

## EA & FONSI/DECISION RECORD

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NUMBER: # OR-035-06-01

**BLM Office:** Vale District, Baker Resource Area

**Proposed Action:** Issue new grazing permits in the Homestead, Sheep Mountain and Unity Reservoir-Bald Eagle Habitat Geographic Units, modifying these permits to help meet Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

**Location of Proposed Action:** Homestead, Sheep Mountain and Unity Reservoir-Bald Eagle Habitat Geographic Units as described in the Baker Resource Management Plan/Record of Decision dated July 1989.

**Applicants (Grazing Permittees):** There are Nineteen permittees that have authorized grazing permits in the three Geographic Units.

### **Conformance With Applicable Land Use Plan:**

This proposed action is subject to the following land use plan:

**Name of Plan:** Baker Resource Management Plan **Date Approved:** 7/12/89

This plan has been reviewed to determine that the proposed action conforms to the land use plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. This environmental assessment is tiered to the Baker RMP and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the RMP. The Baker Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision is the land use plan for public lands affected by the alternatives identified in this environmental analysis. The proposed action and all alternatives except No Action are in conformance with this plan. The land use plan objectives for these geographic units which are pertinent are listed below (See ROD pages 78, 79, 89, 91 & 92 as follows).

- **Vegetation:** Manage upland grass-shrub vegetation to achieve a mid-seral stage plant community. Maintain or enhance the condition of riparian habitat.
- **Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat:** Meet forage requirements for big game as recommended by ODF&W. Maintain/improve habitat for deer, elk, grouse, bighorn sheep, eagles, etc.
- **Cultural Resources:** Protect and preserve cultural resources for their information potential and public values.

**General Setting:** The Pine Valley Allotment (#03001) is within the Sheep Mountain ACEC (5,398 acres), Doyle Gulch Allotment (#03004), Hunsaker Allotment (#03005), Homestead Allotment (#03006) is within the Hell Canyon Wilderness Area. This area includes the Homestead ACEC (8537 acres), Copperfield Allotment (#03007), Crow Reservoir Allotment (#03021), North Fork Allotment (#05235) and King Mountain Allotment (#15211) has 360 acres designated as an ACEC, (see Map).

**Remarks:** The Rangeland Health Standards and Guides assessment field work in

the above allotments was completed in 2005.

**Purpose and need for Proposed Action:** The Determinations and Recommendations for these allotments identified certain rangeland health standards that are still not being met (see below) and livestock grazing was or is a significant factor contributing to that situation. Future monitoring and adjustments may be needed to meet all standards.

<b>Analysis and Findings-Rangeland Health Assessments-Summary Table: Standards that are not being met due to current livestock grazing are labeled with an asterisk (*)</b>					
<b>Allotment Number - Pasture Name</b>	<b>Standard 1- watershed function, uplands</b>	<b>Standard 2- watershed function, riparian</b>	<b>Standard 3- ecological processes</b>	<b>Standard 4- water quality</b>	<b>Standard 5- native, T&amp;E, or locally important species</b>
05235-North Fork	Not Met*	Met	Not Met*	Met	Met
15211-King Mountain	Met	Not Present	Met	Not Present	Met
03001-Sag	Not Met *	Not Present	Not Met *	Not Present	Met
03001-Timber Canyon	Not Met *	Met	Not Met *	Met	Met
03001- Cave Creek	Not Met *	Met	Not Met *	Met	Met
03001- Road Canyon	Not Met *	Met	Not Met *	Met	Met
03001- Spillway	Met	Not Present	Met	Not Present	Met
03001- Tarter	Not Met *	Met	Met	Met	Met
03001- Snake River	Not Met *	Met	Met	Met	Met
03001- Pine Creek	Met	Not Present	Met	Not Present	Met
03001- Overlook	Not Met *	Met	Not Met *	Met	Met
03001- Top	Not Met *	Met	Not Met *	Met	Met
03004- Doyle Gulch	Not Met *	Met	Met	Met	Met
03005- Hunsaker	Not Met *	Met	Met	Met	Met
03006- Homestead	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
03007- Copperfield	Not Met *	Met	Met	Met	Met
03021- Crow Reservoir	Not Met*	Not Present	Not Met*	Not Present	Met

All of the data and other indicators used to evaluate status of the standards and analyze information to make the above decisions can be found in the completed field forms and are summarized in the Allotment evaluations, the Determination and Recommendations documents, and this EA. See Appendices for the completed Determinations and Recommendations documents.

