

In Reply Refer To:
4100 (110)

May 16, 2007

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED NO.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DECISION

Dear Interested Public:

A Formal Allotment Evaluation was completed to address the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration for the Cowboy Butte Grazing Allotment #5310. On April 28, 1997, Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (S&Gs) were approved by the Secretary of the Interior and adopted into all Land Use Plans (LUPS) in Arizona as indicated by the Decision Record for the Statewide Amendment. The Cowboy Butte allotment evaluation was conducted in accordance with the direction set forth in the Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 98-91 for implementation of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. The evaluation concluded that issuing a grazing permit for a period of 10 years conformed to the applicable land use plans and amendments and that the existing NEPA documentation (AZ-EA-110-2005-0009) adequately addresses the proposed action.

In accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4130.2, and based upon the allotment evaluation, consultation with affected permittee, interested publics, rangeland resource team and recommendations from the interdisciplinary assessment team, my proposed decision is to offer the grazing permit for the Cowboy Butte Grazing Allotment for a period of 10 years with the following terms and conditions, which become effective upon acceptance of the permit.

1. Grazing will be in accordance with the Cowboy Butte Allotment Management Plan as analyzed in AZ- EA-110-2005-0009.
2. Billing for grazing use will be based on the Actual Use Report which is due on or before June 15 each year.

Authorized Permitted use is as follows:

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Active AUMs</u>	<u>Suspended AUMs</u>	<u>Permitted Use</u>
#5310 Cowboy Butte	184	0	184

Kind and number of Livestock, period(s) of use, and the amount of use, in animal unit months (AUMS):

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Livestock #s</u>	<u>Season of Use</u>	<u>% Fed</u>	<u>Active</u>
Cowboy Butte	40 Cattle	11/01 05/31	67	184

RATIONALE:

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 provide for livestock grazing use of the public lands which have been classified as proper for grazing. Grazing use must be consistent with good range management aimed at conservation and protection of the natural resources.

Arizona Standards and Guidelines (S&G) for grazing administration were developed through a collaborative process involving the Bureau of Land Management, State S&G Team and the Arizona Resource Advisory Council. Together, through meetings, conference calls, correspondence, and Open Houses with the public, the BLM State Team and RAC prepared Standards and Guidelines to address the minimum requirements outlined in the grazing regulations. The Standards and Guidelines, criterion for meeting Standards, and indicators are an integrated document that conforms to the fundamentals of rangeland health and the requirements of the regulations when taken as a whole.

The BLM has also reviewed the legal concerns and has concluded that the Standards and Guidelines evaluation and term permit renewal is supported by the National Environmental Policy Act and Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. The proposed action of renewing leases/permitted use conforms to the Arizona Strip Resource Management Plan (Land Use Plan) dated January 31, 1992, as amended.

The NEPA documentation covers the proposed action and alternatives which constitute BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA, and procedural requirements as provided in the CEQ regulations. This is demonstrated by the following background information:

In December of 1996 a ("draft") Statewide Plan Amendment of Land Use Plans in Arizona for implementation of Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration, and preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact, and supporting Environmental Assessment was sent out to 900 interested publics.

On April 28, 1997, Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing

Administration (S&Gs) were approved by the Secretary of the Interior and adopted into all LUPs in Arizona as indicated by the Decision Record for the Statewide Amendment.

The BLM has followed the mandate of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which requires the Secretary of the Interior to develop, maintain, and revise land use plans. The Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement guides the BLM's management of public lands and all resources.

The BLM has complied with the grazing regulations, Washington Office and Arizona BLM policies for permit/lease renewals and fundamentals of Rangeland Health as specified in 43 CFR 4180.

The Bureau of Land Management's grazing regulations contain many provisions for public participation in the decision making process. Consultation, cooperation and coordination (CCC) are the core of the public participation process and provides the BLM decision-maker the opportunity to consider the most complete information before making decisions.

In January, 2001, the public was notified that the Cowboy Butte allotment would be evaluated during that year to determine if the resource conditions were meeting the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. This initial notification was provided to allow for public participation in the CCC process. Different individuals, groups, organizations and agencies were contacted from the general Resource Management Plan mailing lists to determine specific interest in the Cowboy Butte allotment and to solicit interest in the decision making process for grazing term permit renewal and Standard and Guideline evaluation.

Issue scoping took place on March 14, 2001, and the Draft Cowboy Butte S&G evaluation report was sent out for public review and comment on August 20, 2004 to 31 individuals, groups, and agencies. The final report was completed and signed September 30, 2004. Comments were received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and were addressed in AZ-EA-110-2005-0009.

The assessment fulfilled its purpose of determining if the existing soil, water, and vegetative resources on public lands within the Cowboy Butte Grazing Allotment, meet, or are making significant progress toward meeting the standards. These resources are managed according to the resource management plan and other associated activity plans which identify terms and conditions for management on public lands. A thirty-day comment period on the draft report was afforded to the Permittee, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona State Land Department, Natural Resources Conservation Service, other Agencies and interested public.

The S&G assessment was conducted by an interdisciplinary assessment team (IAT) of resource specialists from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The IAT was assisted by the Rangeland Resource Team (RRT). The RRTs were established under the charter of the Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and are involved during the S&G assessment process for permit/lease renewals. Recommendations were considered from the (RRTs) which represented a variety of commodity, environmental and

recreational interests to assist in the interdisciplinary assessment of Standards for Rangeland Health.

In accordance with Bureau policy and regulations, all applicable monitoring data were examined and evaluated in order to determine progress in meeting Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and other land use plan objectives. Analysis of data indicated that the Land Use Planning (LUP) Objectives are being met. LUP Objectives pertaining to DPC's are being met and they assure rangeland health, state water quality standards, and habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species, as well as other wildlife is being maintained or improved. It was determined that current management is not a factor in preventing attainment of Standards. A review of the resource data revealed that the allotment meets Standards 1, 2, and 3.

The IAT completed the rangeland health assessment to determine if renewal of the term grazing permit would preclude the attainment of Arizona's S&Gs and determine if the proposed action (permit renewal) was in conformance with the documented Land Use Plan and adequately covered under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The EA/FONSI, AZ-EA-110-2005-0009, which analyzed the livestock grazing permit renewal action, based on the S&G evaluation, was completed May 15, 2007. This referenced EA/FONSI is considered a public document and is available upon request.

