

APPENDIX F
PERENNIAL, EPHEMERAL, AND PERENNIAL-EPHEMERAL
ALLOTMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

In Arizona, BLM grazing allotments are classified as Perennial, Ephemeral, or Perennial-Ephemeral. These classifications correspond to the following types of designated rangelands:

- Perennial Rangeland: consistently produces perennial forage to support a year round livestock operation.
- Ephemeral Rangeland: does not consistently produce enough forage to sustain a year round livestock operation but may briefly produce unusual volumes of forage to accommodate livestock grazing. There is a Special Rule for Ephemeral Range.
- Perennial-Ephemeral Rangeland: produces perennial forage each year and also periodically provides additional ephemeral vegetation. In a year of abundant moisture and favorable climatic conditions, annual forbs and grasses add materially to the total grazing capacity.

Criteria for Classifying Allotments as Ephemeral

Allotments may be classified as Ephemeral through Rangeland Health Assessments in accordance with the Special Ephemeral Rule, published December 7, 1968. BLM has established criteria based upon the Special Rule through which allotments can be classified as ephemeral. These criteria include:

1. Rangelands are within the hot desert biome.
2. Average annual precipitation is less than 8 inches.
3. Rangelands produce less than 25 pounds per acre of desirable forage grasses.
4. The vegetative community is composed of less than 5% desirable forage species.
5. The rangelands are generally below 3,500 feet in elevation.
6. Annual production is highly unpredictable and forage availability is of a short duration.
7. Usable forage production depends on abundant moisture and other favorable climatic conditions.
8. Rangelands lack potential to improve existing ecological status and produce a dependable supply of forage through intensive rangeland management practices.

IFNM Allotment Classifications

The two allotments currently classified as ephemeral (Morning Star and Tejon Pass) no longer meet the criteria for classification as ephemeral. The allotments produce more than 25 pounds per acre of desirable grass species, and the community is composed of more than five percent desirable forage species. Most of the rangelands are in a high or better ecological status. Those few areas that may be in medium or low ecological status have the potential to improve and produce a dependable supply of forage through intensive rangeland management practices. However, these allotments are not being reclassified at this time because BLM does not have sufficient information to identify forage capacity on these allotments, which is required when allotments are classified as perennial. As ephemeral allotments, no grazing preference levels are currently assigned to them. BLM is conducting additional monitoring to determine appropriate forage capacity; therefore, the decision to reclassify these allotments is being deferred until BLM can collect the data necessary to support and identify an appropriate forage capacity level and conduct an associated environmental analysis.

The nine allotments classified as perennial/ephemeral under No Action Alternative A are reclassified as perennial under Alternatives C and D. These allotments are reclassified because allotments do not meet the ephemeral criteria. BLM can issue temporary, non-renewable licenses to allow for seasonal use, when forage conditions warrant. This change provides BLM with additional discretion in reviewing seasonal use and ensuring use that protects monument objects.