Standards shown above as not being met due to past and possibly current livestock grazing are:

Standard 1: Watershed/upland areas are in properly functioning condition appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Standard 3: Ecological processes are appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

The proposed action would allow continued progress of the upward trends in these ecosystems. These improvements are due to the past livestock adjustments made to address these resource issues. The interdisciplinary (ID) team concluded that these GU's were showing an upward trend and with continued monitoring and additional modifications to the grazing permits either in livestock numbers or grazing time the management goals should be met. Continued improvements in the riparian areas should carry over to slow improvements in the uplands. New changes would become the new terms and conditions for the new grazing permit.

### **Alternatives Including the Proposed Alternative**

#### **Proposed Management Actions Common to All Alternatives:**

To achieve better livestock distribution, require maintenance of fences, springs and reservoir developments on a yearly basis. Maintenance must stay within the existing disturbed area. Any deviation from this must be reviewed by the cultural resource specialist. Require that salting areas always be at least 300 feet away from water, and preferably over  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from water. Require more frequent riding to keep livestock scattered better.

Continue to inventory and treat all noxious weed sites. This may require treatment, followed by reseeding.

Under all alternatives, cultural resource surveys should be completed prior to implementation of surface disturbing range projects and vegetation treatments. Avoidance measures (for example fencing or grazing system adjustments) and project location adjustments should be implemented to avoid impacts to cultural resources. Riparian exclosures that contribute to the protection of cultural resources would be maintained.

#### **Proposed Monitoring Common to All Alternatives:**

Monitor the grazing changes to see if utilization standards are being met or if not should the carrying capacity need to be adjusted again to make sure the utilization level is met. Monitoring livestock grazing should be done to ensure management objectives for upland and riparian systems are met or moving towards conditions that allow for restoration of the desired conditions, prevent any degradation of these systems and improve the overall conditions of riparian and aquatic habitat. This requires grazing systems that meet proper carrying capacities for these designated areas. Utilization monitoring for herbaceous and shrub species is accomplished at key use sites at pre-season, mid-season and the end of the grazing season using the key forage plant method when livestock grazing is occurring. BLM has developed Utilization Monitoring Thresholds based on results from the Section 7

consultation process, and were adopted as BMP (best management practices) and should be used to monitor grazing allotments. A threshold for upland herbaceous vegetation use is 50%; riparian herbaceous vegetation use threshold is 45%; and browse/shrubs use threshold is 30%. During the mid-season grazing period, if utilization indicates that the standard is close to being achieved, the permittee would take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the standard from being exceeded. This type of action may include moving livestock from the pasture or allotment, shortening the season of use, more riding to move livestock for better distribution, or constructing fencing to exclude livestock from the areas of concern.

**A. No Grazing Alternative:**

Under this alternative, the pastures identified above as not meeting standards due to livestock management would be rested for three full growing seasons before grazing use is resumed with additional grazing modifications as described below under "Proposed Action".

**B. No Action Alternative (Continue Existing Management):**

Under this alternative, the grazing permits would be reissued without modification. They would be for a period of 10 years, except when base property leases are less than 10 years the BLM permits would coincide with the terms of the base property leases.

**C. Proposed Alternative**

The proposed alternative is to issue grazing permits to the current permittees, but with some slight modifications and resource guidelines and stipulations which should become part of the terms and conditions in the new permit. Voluntary reductions which have occurred in the past would be made permanent. The grazing permits would be for a period of 10 years, except when base property leases are less than 10 years the BLM permits would coincide with the terms of the base property leases.

**1. Pine Valley Allotment #03001 Grazing Schedule Before Voluntary Reductions Started in 2000:**

ALLOTMENT NAME & NUMBER	AUMS	# LIVESTOCK	PASTURE	PERIOD OF USE
<b>3001 PINE VALLEY (I)</b>	<b>2392</b>			
Permittee #1 (70 head Permittee #2 lease)	510 20	255 C 255 C 10 C	SAG TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U
Permittee #3	280 20	140 C 140 C 10 C	CAVE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U
*Permittee #4	30	15 C 15 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 6/15 NON-USE
Permittee #5 (15 head Permittee #6 lease)	120	60 C 60 C	TIMBER CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15
*Permittee #7	120	60 C 60 C	SPILLWAY OVERLOOK	NON-USE 4/16 - 6/15
*Permittee #8	118	33 C	TARTER	4/16 - 8/01
*Permittee #9	860 80	340 C 200 C 120 C 80 C 200 C	TIMBER CANYON SNAKE RIVER PINE CREEK PINE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U 5/15 - 6/15
*Permittee #10	54	27 C 27 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 NON-USE
*Permittee #11 lease	100	50 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 NON-USE
Permittee #12 lease	80	40 C	CAVE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15

\* After voluntary reductions permittees have taken non-use or have reduced livestock numbers for the past several years in some pastures to help move toward meeting resource objectives.