The Environmental Assessment reaffirmed the present grazing management, and determined that the present grazing management program would continue to allow improvement to the health of public land resources, such as soil, water, vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife and other resource values. Further, the Authorized Officer made a determination that issuing a grazing permit for a period of 10 years conformed to the applicable land use plans and amendments and the existing NEPA documentation adequately addresses the proposed action.

The Code of Federal Regulations (43 CFR 4130.2(a) requires that, "Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through..." the Arizona Strip Field Office Resource Management Plan, which adopted the Vermilion Resource Area Grazing Environmental Impact Statement.

The Arizona Strip Field Office is currently involved in a planning process to develop a new RMP for the Public Domain outside of the Monuments. Some modifications to current grazing practices may result from this new RMP. The 10-year grazing permit, in part, states "This permit is subject to (A) modification, suspension or cancellation as required by land plans and applicable law; (B) annual review and to modification of terms and conditions as appropriate;..". BLM may use these permit conditions to implement any changes required under the new RMP.

Also, the renewal of grazing permits is allowed: As provided for in 43 CFRs 4100 where the objectives of regulations are to promote healthy sustainable rangeland ecosystems; to accelerate restoration and improvement of public rangelands to properly functioning conditions; to promote

the orderly use, . . . ; to establish efficient and effective administration of grazing of public rangelands; . . .”, and as provided for in the Land Use Plans in accordance with multiple-use objectives, requirements and provisions of established laws, regulations and BLM policies incorporating Desired Plant Community Objectives using the Ecological Site Index approach.

Renewal of the grazing permit would comply with Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act and ARS§ 49-202 of the State Environmental Quality Act Certification. The management practices of the allotment are in conformance with Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration, and are designed to assist management in meeting these Standards for Rangeland Health through guideline consistency on the Cowboy Butte Grazing Allotment.

As required by Bureau Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-052 renewal of this grazing permit would not result in an adverse effect on energy development, production or distribution.

Authority: The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 C.F.R., as amended, effective August 11, 2006, and as modified to reflect injunctive relief granted on August 11, 2006 in Western Watersheds Project v. Kraayenbrink, Civ. No. 05-297-E -BLW (D. Idaho) and Maughan v. Rosenkrance, Civ. No. 06-275-E-BLW (D. Idaho), and on September 25, 2006 in WWP v. Kraayenbrink, Civ. No. 05-297 (D. Idaho), which states in pertinent subparts and sections:

4100.0-8 “The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resource uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use, and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR 1601.0–5(b).”

4110.3(a) “The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or lease and make changes in the grazing preference as needed to: (1) Manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity; (2) Assist in making progress towards restoring ecosystems to properly functioning conditions; (3) Conform with land use plans or activity plans; or, (4) Comply with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.”

4130.2(a) “Grazing permits or leases authorize use on the public lands and other BLM-administered lands that are designated in land use plans as available for livestock grazing. Permits and leases will specify the grazing preference, including active and suspended use. These grazing permits and leases will also specify terms and conditions pursuant to §§ 4130.3, 4130.3–1, and 4130.3–2.”

4130.2(b) “The authorized officer shall consult, cooperate and coordinate with affected permittees or lessees, the interested public and the state having lands or responsibility for managing resources within the area before issuing or renewing grazing permits and leases.”

4130.2(d) “The term of grazing permits or leases authorizing livestock grazing on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management shall be 10 years . . .”

4130.3(a) “Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.”

4130.3(c) “If any term or condition of a BLM-offered permit or lease is stayed pending appeal, BLM will authorize grazing use as provided in § 4160.4 with respect to the stayed term or condition.”

4130.3-1 “(a) The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity of the allotment. (b) All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease. (c) Permits and leases shall incorporate terms and conditions that ensure conformance with subpart 4180 of this part.”

4130.3-2 “The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits or leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands.”

4130.2(f) “The authorized officer will not offer, grant or renew grazing permits or leases when the applicants, including permittees/lessees seeking renewal, refuse to accept the proposed terms and conditions of a permit or lease.”

4160.1(a) “Proposed decisions shall be served on any affected applicant, permittee or lessee, and any agent and lien holder of record, who is affected by the proposed actions, terms or conditions, or modifications relating to applications, permits and agreements (including range improvement permits) or leases, by certified mail or personal delivery. Copies of proposed decisions shall also be sent to the interested public.”

4160.2 “Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other interested public may protest the proposed decision under §4160.1 of this title in person or in writing to the authorized officer within 15 days after receipt of such decision.”

4180.2(c)(1) “The authorized officer shall take appropriate action as soon as practicable but not later than the start of next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on public lands are significant factors in failing to achieve standards and conform with the guidelines that are made effective under this section.”

Right of Protest and/or Appeal:

Any applicant, permittee, lessee, or other affected interests may protest the proposed decision under 43 CFR 4160.1 in person or in writing to the authorized officer, Becky Hammond, at 345 East Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah, 84790 within 15 days after receipt of such decision. The protest, if filed, should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) as to why the proposed decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice. Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other person whose interest is adversely affected by the final decision may file an appeal and petition for stay of the decision pending final determination on appeal under 43 CFR 4160.4, 43 CFR 4.21 and must follow the requirements set forth in §4.470 through 4.480 of this title. The appeal and petition for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer, as noted above, within 30 days following receipt of the final decision, or 30 days after the date the proposed decision becomes final as provided in §4160.3(a).

The appeal shall comply with the provisions of 43 CFR 4.470 and state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why the appellant thinks the final decision is in error. When filing a petition for stay, the appellant must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors the stay.

As noted above, the petition for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer.

Sincerely,

Becky Hammond
Field Manager

Bureau of Land Management

Arizona Strip Field Office

Environmental Assessment

Cowboy Butte Allotment Grazing Permit Renewal

EA-AZ-110-2005-0009

I. INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the proposed grazing permit renewal for the Cowboy Butte allotment. The action culminates an evaluation conducted on the allotment under the Arizona BLM Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Management (S&Gs). In addition, this EA looks at the present Allotment Management Plan (AMP), and determines if current grazing management practices would maintain desirable conditions and continue to allow improvement of public land resources, or if changes in grazing management for the allotment are necessary. This EA is intended to evaluate the findings of the Cowboy Butte allotment assessment as it relates to vegetation conditions and resource values in the allotment. This is done in an effort to balance demands placed on the resources by various authorized uses within the allotment.

