

**Pre-Decisional Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)  
for the  
North and South Cotterel Allotments**

I have reviewed the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed activities documented in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the North and South Cotterel Allotments (ID-220-2008-EA-223). I have also reviewed the project record for this analysis and the effects of the proposed action and alternatives are disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Impacts sections of the EA. Implementing regulations for NEPA (40 CFR 1508.27) provide criteria for determining the significance of the effects. Significant, as used in NEPA, requires consideration of both *context* and *intensity* as follows:

- (a) Context. This requirement means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant (40 CFR 1508.27):**

The disclosure of effects in the EA found the actions limited in context. The planning area is limited in size and activities limited in potential. Effects are local in nature and are not likely to significantly affect regional or national resources.

- (b) Intensity. This requirement refers to the severity of the impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following are considered in evaluating intensity (40 CFR 1508.27).**

- 1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and/or adverse.*

Impacts associated with the livestock grazing permit renewal are identified and discussed in the Environmental Impacts section of the EA. The proposed action will not have any significant adverse impacts on the resources identified and described in the EA.

- 2. The degree to which the proposed action affects health or safety.*

The proposed activities will not significantly affect public health or safety. The purpose of the proposed action is to allow for multiple uses while maintaining or improving resource conditions to meet standards for rangeland health in the allotments. Similar actions have not significantly affected public health or safety.

3. *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*

There are no known unique historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers in the allotments.

4. *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

The analysis did not identify any highly controversial concerns affecting the quality of the human environment.

5. *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

The possible effects on the human environment are not highly uncertain nor do they involve unique or uncertain risks. The technical analyses conducted for the determinations of the impacts to the resources are supportable with use of accepted techniques, reliable data, and professional judgment. Therefore, I conclude that there are no highly uncertain, unique or unknown risks.

6. *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

This decision is specific to the North and South Cotterel Allotments. It is not expected to set precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future management consideration outside of these allotments.

7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.*

The EA did not identify any significant effects. Outside this project area, additional Standards and Guidelines Assessments, Determinations, and subsequent permit renewal decisions will be made, potentially resulting in changes in livestock management actions, stocking levels, and season of use. However, those actions in combination with this decision are expected to have beneficial cumulative effects by implementing changes necessary to meet Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health.

8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant, cultural, or historical resources.*

The proposed action is not considered to adversely affect districts, sites, highways or structures. In addition, there are no known sites which are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. It is also not considered to cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

9. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*

There is no designated critical habitat for any listed Threatened or Endangered species within the project area.

10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

The proposed action does not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Based upon the review of the test for significance and the environmental analyses conducted, I have determined that the actions analyzed for the EA are not major federal action and that its implementation will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary for this proposal.