Reduction in Animal Unit Months (AUM's) was based on reviewing all monitoring data; utilization records, updating the carrying capacity based on livestock water areas, total acres available for grazing in each pasture and using 15 acre range per AUM. The AUM's have been recalculated and adjusted. These adjustments need to be reviewed to determine if this is close to the proper carrying capacity. The management goal is to achieve a mid-seral stage of the grass and shrub component and to set the utilization level

of 50% on the vegetation in and around the key areas. This reduction was based on a percentage of their licensed AUM's and resource issues identified for each pasture. In addition to the above public land use, there are exchange-of-use agreements for intermingled private lands, in the amounts of 20 AUM's, 20 AUM's and 80 AUM's to be used within the dates above.

**New Grazing Plan for Pine Valley Allotment (Proposed Alternative):**

ALLOTMENT NAME & NUMBER	AUMS	# LIVESTOCK	PASTURE	PERIOD OF USE
<b>3001 PINE VALLEY (I)</b>	<b>1950</b>			
Permittee #1 (60 head Permittee #2 lease)	440 20	220 C 220 C 10 C	SAG TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U
Permittee #3	220 20	110 C 110 C 10 C	CAVE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U
*Permittee #4	30	15 C 15 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 6/15 NON-USE
Permittee #5 (15 head Permittee #6 lease)	110	55 C 55 C	TIMBER CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15
*Permittee #7	80	40 C 40 C	OVERLOOK SPILLWAY	5/15 - 6/15 NON-USE
*Permittee #8	100	50 C	TARTER	4/16 - 6/15
*Permittee #9	760 80	220 C 200 C 120 C 80 C 220 C	TIMBER CANYON SNAKE RIVER PINE CREEK PINE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 NON-USE 5/15 - 6/15 E-O-U 5/15 - 6/15
*Permittee #10	50	25 C 25 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15 NON-USE
*Permittee #11 lease	80	40 C	ROAD CANYON TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15
Permittee #12 lease	80	40 C	CAVE CREEK TOP	4/16 - 5/15 5/15 - 6/15

\* After voluntary reductions permittees have taken non-use or have reduced livestock numbers for the past several years in some pastures to help move toward meeting resource objectives.

Standards and Guidelines findings indicated that the majority of resource issues and concerns were in some of the upland areas that have been grazed heavily in the past. There are a lot of acres that are too steep to be grazed by livestock and these acres should not be used to calculate the carrying capacity. Adjusting livestock

numbers and grazing time should allow movement towards a more accurate carrying capacity for the remaining acres that are actually grazed by livestock and to meet the established utilization levels.

Changes to grazing management under the preferred alternative would include:

1) Use would be made in accordance with the grazing plan (see diagram above), which reduced livestock use from 2392 AUM's to 1950 AUM's (18% reduction) over a six year period starting in 2000. These voluntary reductions would become permanent if monitoring determines this is close to the carrying capacity for each pasture. These adjustments were done with consultation with the permittees after reviewing annual monitoring data showing some pastures not meeting the vegetative objectives for the soil type.

2) Thresholds for upland herbaceous vegetation use would be 50%; riparian herbaceous vegetation use would be 45%; and browse/shrubs use would be 30%. During the mid-season grazing period, if utilization indicates that the standard is close to being achieved, the permittee would take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the standard from being exceeded. This type of action may include moving livestock from the pasture or allotment, shortening the season of use or livestock numbers, more riding to move livestock for better distribution, salting, or perhaps constructing fencing to exclude livestock from the areas of concern.