Analysis of existing allotment data indicates that ecological condition trends and pace-frequency trends are within normal limits. It was determined by the Interdisciplinary Assessment Team (IAT) during the assessment process, that resource conditions on the allotments are meeting Standards for Rangeland Health.

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need of this action is to renew the grazing permit for the Cowboy Butte (#5310) allotment. This allotment is located in Coconino County near Fredonia, Arizona on lands managed by the Arizona Strip Field Office.

Conformance with Land Use Plan

The proposed action and alternatives described below are consistent with the Arizona Strip District Resource Management Plan (RMP) dated January 31, 1992, as amended April 1997, and are consistent with Federal, State and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible. Rangeland management was considered in the Vermillion Grazing EIS of 1979, which was subsequently adopted as management direction in the Arizona Strip District RMP of 1992 (I-1).

Relationships to Statutes, Regulations, or other Plans

This action is in conformance with Arizona's Standards and Guides, which were developed through a collaborative process involving the Arizona Resource Advisory Council and the Bureau of Land Management State Standards and Guidelines team. The Secretary of the Interior approved the Standards and Guidelines in April 1997. The Decision Record, signed by the BLM Arizona State Director (April 1997) provided for full implementation of the Standards and Guides in all Arizona BLM Land Use Plans

Grazing permit renewals are also provided for in 43 CFRs 4100 where the objectives of regulations are "...to promote healthy, sustainable rangeland ecosystems; to accelerate restoration and improvement of public rangelands to properly functioning conditions; to promote the orderly use,....; to establish efficient and effective administration of grazing of public rangelands;....", and as provided for in the Land Use Plans in accordance with multiple-use objectives, requirements and provisions of established laws, regulations and BLM policies incorporating Desired Plant Community (DPC) objectives using the Ecological Site Index approach.

Grazing management practices of the Cowboy Butte AMP are in conformance with Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. These practices are intended to assist management in meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.

Renewal of the Cowboy Butte grazing permit conforms to the President's National Energy Policy and would not have adverse energy impacts. This action would not deny energy projects, withdraw lands, close roads or in any other way deny or limit access to mineral materials to support energy actions.

Issues raised relating to Standards for Rangeland Health

The issues relating to rangeland health were identified by the Rangeland Resources Team (RRT), Interdisciplinary Assessment Team (IAT), and livestock permittee during the allotment scoping meeting. Conclusions to these issues can be found in Standards and Guidelines Assessment Reports. The issues identified through the process described above were:

Scoping meeting March 14, 2001.

- Siler Pincushion Cactus
- OHV Activity
- "Moderate concerns" for soil erosion

Current Planning Process

The Arizona Strip Field Office is currently involved in a planning process that will result in 3 stand alone RMPs, one for each new National Monument and one for the Public Domain on the Strip outside of the monuments. No grazing changes are currently anticipated for the aforementioned allotment. However, there may be modifications as a result of the new RMPs.

The 10- year grazing permit, in part, states “This permit is subject to (A) modification, suspension or cancellation as required by land plans and applicable law; (B) annual review and to modification of terms and conditions as appropriate; ...”. BLM may use these permit conditions to implement any changes required under the new RMPs.

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action (Renewal of 10 Year Grazing Permit)

The Proposed Action is to renew the grazing permit for the Cowboy Butte allotment and respective grazing AMP for a period of ten years with current terms and conditions. Renewal of the 10 year grazing permit proposes no change from the present grazing permits. Livestock numbers would be limited to the current active preference. Livestock grazing would be in accordance with the existing AMP. New range improvements to assist in grazing practices and promote rangeland health would be considered through the NEPA process.

Alternatives Considered But Rejected For Further Analysis

Alternatives are tiered to the Arizona Strip District RMP (January, 1992) and the Vermillion Grazing EIS of 1979 which was adopted into the RMP and are basically the same for this action. The Grazing EIS addressed four alternatives: No Action, Elimination of Grazing on Public Lands, Stocking Level by Condition Class, Grazing and Benefit/Cost.

The following three alternatives were considered for this EA but rejected because they were analyzed in the RMP, to which this document is tiered.

- **Stocking Level by Condition Class alternative** would set the stocking level in relation to the average condition and apparent trend of the allotment.
- **Benefit/cost alternative would alter proposed actions to make them cost effective.** In the EIS only two AMPs would have to be changed to have their benefit/cost ratios equal to 1 or greater and they were Muggins Flat and Sage allotments.
- **No Action Alternative (Elimination of Livestock Grazing on Public Lands).** The decision to authorize livestock grazing in this area is documented in the approved land use plan. Absent of any new information indicating that continued livestock grazing would preclude BLM from either achieving or making significant progress toward achieving established land health standards, the land use plan decision authorizing grazing remains valid. Since an alternative of no grazing or not renewing a grazing permit would not conform to the land use plan, a plan amendment would be required prior to closing an allotment to livestock grazing.

The grazing system as identified in the Cowboy Butte AMP

A four pasture rest-rotation grazing system is used on the allotment. Using this system three pastures are grazed in succession for 2 or 2½ month periods, and one pasture is given complete yearlong rest. It takes four years to complete a grazing cycle, wherein no pasture is grazed at the same time of year during the four year sequence.

Grazing Preference and Current Use on the Allotments

Allotment Name	# Livestock	Period of Use	% Federal Range	Active AUMs
Cowboy Butte	40 cattle	11/1-5/31	66	184

Terms and Conditions of Grazing Permits

Grazing is in accordance with the Cowboy Butte AMP. Billing for grazing use is based on the actual use report which is submitted to BLM by the grazing permittee at the end of the period of use each year.

Desired Plant Community (DPC)

This EA also incorporates by reference the “Implementation of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration, Cowboy Butte Allotment S&G Assessment.”¹ This allotment assessment lists and evaluates achievement of the allotments DPC objectives, expressed in terms of species composition by weight, as summarized below.

Pasture B Plot #1 Loamy Upland 10 to 14 inch pz
 Maintain the key area in a Late Seral stage at 51 to 75 percent comparable to the Potential Natural Community. Maintain perennial grasses between 30 and 40 percent composition by weight and shrubs at about 60 percent composition by weight.

Pasture A2 Plot #2 Gypsum Upland 7 to 11 inch pz
 Maintain the key area in a Late Seral stage at 51 to 75 percent comparable to the Potential Natural Community. Maintain perennial grasses between 55 and 60 percent composition by weight and shrubs about 40 to 45 percent composition by weight.

