Appendix A18
Isom Allotment #159

1.0 Introduction

According to the RMP, Isom Allotment consists of approximately 1,000 acres of public land, 1,860 acres of private land, and 2,240 acres of state land. This allotment is bordered by the Payette National Forest to the west, private land to the north and east, and state and private land to the south. There is no direct public access to public lands in Isom Allotment.

Through the Evaluation and Determination, it was determined that:

- Livestock management is contributing to the non-conformance with the Watershed (#1), Riparian Areas (#2), Stream Channels and Flood Plains (#3), Native Plant Communities (#4), and Threatened and Endangered Species (#8) standards;
- Conformance to Water Quality (#7) standard is being achieved;
- Compliance with all applicable guidelines for livestock grazing management is not being achieved (numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 18).

2.0 Description of the Alternatives

2.1 Alternative A – No Action /Continue Current Management

Livestock management would continue as currently authorized, with the current grazing permit expiring February 28, 2015. Mandatory terms and conditions of the grazing permit are:

Permittee	Livestock	Season of Use	Percent Public Land	Grazing Preference		
				Active	Suspended	Total
Earl Henderson	300 Cattle 200 Cattle	04/16 to 06/15 10/16 to 11/30	14%	84 42	0	126

Following are allotment specific terms and conditions attached to the grazing permit:

1. This is Fenced Federal Range and may be grazed concurrently with private lands as long as grazing use is not detrimental to the federal range.
2. Fees are due on the date specified on the grazing bill. Failure to pay your grazing bill within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of $25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, not to exceed 250.00 payment. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Upon failure to make payment within this 30 days livestock may be considered in trespass.
3. As provided in the Code of Federal Regulations CFR 4130.6-2d, you are hereby required to submit a certified Actual Use Report within 15 days after completion of your annual grazing use. Failure to comply could result in the cancellation of your permit in whole or part.
4. Livestock exclosures located within your grazing allotments are closed to all domestic grazing use. It is your responsibility to keep the fences in good repair where maintenance has been assigned to you. Permittees who willingly cause and willingly allow their livestock to graze in exclosures closed to grazing will be charged with trespass.
5. Salt and/or mineral blocks shall not be placed on public lands within one-quarter (¼) mile of springs, streams meadows, riparian habitats or aspen stands.

6. All appropriate documentation regarding State and/or private leased lands, private lands offered for exchange-of-use, and livestock control agreements must be approved by the authorized officer prior to allowing livestock to graze on public lands.
7. The turn-out date shown above will be subject to range readiness. Range readiness occurs once the soils have firmed after the spring thaw, and the physiological requirements of the plants have been met. A copy of the range readiness guidelines is available upon request.
8. Turn-out is subject to Boise District range readiness criteria
9. Changes to the scheduled use requires prior approval
10. Trailing activities must be coordinated with the BLM prior to initiation. A trailing permit or similar authorization may be required prior to crossing public lands.
11. Range improvements must be maintained in accordance with the cooperative agreements and range improvement permits in which you are a signator or assignee. All maintenance of range improvements within a Wilderness Study Area requires prior consultation with the Authorized Officer.

2.2 Alternative B – Proposed Action

Based on field mapping of existing fences and information provided by the permittee, the acreage for Isom Allotment #159 has been recalculated. These revised acres, as shown in the following table, reflect the most accurate and up-to-date information, and would be used for the new term permit. To incorporate updated allotment information and current grazing management guidance, it is proposed to:

1. Split the Isom Allotment #159 along an existing fenceline that is on the east side of Jackson Creek, as shown in the following table. The allotment name would be changed from Isom #159 to Little Jackson Creek #159 Allotment.

Public Land Parcel	**Legal Description**			**Action**
	Public Land	**Private Land**	**State Land**	
East Side of old Isom Allotment	T16N, R1W			Change allotment name from Isom to Little Jackson Creek #159
	Section 17 S½N½, S½	Section 6: NW¼SW¼	Section 6: SW¼SW¼	
		Section 7: E½E½	Section 7: W½, W½E½	
		Section 8: All	Section 16: W½, W½E½	
		Section 9: that portion lying west of Hornet Creek	Section 17: N½NW¼	
		Section 17: N½NE¼	Section 18: All	
	T16N, R2W			
		Section 1: that portion of the SW¼ lying east of the fence; W½SE¼, NE¼SE¼	Section 1: SE¼SE¼	
		Section 12: that portion of the E½W½ lying north and east of the fence	Section 12: E½	
			Section 13: that portion lying east of Jackson Creek	
TOTAL Acreage (based on GIS)	**474**	**1,235**	**1,782**	

Public Land Parcel	Legal Description			Action
	Public Land	Private Land	State Land	
West Side of old Isom Allotment	T16N, R2W			
	Section 13: NW¼, N½SW¼		Section 13: That portion lying west of Jackson Creek	Transfer to Jackson Creek Allotment #158
	Section 14: E½			
TOTAL Acreage (based on GIS)	**545**	**0**	**201**	