**2. Doyle Gulch, Hunsaker Creek, Homestead and Copperfield Allotments Grazing Schedule Before Voluntary Reductions started in 2000:**

ALLOTMENT NAME & NUMBER	AUMS	# LIVESTOCK	PASTURE	PERIOD OF USE
<b>3004 DOYLE GULCH (I)</b>	<b>177</b>			
*Permittee #13	80	40 C	DOYLE GULCH	4/16 - 6/15
*Permittee #14	94	47 C	DOYLE GULCH	4/16 - 6/15
*Permittee #8	3	3 C	DOYLE GULCH	NON-USE
<b>3005 HUNSAKER CREEK (C)</b>	<b>264</b>			
Permittee #15	104	53C	HUNSAKER CREEK	4/16 - 6/15
Permittee #16	160	80C	HUNSAKER CREEK	4/16 - 6/15
<b>3006 HOMESTEAD (M)</b>	<b>415</b>			
*Permittee #9	227	117 C	HOMESTEAD	4/16 - 6/12 NON-USE
Permittee #11 lease	188	97 C	HOMESTEAD	4/16 - 6/12
<b>3007 COPPERFIELD (M)</b>	<b>106</b>			
*Permittee #17	106 10	30 C 10 C	COPPERFIELD	4/16 - 7/31 EOU NON-USE

After voluntary reductions in the past, permittees have taken non-use or have reduced livestock numbers the past several years in some pastures to help move toward meeting resource objectives. Reduction in AUM's was based on reviewing monitoring data; utilization records, updating the carrying capacity based on livestock water areas, total acres available for grazing in each pasture and using 15 acre range per AUM.

The AUM's have been recalculated and adjusted. The management goal is to achieve a mid-seral stage of the grass and shrub component and the set utilization level of 50% on the vegetation in and around the key areas. This reduction was based on a percentage of their licensed AUM's and resource issues identified for each pasture.

**New Grazing Plan for Doyle Gulch, Hunsaker Creek, Homestead and Copperfield Allotment  
(Proposed Alternative):**

<b>ALLOTMENT NAME &amp; NUMBER</b>	<b>AUMS</b>	<b># LIVESTOCK</b>	<b>PASTURE</b>	<b>PERIOD OF USE</b>
<b>3004 DOYLE GULCH (I)</b>	<b>80</b>			
*Permittee #13	40	40 C	DOYLE GULCH	4/16 - 5/15
*Permittee #14	40	40 C	DOYLE GULCH	NON-USE
*Permittee #8	3	3 C	DOYLE GULCH	NON-USE
<b>3005 HUNSAKER CREEK (C)</b>	<b>132</b>			
Permittee #15	52	53C	HUNSAKER CREEK	4/16 - 5/15
Permittee #16	80	80C	HUNSAKER CREEK	4/16 - 5/15
<b>3006 HOMESTEAD (M)</b>	<b>310</b>			
*Permittee #9	155	80 C	HOMESTEAD	4/16 - 6/12 NON-USE
Permittee #11 lease	155	80 C	HOMESTEAD	4/16 - 6/12
<b>3007 COPPERFIELD (M)</b>	<b>50</b>			
*Permittee #17	50 10	50 C 10 C	COPPERFIELD	4/16 - 5/15 EOU NON-USE

\* After voluntary reductions permittees have taken non-use or have reduced livestock numbers for the past several years in some pastures to help move toward meeting resource objectives.

Standards and Guideline findings indicated that the majority of resource issues and concerns were in some of the upland areas that have been grazed heavily in the past. There are many acres that are too steep to be grazed by livestock and these acres should not be used in the calculation of the carrying capacity. Adjusting livestock numbers and grazing time should allow movement towards a more accurate carrying capacity based on the available acres that are actually grazed by livestock.

Changes to grazing management would include:

1) Use would be made in accordance with the grazing plan (see diagram above), which reduced livestock use from 962 AUM's to 677 AUM's (30% reduction) over a six year period starting in 2000. These voluntary reductions would become permanent if monitoring determines this is close to the carrying capacity for each pasture. These adjustments were done with consultation with the permittees after reviewing annual monitoring data showing some pastures not meeting the vegetative objectives for the soil type

2) Thresholds for upland herbaceous vegetation use would be 50%; riparian herbaceous vegetation use would be 45%; and browse/shrubs use would be 30%. During the mid-season grazing period, if utilization indicates that the standard is close to being achieved, the permittee should take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the standard from being exceeded. This type of action may include moving livestock from the pasture or allotment, shortening the season of use or livestock numbers, more riding to move livestock for better distribution, and salting on the ridge tops.