Pasture C Plot #3 Seeded Area (Not possible to designate an accurate ecological status due to the high percentage of non-native seeded grasses). Maintain perennial grasses between 60 and 80 percent composition by weight, forbs between 0 and 5 percent composition by weight, and shrubs between 20 and 40 percent composition by weight.

Pasture C Plot #4 (Not possible to designate an accurate ecological status due to the high percentage of non-native seeded grasses). Maintain perennial grasses between 70 and 90

¹ Cowboy Butte Allotment S&G Assessment, available at the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Strip Field Office, 345 E. Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah 84790.

percent composition by weight, forbs between 1 and 10 percent composition by weight, and shrubs about 1 to 5 percent composition by weight.

Monitoring

The goals of monitoring are to determine if the fundamentals or conditions of Rangeland Health are being met within the AMP area under 43 CFR 4180. These conditions of Rangeland Health are:

- (a) Watersheds are in, or are making significant progress toward, properly functioning physical condition, including their upland, riparian-wetland, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance with climate and land form and maintain or improve water-quality, water quantity, and timing and duration of flow.
- (b) Ecological processes, including the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow, are maintained, or there is significant progress toward their attainment, in order to support healthy biotic populations and communities.
- (c) Water quality complies with State water quality standards and achieves, or is making significant progress toward achieving, established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.
- (d) Habitats are, or are making significant progress toward being restored or maintained for Federal threatened and endangered species, Federal Proposed, Category 1 and 2 Federal candidate and other special status species.

To monitor rangeland health conditions, key areas as defined in the *Monitoring* "Planning for Monitoring", "TR 4400-1", (1984) would be used. The key area would be used as an indicator area to reflect what is happening on the terrain they represent, subsequent of on-the-ground management. Each key area would be established based on a Range Site/Ecological Site (developed by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, (NRCS) with a specific Potential Natural Community (PNC) and specific physical site characteristics. Knowing the PNC of the area, and using the ecological site descriptions as a guide, DPC objectives can be developed. The DPC then becomes the objectives by which management actions would be measured.

Dry Weight Ranking (DWR) studies would be used to measure attainment of the key area DPC objectives. In addition, Pace Frequency studies would be used at each key area to detect changes of individual species which determines a trend or change in vegetation composition. Pace Frequency and DWR would be completed on each key area every 3-6 years. DWR and Pace Frequency study methodologies are described in *Sampling Vegetation Attributes*, "Interagency Technical Reference 1734-4" (1996).

Livestock use on forage plants would be determined by conducting grazing utilization studies

using the Grazed-Class Method as described in the *Utilization Studies and Residual Measurements* "Interagency Technical Reference 1734-3" (1996). Utilization studies would be completed annually by BLM, when livestock are removed from the pasture. Study data would be compiled each year. Other information to be collected and compiled is precipitation, actual use, etc. All monitoring data would be used to evaluate current management and assist BLM in making management decisions that helps achieve vegetation objectives on the allotment.

Based on analyses of allotment monitoring data and supporting documentation contained in the Cowboy Butte S&G Assessment Report, resource conditions on the allotment meets all applicable standards for rangeland health.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment is tiered to the Arizona Strip District RMP (January 31, 1992), Affected Environment pages III-1 to III-58, and pages 2-1 to 2-47 of the Vermillion Grazing EIS (1979) which was adopted into the RMP and are essentially the same for this action.

Chapter 2 of the Vermillion Grazing EIS describes the environmental components likely to be impacted by the proposed action. Environmental components discussed in the EIS that might affect or be affected by the proposal are: Climate, Vegetation, Threatened or Endangered Plant Species, Riparian Vegetation, Soils, Water Resources, Animals (wildlife), Cultural Resources, Visual Resources, and Land Uses including livestock grazing and recreation.

This EA also incorporates by reference the "Implementation of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration, Cowboy Butte Allotment S&G Assessment."² The introduction, grazing use, and allotment profile sections in the S&G Assessment describes the resources and issues applicable to the allotment areas. Also, see the S&G Assessment Appendices for other resource data and associated information.

Climate

Precipitation in the vicinity of the allotment is very erratic, both in area and in occurrence. Readings taken from 2 rain gauges less than 3 miles apart, at similar elevation, show ~1 inch difference in average annual precipitation. Average annual precipitation at the Fredonia rain gauge--which is in the proximity of the Cowboy Butte allotment--is ~10 inches, and has varied from 3.37 to 20.04 inches over a 65 year period. Approximately 17% of the annual precipitation comes in the fall, 30% in comes in winter, 21% comes in spring, and 32% comes in summer. Average Fahrenheit temperatures range from the 30's in winter to the 80's in summer. Due to low humidity and high summertime temperatures, the potential evaporation rate is about 18 inches for every inch of precipitation.

Vegetation

² Ibid.

There are four principal vegetative types³ within the allotment: Grassland, sagebrush, desert shrub, and saltbush.

- The grassland type includes Blue grama, galleta, squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, crested wheatgrass, and Russian wildrye
- The sagebrush type includes big sagebrush, squirrel tail, blue grama, galleta, sand dropseed, mormon tea and cliffrose.
- The desert shrub vegetative type consists of ephedra, wolfberry, yucca, fourwing saltbush, galleta and annual species.
- The saltbush type includes shadscale, winterfat, galleta, and sand dropseed.

These vegetative types make up the different ecological sites⁴ that are part of the Major Land Resource Units, as defined by the NRCS. The two ecological sites on the allotment are: Loamy Upland, Gypsum Upland.

Water Sources

Water is supplied to the allotment through pipelines connected to the Fredonia city water supply. Also, ephemeral ponds supply part of the water needs, with the permittee hauling water to supplement any shortfall.

All of the above artificial water sources are available to wildlife, although some of them may not actually hold water yearlong. All of the water rights are held by the permittee. It is a requirement of the agreements to make the water accessible to wildlife, for the time that water is available. There is currently no known competition for water between wildlife and livestock at the artificial sources.

