

Reese Creek Grazing Lease Renewal Categorical Exclusion Documentation

(CE OR115-09-12)

A. Background

BLM Office: Medford District Office

Allotment Name and Number: Reese Creek # 10027

Proposed Action Title: Reese Creek Grazing Lease Renewal

Location of Proposed Action: East and west of the Butte Falls Highway in T. 35 S., R. 1 E., Section 5 Willamette Meridian.

Description of Proposed Action: The proposed action is to renew the Reese Creek Allotment's 10 year grazing lease using the same grazing preference and Terms and Conditions as the prior lease. The Reese Creek Allotment is 40 acres and has a permitted use of 3 cattle from 5/1-5/31.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The grazing program is implemented through provisions in the Medford Grazing Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (April 1984) and the Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) Record of Decision (September 1984). Since 1984, additional RPS updates have been published (October 1987, October 1990, October 2001).

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision: USDI Bureau of Land Management. 1995. Record of decision and resource management plan. Medford, OR.

C: Land Health Assessment

The allotment is meeting the following standards and conforming to guidelines (43 CFR 4180.2, *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington* (1997)). The following standards are being met:

- Standard 1: Watershed Function- Uplands
- Standard 2: Watershed Function- Riparian
- Standard 3: Ecological Processes
- Standard 4: Water Quality

The allotment is not meeting standards and conforming to guidelines (43 CFR 4180.2, *Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington* (1997)). Standard 5: Native, Threatened or Endangered (T&E) and locally important species is not being met, but livestock grazing has been determined not to be a causal factor.

D: 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, as published in the Notice of Final Action to Adopt Revisions to the Bureau of Land Management's Procedures for Managing the NEPA Process, Chapter 11 of the Department of the Interior's Manual Part 516. Federal Register: Volume 72, Number 156 -August 14, 2007, pages 45503-45542. "Issuance of livestock grazing permits/leases where (a) The new grazing permit/lease is consistent with the

use specified on the previous permit/lease, such that (1) the same kind of livestock is grazed, (2) the active use previously authorized is not exceeded, and (3) grazing does not occur more than 14 days earlier or later than as specified on the previous permit/lease, and (b) The grazing allotment(s) has been assessed and evaluated and the Responsible Official has documented in a determination that the allotment(s) is (1) meeting land health standards, or (2) not meeting land health standards due to factors that do not include existing livestock grazing.”

This categorical exclusion review has been conducted by an interdisciplinary team (IDT), which utilized all available allotment information to make a recommendation.

An interdisciplinary team conducted an evaluation of the Standards for Rangeland Health for this Allotment. Additionally, a Determination was made and signed on November 19, 2008 by the Authorized Officer which finds that four Standards for Rangeland Health (Watershed Function-Uplands, Watershed Function- Riparian, Ecological Processes, and Water Quality) are being met and one Standard for Rangeland Health (Native, Threatened or Endangered (T&E) and locally important species) is not being met (livestock grazing is not a causal factor).

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment as documented in the following table. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2 apply.

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION			
The proposed categorical exclusion action will:		YES	NO
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		✓
2.2	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.		✓
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		✓
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		✓
2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		✓
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		✓
2.7	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.		✓

2.8 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.		✓
<p>Rationale: There are no effects to federally listed SONC coho salmon or their critical habitat at the sixth field project level as a result of this action.</p> <p>There are no known occurrences of federally listed plants defined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, 2003).</p> <p>There are no designated Critical Habitat Units (CHU) or Late Successional Reserves (LSR) for the threatened northern spotted owl within this allotment.</p>		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		✓
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		✓
2.11 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).		✓
2.12 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).		✓
<p>Rationale: Field surveys have located two noxious weed species within the allotment, including one population of yellow starthistle (<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>), and scattered patches of medusahead (<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>). In the non-conifer habitats preferred by livestock, medusahead and other exotic annual grasses are present. However, the areas most likely to experience conversion from native perennial grasslands to exotic annual grasslands have already undergone conversion, and current stocking rates are unlikely to convert additional areas of remnant native grassland.</p>		

F: Signature

Authorizing Official: David J. Hughes Date: 11/20/08
 (Signature)

Name: David J. Hughes
 Title: Acting Resource Area Manager

G. Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Kimberly Hackett at 618-2309.

Kimberly Hackett 11/19/08
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Dulcey Schuster: Soils/Environmental Coordinator

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Dave Roelofs: Wildlife, T&E Animals

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Marcia Wineteer: Botany, T&E Plants

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Steve Liebhardt: Aquatic, Fisheries

Shawn Simpson 11/20/08
Shawn Simpson: Hydrology, Riparian, Wetlands

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