**3. North Fork Allotment #05235, King Mountain allotment #15211 and Crow Reservoir Allotment #03021 are C (custodial) allotments.**

North Fork	40 cattle	5/01 to 5/30	40 AUM's
King Mountain	28 cattle	5/01 to 5/30	28 AUM's
Crow Reservoir	41 cattle	4/16 to 6/16	82 AUM's

These C allotments are grazing allotments that are unfenced small tracts, which are intermingled with much larger tracts of private land, thus limiting BLM's management opportunities. It is still reasonable to assess these allotments relative to Rangeland Health Standards; resource issues would only be accomplished if done on both the private and public land. An overview of the public land indicates some minor concerns with plant vigor, but not with plant composition. The above use dates are for billing purposes only. There are no defined grazing schedules and they are used at anytime of the year as long as abuse (over grazing) to the public land does not occur.

**Management Actions under the Proposed Alternative**

The proposed alternative is to issue grazing permits to the current permittees, with some modifications. Voluntary reductions which have occurred in the past would be made permanent. The grazing permits would be for a period of 10 years, except when base property leases are less than 10 years the BLM permits would coincide with the terms of the base property leases.

**Proposed Management Actions Common to All Allotments under the Proposed Alternative:**

- To achieve better livestock distribution, require maintenance of fences, springs and reservoir developments on a yearly basis where needed. Maintenance must stay within the existing disturbed area. Any deviation from this must be reviewed by the cultural resource specialist. Move salting areas further away from water areas (1/4 to 1/2 mile). Require riding as necessary, preferably every other day or weekly to keep livestock scattered better.

- Inventory pastures for possible new water developments and fencing to help achieve resource goals and objectives.
- Adjust grazing system, livestock numbers and time to meet utilization standards on riparian areas (45% on riparian herbaceous plants and 30% on riparian shrub component). Continue to monitor.
- Restore ecosystems that exhibit poor plant diversity and plant vigor to move towards DFRC (desired future range condition). This can be accomplished by removal, burning or control of these species, like annuals, shrubs, and juniper and reseeding with native grass species where needed.
- Monitor the riparian and upland areas to determine how much use is occurring by wildlife each year. Some of these areas are used by wildlife (sheep, deer and elk) as winter range and throughout the rest of the year.

#### **Monitoring under the Proposed Alternative:**

Monitor the grazing changes already implemented to see if utilization standards are being met and if not should the livestock numbers or grazing time be adjusted again to make sure the utilization standard is being met. Monitoring livestock grazing would be done to ensure management objectives for upland and riparian systems are met or moving towards these conditions which should allow for restoration of the desired plant communities, prevent any degradation of these systems and improve the overall conditions of riparian and aquatic habitat. This requires grazing systems that meet proper carrying capacities by livestock for these designated areas. Utilization monitoring for herbaceous and shrub species is accomplished at key use sites at pre-season, mid-season and the end of the grazing season using the key forage plant method when livestock grazing is occurring. BLM has developed Utilization Monitoring Thresholds based on results from the Section 7 consultation process, and these should be used to monitor grazing allotments. Thresholds for upland herbaceous vegetation use would be 50%; riparian herbaceous vegetation use would be 45%; and browse/shrubs use would be 30%. During the mid-season grazing period, if utilization indicates that the standard is close to being achieved, the permittee would take appropriate and necessary action to prevent the standard from being exceeded. This type of action may include moving livestock from the pasture or allotment, shortening the season of use, more riding to move livestock for better distribution or perhaps constructing fencing to exclude livestock from the areas of concern.

Environmental Effects:					
Critical Element	Affected		Critical Element	Affected	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Air Quality		X	T & E Animals		X
ACECs		X	T & E Fish		X
Cultural Resources	Addressed in EA		T & E Plants		X
Energy Resources		X	Tribal Concerns & Treaty Rights		X
Environmental Justice		X	Wastes, Hazardous/Solid		X
Farmlands, Prime/Unique		X	Water Quality, Drinking/Ground		X
Floodplains		X	Wetlands/Riparian Zones		X
Migratory Birds		X	Wild & Scenic Rivers		X
Social/Economic	Addressed in EA		Wilderness		X

**Description of Effects, No Grazing Alternative:** Social/Economic: This alternative could result in the greatest economic impact to the permittees' ranching operations. Some of them may have to find and pay for alternative grazing areas during the three years the BLM pastures are being rested. In this case, incomes could be reduced. Cultural Resources: Project surveys and measures designed to avoid impacts to sites should protect cultural resources. Dispersed livestock grazing has negligible to no effect on cultural resources. Increased regeneration of riparian vegetation, improved stream bank stability, maintenance of riparian fencing, increased plant cover, and meeting rangeland health standards should reduce the potential for disturbance or erosion, which should contribute to site stability and protection of cultural resources. Wetlands/Riparian Zones: No grazing for three years should increase regeneration and establishment of riparian vegetation as well as diversity. This in turn should lead to improved bank stability, increased shade to the streams, and reduction in sedimentation. Uplands & Ecological Processes: No livestock use in upland zones should continue a slow process in an upward trend and should return these zones to a desired future range condition (native perennial species).