Threatened or Endangered (T/E) Species

Siler cactus grows on the outcrops on the Schnabkaib member of the Moenkopi Formation. These gypsiferous clay and sandy layers tend to form rounded hills and often support sparser vegetation than adjacent areas of different substrate. It is characterized by desert shrub vegetation between 2,800-5,400 feet. The census data shows:

- 1986-10 cactus along a two mile transect
- 1986-10 cactus on 1 mile fence clearance on boundary between Highway and Cowboy Butte Allotments
- 1997-3 cactus were found at the south end of Cowboy Butte

³ Vermillion Grazing Environmental Impact Statement

⁴ An ecological site is a distinctive kind of land that differs from other kinds in its ability to produce a characteristic plant community. Each ecological site is a product of all environmental factors responsible for its development. Each site is capable of producing and supporting a plant community typified by an association of species that differs from other ecological sites in species kind, proportion and total production.

- 2004-4 cactus along 10 miles of transect in allotments habitat

The 2004 data shows a very small number of cactus which could be due to the six year drought, along with the fact this has always been a very scattered population. The nearby Johnson Spring within the Fuller Road Allotment demonstrate a similar drop in number of cactus, as the 1996 total in the trend plot was 77 and in 2004 it was 38.

Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), and peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus alatum*) may occasionally fly over the allotment. There are no riparian areas that would provide foraging habitat for peregrine falcon, bald eagle, or southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii extimus*). An experimental non-essential population (as defined under section 10J of the Endangered Species Act) of California condors was established on the Vermillion Cliffs in 1996. These birds may eventually forage on carrion within the allotment but have not yet been observed doing so.

BLM Sensitive and State Species of Concern

Ferruginous hawks (*Buteo regalis*) are known to forage over grassland habitat similar to that found on the allotment, though specific sightings have not been recorded for the area. Black-crowned night Heron (*Nysticorax nycticorax hoactli*) and snowy egrets (*Egretta thula brewsteri*) have occasionally been observed using stock tanks in the area, but have not been recorded on the allotment. A variety of sensitive bat species have been captured on this and neighboring allotments including Townsend's big-eared (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), spotted bats (*Euderma maculatum*), small-footed myotis (*Myotis ciliolabrum*), fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*), and big free-tailed bats (*Nyctinomops macrotis*).

No other, federally listed T/E species are known to occur in the area covered by this EA.

Wildlife

Mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) are occasionally found at low densities on this allotment. During winters with unusually deep or persistent snow, the mule deer are pushed out of their typical winter ranges and can be found close to the towns of Fredonia and Kanab. Non-game wildlife found on the allotment is typical of the area, including a variety of small mammals, grassland birds, raptors, and reptiles. All water sources within this arid area are important for wildlife.

Soil

The only soils monitoring data for this area is the Phase 1 Watershed Conservation and Development Inventory of 1971-1973 (See Field Office Files 7300). It was based upon a general soils map and thus ended up as broad interpretations and averages over large areas. Other more specific and detailed soils information is as follows:

SCS Soil Survey of Coconino County Area 629, Arizona, North Kaibab Part, 1991

- 4 Barx gravelly loam, 1 to 6 percent slopes, (fan terraces), mixed alluvium, Loamy Upland, 10 to 14 inches ppt
- 6 Bidonia-RO complex, 1 to 15 percent slopes, (plateaus), sandstone, Sandstone Upland (PJ), 10 to 14 inches ppt
- 8 Clayhole silty clay loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes, (fans), gypsiferous shale, Gypsum Upland, 7 to 11 inches ppt
- 19 Jocity silty clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes, (stream terrace), mixed alluvium, Clayey Upland, 7 to 11 inches ppt
- 24 Manikan silty clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes, (stream terraces), mixed alluvium, Clayey Upland, 10 to 14 inches ppt
- 47 Torriorthents, 3 to 50 percent slopes, (scarps, hills), gyp-shales and mudstones, Gypsum Hills, 7 to 11 inches ppt
- 48 Torriorthents-Rock Outcrop complex, (hills, walls), SS,MS,S, Navajo thru Chinle, Breaks, 10" to 14"

Lithology

The Cowboy Butte allotment consists of alluvial fans and low ridges with outcrops of Moenkopi mudstones and gypsiferous shales. Silty and clayey soils form broad floodplains.

Cultural/Historical

Prehistoric and Historical sites exist throughout the allotment. Cultural resources cover the span of human occupation in the new world from around 10,000 years ago, up to and including the ranch operators of today. Our specific knowledge of the cultural makeup is limited due to the lack of scientific investigation of the area.

Visual Resources

The allotment is in Visual Resource Management Class (VRM) Class III. VRM criteria are: management activities which affect the scenery should be designed or restricted so they are not obviously in contrast to the existing landscape.

Livestock Grazing

Cowboy Butte allotment contains: 2,760 acres of federal land, 965 acres of state land, and 217 acres of private land. Total acreage is 3,942 acres. The total number of active AUMs on the allotment is 184, and the period of use is November 1 to May 31.

Recreation Resources

The allotment is considered to have recreation values for geology, scenic view sheds, remoteness and solitude. General recreation activities include: recreational OHV use, driving for pleasure,

horseback riding, hiking, backpacking, camping, hunting, rock collecting, photography, bird watching and nature study.

Noxious Weeds

There are currently no known noxious weeds inside the allotment boundary.

Socio/Economic

The economic base of the Arizona Strip is mainly ranching with a few gypsum/selenite mines and uranium operations. Nearby communities are supported by tourism (including outdoor recreation), construction and light industry. The social aspect involves remote, unpopulated settings with moderate to high opportunities for solitude.

The following resources are not present in the allotment:

- Wilderness
- Wetlands/Riparian Areas
- Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Wild Horses and Burros
- Minerals
- Hazardous Wastes
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following critical elements of the human environment are not affected by the proposed action or alternatives or are not present:

- Air Quality
- Native American Religious Concerns
- Wastes (hazardous or solid)
- Water (quality and quantity of surface/underground supplies)
- Prime or unique farmlands
- Floodplains
- Environmental Justice
- Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Wilderness

Only impacts that may result from implementing the proposed action or alternatives are described in this EA. If an ecological component is not discussed, it is because BLM resource specialists have considered effects to the component and found the proposed action or alternatives would have minimal or no effects.

General effects from projects similar to the proposed action or alternatives are also described in the documents to which this EA is tiered.

This EA incorporates by reference the Cowboy Butte Allotment S&G Assessment and Appendices which provide complete discussions, analysis, and summaries of the range resources and associated data and issues.

Climate

The Proposed Action would have no effect on the climate. However, the Proposed Action would allow affected resources to respond to the climate with improvement to these resources, as mentioned below in the drought and vegetation segments.

