new resource uses beyond what currently exist.

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

(No) Rationale: The proposed action is an administrative name change and will not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations because the proposed action will not authorize new resource uses beyond what currently exist.

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).

(No) Rationale: The proposed action is an administrative name change only and will have no impact to access or ceremonial use, nor will it significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sites.

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).

(No) Rationale: The proposed action is an administrative name change and does not contribute to the introduction or spread of noxious weeds.

**Review For
Extraordinary
Circumstances**

Signature

Date

Impact

**Archeologist/
Biologist- Animal/ TE/
Zebb Andrews**

**Biologist- Plant/TE/
Zebb Andrews**

SIGNATURE

NEPA Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Preparer (BLM Project Lead): _____ Date: _____

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Bethany Rosales, Natural Resource Specialist, Range, at 575-838-1260 or Michael Mora, Rangeland Management Specialist, at 575-838-1282 or Alec Bryan 575-838-1251.