**Description of Effects, No Action Alternative:** Social/Economic: This alternative could result in the least economic disruption to the permittees' ranching operations. Wetlands/Riparian Zones: Riparian standards are currently being met with the implementation of voluntary reductions; however there is a risk that if the permitted number of AUM's is made available, impacts to riparian habitat and water quality could occur. Cultural Resources: Project surveys and measures designed to avoid impacts to sites should

protect cultural resources. Dispersed livestock grazing has negligible to no effect on cultural resources. Watershed Function, Uplands & Ecological Processes: Probably would continue to fail to meet standards for rangeland health in the short term; however the trend is upward or static in most areas and should continue to improve.

**Description of Effects, Proposed Action:** Social/Economic: The proposed action could result in economic effects to the permittees' ranching operations in the form of reduced numbers of cattle or increased costs for alternative grazing areas. Cultural Resources: Project surveys and measures designed to avoid impacts to sites should protect cultural resources. Dispersed livestock grazing has negligible to no effect on cultural resources. Reducing livestock use in riparian zones, maintenance of riparian fencing, improved stream bank stability, increased vegetative cover, and meeting rangeland health standards should stabilize soils and reduce the potential for disturbance or erosion, which should contribute to the protection of cultural resources. Wetlands/Riparian Zones: Riparian habitat should continue to meet standards and continue the current upward trend. Uplands & Ecological Processes: Lesser amounts of livestock use in upland zones should continue a slow process in an upward trend and should return these zones to a desired future range condition (native perennial species).

None of the above actions address the current or future use of wildlife in these areas.

### **Cumulative Effects Analysis of the Alternatives:**

Cumulative effects are the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Historical grazing, livestock, sheep and mining have had a negative impact in most of the area. Several changes in livestock grazing have already been implemented to address resource issues previously identified through monitoring, and with these grazing changes rangeland health has improved over historical conditions. Along with these changes several pastures have been in non-use for several years. It could require several good growing years to see a major change, but indicators show an upward trend in most areas, including most of the riparian areas.

The Sheep Mountain and Homestead Geographic Unit experienced a wildfire in the summer of 2006. This fire covered over 53,000 acres of public and private land and included most of the allotments and pastures in these units. Under the BLM policy these pastures would be rested for at least two years and may be rested for up to five years, depending on the recovery and health of the vegetation in these areas. This affects fifteen permittees grazing permits for this area which would be placed in non-use. Once grazing is authorized again monitoring would also start again to determine if any additional modifications to the grazing schedule need to be done to meet management goals. Lesser amounts of livestock use in upland zones should continue a slow process in an upward trend which could return these zones to a desired future range condition (native perennial species).

**Cumulative Effects, No Grazing Alternative:** The cumulative effects of the no grazing alternative could include riparian zone recovery, increased bank cover, better stream bank stability, and more shading of streams by woody vegetation and should also improve upland vegetation. The cumulative effects on ranching operations could consist of further cutbacks on livestock use, which combined with others over the years, could increasingly make the ranching business more difficult.

**Cumulative Effects, No Action Alternative:** To reissue the grazing permits without current modifications made could cause cumulative effects in the continuance of grazing practices that could return the riparian habitat to a downward trend and which could be detrimental to recovery of upland vegetation.

**Cumulative Effects, Proposed Action:** Decreased livestock use in riparian zones or springtime use in riparian zones allowing summer and fall regrowth should result in most of the riparian zones to continue to be in properly functioning condition or in upward trend and should continue to provide good water quality. Cumulative effects on the ranching operations could again involve livestock use on private pastures at a higher expense.

**Appendices**

- Appendix A: Geographic Unit Maps
- Appendix B: Doyle Gulch, Copperfield, Hunsaker, and Homestead Allotment Maps with Determination/Recommendations Document
- Appendix C: Pine Valley Allotment Map with Determination/Recommendations Document
- Appendix D: King Mountain, North Fork Allotment Maps with Determination/Recommendations Document

**Persons/Agencies Consulted:** Permittees

**Preparers:** Gary Guymon

**Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist concurrence:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Baker Field Manager Concurrence:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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