In response to drought conditions, BLM can modify the terms and conditions of a grazing permit (i.e. number of cattle, turn out dates, removal dates, etc.) temporarily or on a more long-term basis. Most modifications are accomplished on a cooperative basis with the livestock permittee. However, if a permittee disagrees with BLM's assessment of the resource conditions or the necessary modifications, BLM may nevertheless issue a Full Force and Effect Grazing Decision to protect resources.

Vegetation

Under current management, the grazing system is designed to allow for different seasons of use and rest--allowing cool and warm season grasses and browse to build vigor, maintain healthy root systems, and achieve seed ripe. Two important elements of a grazing system are duration of grazing and stocking rates, which are determinants of how much leaf area is removed from forage plants. Removal of no more than 50 percent of the leaf volume allows forage plants or key species to remain healthy, productive, and resist weedy species competition.

Utilization data from 1990-1999 has been compiled for this evaluation. The objective is to obtain not more than an average of 50 percent utilization of the current year's growth of key species. The highest utilization level was 42 percent in 1994 and average utilization was ~8 percent over the 10 year period.

Key areas are established on ecological sites and studied to determine the ecological status--defined as the extent to which the current kinds, proportions, and amounts of vegetation in a plant community are believed to resemble that of the potential natural community (PNC). Four ecological status classes are used to represent a percent similarity to the potential natural community:

- Early Seral Stage (0-25 percent similar)
- Mid Seral Stage (26 - 50 percent similar)
- Late Seral Stage (51-75 percent similar)
- Potential Natural Community (76 -100 percent)

The following table lists the allotment’s pastures, key areas, current ecological status, and similarity to the potential natural community.

Pasture	Key Area	Ecological Status	Similarity to PNC
B	#1	Late Seral	52%
A-2	#2	Late Seral	60%
C	#3	Not known*	Not known*
C	#4	Not known*	Not known*

*Non-native plant species were seeded during a mid 1960’s watershed rehabilitation project and, therefore, it is not possible to assess accurate ecological status. Plant community structure guidelines developed by the Natural Resource Conservation Service for this ecological site calls for 60 to 70% grass, 5 to 10% forb, and 20 to 35% shrub composition. Composition at key areas #3 and #4 is 79 to 93% seeded grasses, 0 to 5% forbs, and 2 to 21% shrubs.

Four principal vegetative types can occur at the Cowboy Butte allotment: grassland, sagebrush, desert shrub, and saltbush. The grassland type includes Blue grama, galleta, squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, crested wheatgrass, and Russian wildrye; the sagebrush type includes big sagebrush, squirrel tail, blue grama, galleta, sand dropseed, mormon tea and cliffrose; the desert shrub vegetative type consists of ephedra, wolfberry, yucca, fourwing saltbush, galleta and annual species; and the saltbush type includes shadscale, winterfat, galleta, and sand dropseed. Desired Plant Community (DPC) objectives are predicated on the make up of a plant community at a given ecological site. Feasibility or capability to elicit change and current condition of vegetation are considerations when developing DPC objectives.

Trend of the vegetation at the 4 key areas is based on pace-frequency studies—which measure the ratio between the number of a given key species sampled and the total number of species sampled. Current trend is mostly not apparent, meaning it is neither up nor down. Cool season grasses fluctuate in frequency, but this is believed to be a normal response to wet and dry precipitation cycles.

Based on the foregoing; utilization is well below the authorized limit, ecological status or plant community structure is meeting desired plant community objectives, and trend is within normal parameters. Therefore the Proposed Action would have no significant impact on vegetation. The Silar pincushion cactus is discussed further on under T/E Species.

Noxious Weeds

There are currently no known noxious weeds inside the allotment boundary. The area is routinely surveyed for new weeds.

Threatened or Endangered (T/E) Species

Siler pincushion cactus on the allotment would likely be unaffected by livestock. Vegetation is sparse in the cactus habitat and, coupled with the fact livestock water is about 1 mile from cactus

habitat, act as deterrents to livestock. The cactus population on the Arizona Strip District is currently stable, but ongoing monitoring and observation since 1986 cite the following reasons for cactus mortality: natural causes, 51 percent; rabbit and rodent herbivory, 43 percent; inexplicable causes, less than 5 percent; trampling, less than 7/10 of one percent; and off highway vehicles, 0 percent. The Biological Opinion for this allotment has been completed (See conditions in mitigation section, pages 16 & 17). BLM has determined that renewal of the 10 year grazing permit for this allotment would not likely have an adverse affect on Siler pincushion cactus or its habitat.

The Proposed Action Alternative would have not affect on any other listed threatened or endangered species nor would the proposed action impact an occasional fly over by the bald eagle, California condor, or peregrine falcon.

BLM Sensitive Species.

The Proposed Action would have no significant impact on BLM sensitive and state species of concern. These species include the avian species, Ferruginous hawk, Black-crowned Night Heron, and snowy egret and sensitive bat species such as Townsend's big eared, spotted bats, small-footed myotis, fringed myotis and big free-tailed bats.

Wildlife

The Proposed Action would have no significant impacts on big game or the other nongame wildlife found on the allotment. Observation and studies over time have indicated that this area receives only light use by mule deer, primarily as transitional habitat between summer and winter range. AGFD has not inventoried fences on this allotment to determine if the fences comply with their wildlife passable agenda.

Migratory Birds

Executive Order 13186 requires BLM and other federal agencies to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to improve protection for migratory birds. Implementation of the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect any species of migratory bird known or suspected to occur on the allotment. No take of any such species is anticipated.

Soil

Attributes making up the soil resource should remain stable or improve through implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative and enforcement of the Arizona Standards and Guides process for permitted livestock grazing within the allotment. The current grazing rotations and/or season of rest allows for plant rest and vigor. Utilization levels are within that allowable and current trends are mostly static.

One soils issue identified in the Cowboy Butte Allotment S&G Assessment was “moderate concerns” for soil erosion. After the BLM soil scientist visited the allotment, no soil concerns were documented and the allotment is meeting Standard #1, i.e., upland soils exhibit infiltration, permeability, and erosion rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate and landform (ecological site).

Cultural Resources

There would be no significant impact to cultural or historical sites as a result of renewing this grazing permit. Cultural resources project file AZ BLM 010-2001-35 contains documentation of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Great efforts are made to avoid these sites during allotment project implementation. Further, archaeological clearances are completed prior to all project approvals.

Visual Resources

The Visual Resource Management Class areas inside the allotments remain essentially unchanged since the objectives were proposed in the Visual Resource Area Implementation Plan. A review as well as protection of the visual resource values is a routine part of the interdisciplinary NEPA process, along with recommendation for mitigating measures if impacts to visual resources are anticipated when surface disturbing projects are proposed.

Livestock Grazing

Under the Proposed Action livestock grazing would continue and the permittees would be allowed to continue in the livestock business.

Recreation Resources

Recreation in the area is primarily composed of driving for pleasure, recreational OHV use, horseback riding, hiking, backpacking, camping, hunting, photography and nature study. No impact to recreation is expected.

A recreation issue identified on the allotment was OHV Activity, which often results in a deterioration of the “quality” of the areas that they play in. They leave trash, destroy vegetation, and create erosion problems with their recreational and off-road activities. An enhanced law enforcement presence as well as a public education program would help curtail some of the negative impacts that some perceive as increasing significantly in the area.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative Impacts are tiered to the Arizona Strip RMP (1992), Environmental Consequences

pages IV-36 to IV-38, and to chapter 3 of the Vermillion Grazing EIS (1979) which was adopted into the RMP. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Relationship between Local Short-term Uses of Man's Environment, Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term Productivity, and the Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources were discussed.

Cumulative impacts occur when additional management facilities are added to those already present. Grazing plans are intended to meet specific objectives to the plan area and involve rangeland improvements that are designed to maintain or improve wildlife habitat, watershed, and overall resource conditions, thus improving ecosystem health.

Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions within the analysis area would continue to influence range resources, watershed conditions and trends. The impact of land treatments targeting woody species, voluntary livestock reductions during dry periods and implementation of a grazing system have improved range conditions. The net result has been greater species diversity, improved plant vigor, and increased ground cover from grasses and forbs. No cumulative impacts are predicted from the proposed action.

Residual Impacts

Residual Impacts are tiered to the Arizona Strip RMP (1992), Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources page Chapter 7, Page 7-1 of the Vermillion Grazing EIS (1979) which was adopted into the RMP. Though the proposed action doesn't propose any new fences, it does allow for the existence of present fence lines, which do create some restrictions of free passage, but do not prevent passage of mule deer. Other wildlife using the area are not restricted by existing fences.

There are no residual impacts as a result of the proposed action to the vegetative resource. Future maintenance of existing vegetation treatments would take place regardless of the proposed action and would not affect additional acres beyond that done previously. Residual impacts from maintenance activities would be improved watershed conditions, wildlife habitat, and rangeland resources over time.

Monitoring

The monitoring addressed in the proposed action is sufficient to identify changes in vegetation as a result of livestock grazing activities. In addition to those methods described, there are efforts in place to inventory for noxious weed establishment, as well as monitor treated areas for treatment effectiveness. BLM weed specialist (LD Walker) has the lead on monitoring and treating noxious weeds on the Arizona Strip. He has provided training in identification and treatment as well as ways to reduce the spread of weeds to BLM employees and permittees.

Mitigation

When noxious weeds are located, various methods are used for their control depending on the

size of the infestation and growth stage of the plants. The methods include but are not limited to:

- Physical or mechanical
- Biological
- Chemical or Cultural

If vegetative monitoring indicates current livestock grazing practices are causing non-attainment of resource objectives, BLM can modify the terms and conditions of a grazing permit (ie. number of cattle, turn out dates, removal dates, etc.) temporarily or on a more long-term basis. Most modifications are accomplished on a cooperative basis with the livestock permittee. However, if a permittee disagrees with BLM's assessment of the resource conditions or the necessary modifications, BLM may nevertheless issue a Full Force and Effect Grazing Decision to protect resources.

The Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO) developed several measures which were consulted on by the US Fish and Wildlife Service that will be implemented as part of the proposed action to reduce the potential for adverse effects (Arizona Strip Field Office Undated) to Siler Pincushion Cactus (SPC).

- SPC demographic study plots will continue to be read annually. Areas of possible or potential occurrence of the species will be re-inventoried at least once every ten years. Annual monitoring reports will be provided to the Fish and Wildlife Service.
- ATV use and activity will be monitored in the allotments. If monitoring reveals adverse effects to the species from that activity, then action will be taken to preclude further effects. In addition, the grazing permits will include a stipulation that use of ATVs off- road in occupied SPC habitat is prohibited. Maps illustrating occupied habitat will be provided to allotment permittees. Horses may be used in occupied habitat.
- The ASFO will conduct a survey at least once every ten years in areas of dense SPC populations outside of established monitoring plots in the allotments. The purpose of the surveys is to assess the condition of the populations and to check for damage to cactus and habitat associated with livestock operations. The surveys will include 1-mile transects in dense SPC populations. If any trampling or habitat damage is observed with the ten-year monitoring, then the monitoring will subsequently be conducted on an annual basis. If five individual SPC are trampled by livestock per year over a five-year period in the transects, fencing or changes in livestock management will be implemented to reduce trampling.
- If existing monitoring plots at Johnson Spring or observations made at Cottonwood Well reveal impacts to SPC due to trampling or ATV use, then the populations at those locations will be fenced. The Atkin Well population will be unfenced and studied. The dense SPC population at Coyote Spring will be fenced to preclude ATV use.
- During drought, grazing pressure on forage plant species will be reduced in the

allotments. The drought policy known as Decreased Permitted Use (43 CFR 4110.3-2) will be implemented.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This EA was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Arizona Strip Field Office, 345 E. Riverside Drive, St. George, UT 84790. Phone (435) 688-3200. Public involvement for the Cowboy Butte S&G evaluation began more than a year ago. The assessment was conducted by an interdisciplinary assessment team (IAT) of resource specialists from the BLM. The IAT was assisted by the Rangeland Resources Team (RRT) appointed by the Arizona Resource Advisory Council. A draft evaluation was sent out for public review and comment to Individuals, Groups and Agencies. Comments from Individuals, Groups and Agencies were incorporated in to the Final Cowboy Butte S&G evaluation report. This EA reflects those comments.

Interdisciplinary Assessment Team (IAT):

Linda Price.....Project Coordinator
Bill Wall.....Range/Grazing
John Herron.....Archaeologist
Robert Smith.....Soils, Watershed
Larry Gearhart.....Wilderness/Recreation
Michael Herder.....Wildlife Biologist

Internal Reviewers:

Gloria Benson, Native American Coordinator
Tom Folks, Recreation
Laurie Ford, Lands/Realty/Minerals
Michael Herder, Wildlife
John Herron, Cultural
Lee Hughes, Plants
Ray Klein, GCPNM Supervisory Ranger
Linda Price, S&G
Bob Sandberg, Range
Richard Spotts, Environmental Coordinator
Ron Wadsworth, Supervisory Law Enforcement

Implementation of the Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines
for Grazing Management for the Cowboy Butte Grazing Allotment Permit Renewal

RE: AZ-EA-110-2005-0009

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

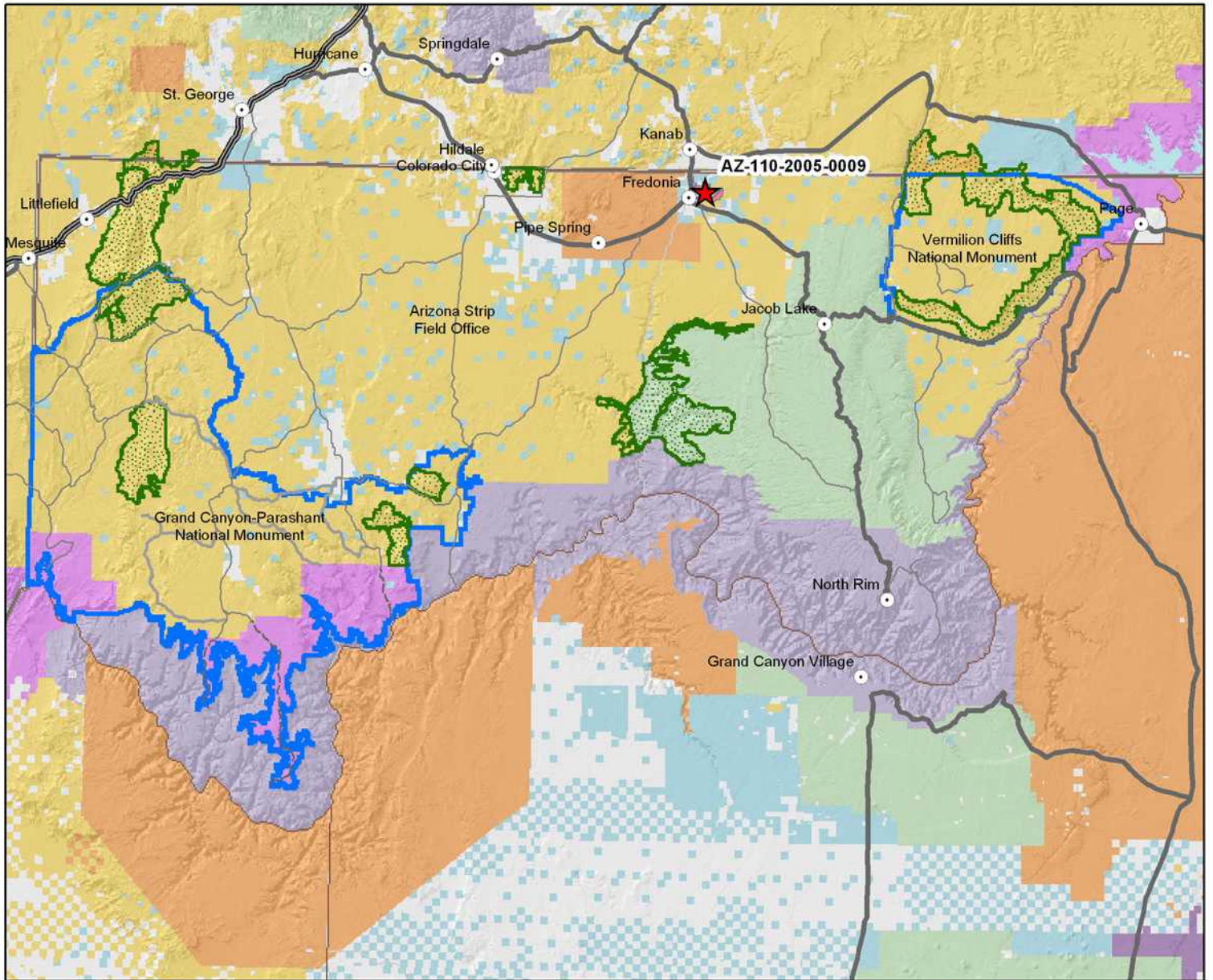
The Environmental Assessment AZ-110-2005-0009, hereby incorporated by reference, analyzed a livestock grazing permit renewal action conducted under the Arizona BLM Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Management (S&Gs) where an intensive allotment evaluation was conducted with public and other agency involvement throughout the process. Analysis of existing study data indicates that overall Ecological Condition trends are static or up and pace frequency trends are mostly static on the allotment. The resource conditions on the allotment are meeting Standards for Rangeland Health. Issues were analyzed and it was determined that current management is not a factor in preventing attainment of Standards.

The Environmental Assessment reaffirmed the present Allotment Management Plan (AMP), and determined that the present grazing management program would continue to allow improvement to the health of public land resources, such as soil, water, vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife and other resource values.













Based on the analysis of Environmental Assessment AZ-110-2005-0009, I have determined that the renewal of the Cowboy Butte Livestock Grazing Permit with current terms and conditions will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

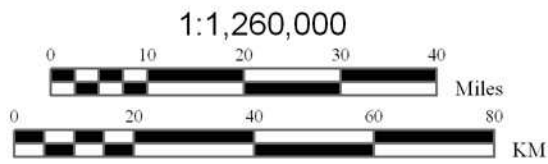
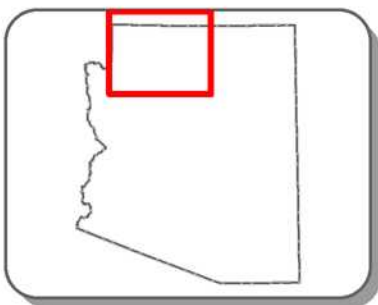
Field Manager
Arizona Strip Field Office

Date



Legend

-  General Project Location
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  National Park Service
-  National Forest
-  Designated Wilderness
-  State Lands
-  National Recreation Area
-  National Forest Wilderness
-  Private Lands
-  Indian Lands
-  Military Reservation
-  Monuments



CAUTION:
 Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.