2. Transfer the western parcel of public land (approximately 545 acres) to Jackson Creek Allotment #158. The grazing permit for these lands is addressed in Appendix 17 for Jackson Creek Allotment #158. With this change of allotment boundaries, that portion of Jackson Creek crossing public land is now in Jackson Creek Allotment. Any further discussions of riparian issues can be found in Appendix 17, for Jackson Creek Allotment.
3. Due to previous allotment boundary modifications, the SW¼SW¼ of Section 17, T16N, R1W, became a part of Isom Allotment, per the 2007 decision for EA #ID-110-2005-EA-010; this allotment boundary change resulted in the allotment now consisting of approximately 3,491 acres, including 474 acres of public land (14 percent), 1,235 acres of private land (35 percent), and 1,782 acres of state land (51 percent). These acreages differ from the 1988 Cascade RMP information presented above in the Introduction and in the main body of the EA.
4. Modify the percent public land term of the grazing permit to 14 percent;
5. Grazing preference will be reduced from 126 to 44 AUMs;
6. Renew the grazing permit showing maximum authorizations for livestock numbers, season-of-use, and AUMs (each of these columns would be stand-alone sections of the permit therefore standard method for calculating AUMs would not apply). Annual flexibility of livestock numbers and/or season-of-use would be allowed based on seasonal circumstances (example - range readiness; variations in permittee's management; but not limited to these situations). Management flexibility would be allowed provided livestock use remains within the sideboards of maximum livestock numbers and season-of-use, and without exceeding authorized AUMs.
7. Use Annual Indicators to insure the allotment is making progress towards meeting the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

Based on the proposed action, grazing preference would be authorized for a maximum of 24 active AUMs to be used between April 20 and June 30. Twenty AUMs of preference would be suspended, pending improvement in the ecological condition of the allotment. Terms and conditions necessary to regulate grazing activities on public land would be added to the grazing permit. Annual indicators would be used to describe utilization criteria. The grazing permit would be renewed for a term of ten years, from March 01, 2009 to February 28, 2019, as follows:

Allotments	Livestock (maximum)	Season of Use (maximum)	Percent Public Land	Grazing Preference (AUMs)		
				Active	Suspended	Total
Little Jackson Creek #159	200 Cattle	04/20 to 06/30	14%	24	20	44

Following are allotment specific Terms and Conditions to be attached to the grazing permit for Little Jackson Creek Allotment:

1. Livestock grazing for Little Jackson Creek Allotment will comply with Field Manager's Decision that became final on (intentionally left blank at this time, date to be inserted when the decision becomes final).
2. Authorized AUMs would not be exceeded on public lands. Livestock numbers and season of use, as shown above, indicate maximums that would be allowed under this permit. Permittee has discretion to manage within these numbers, provided overuse does not occur on public land.
3. Changes to the scheduled use require prior approval, on an annual basis.
4. The Annual Grazing Use Report (BLM Form 4130-5) must be properly completed, signed, dated and submitted within 15 days of completing your authorized annual grazing use.
5. Annual maintenance of range improvements would be completed prior to livestock entry of the allotment.
6. Livestock turn-out is subject to Boise District range readiness criteria.
7. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(b), permittee must notify the BLM Field Manager, by telephone followed with written confirmation, immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined in 43 CFR 10.2) on federal land. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c), permittee must immediately stop any ongoing activities connected with the discovery and make a reasonable effort to protect discovered remains or object.
8. Salt and/or mineral blocks shall not be placed on public lands within one quarter (¼) mile of springs, streams, meadows, riparian habitats or aspen stands.

Flexibility

Scheduled turn out dates may be adjusted based on Range Readiness and Annual Indicators. Grazing schedule adjustments require prior approval from the Authorized Officer.

Based on the results of monitoring associated with Annual Grazing Use Indicators, periodic modifications to authorized grazing management may be imposed. Monitoring data collected would be used to ensure adherence with Annual Indicators, listed below. Modifications may include, but are not limited to: duration of grazing use and/or reducing livestock numbers. These modifications would be coordinated annually with the permittee and incorporated into the annual authorization.

Annual Indicators

Adherence to the annual indicators listed below, and the prescribed grazing management program are expected to make progress towards meeting, and maintaining achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health and land use plan objectives. Periodic collection, evaluation, and interpretation of monitoring data would provide an indication of the potential success of the grazing management prescription.

1. Average utilization by livestock on key bunchgrass species would not exceed 40 percent during the period of critical growth (May 1 through June 30), and 50 percent outside the critical growth period.
2. Utilization on shrubs would not exceed 30 percent of current year's production as determined by Browse Removal Method, or other approved methods.

3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

Affected environment is discussed in the main body of this EA, with additional information provided below.

3.1 Vegetation

3.1.1 Affected Environment – Vegetation

Invasive exotic plant species occurred throughout the allotment and dominated the plant community in areas, and loss of functional/structural groups and above normal plant mortality and/or decadence was evident. Overall, the native plant communities are not able to cycle adequate nutrients and energy to maintain a diverse and healthy plant community. This allotment is used by livestock during the critical growth period of perennial plants. Use during this growth period re-directs energy that would go to seed production and root development to re-growth of above ground biomass, annual use during this period results in weakened plants that are unable to survive unfavorable climatic periods, such as drought. When use is repeated, in the fall of the same year that spring use was taken, demands on already weakened plants occur.

3.1.2 Environmental Consequences – Vegetation

3.1.2.1 Alternative A

The Idaho rangeland health standard for native plant communities is not being met on this allotment. Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to not meet the standard by not maintaining or promoting healthy productive and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform to provide proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

3.1.2.2 Alternative B

Changes to livestock grazing management practices proposed under this alternative would be a 45 percent reduction in active preference AUMs, and a five day earlier spring entry date. This proposed management change is expected to make improvements to the vegetation and progress towards meeting the standard by maintaining or promoting healthy productive and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform to provide proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

3.2 Soils

3.2.1 Affected Environment – Soils

Large areas of bare ground were observed, the distribution and composition of the plant communities was not conducive to moisture retention and runoff control, further evidence of overland water flow was observed in the form of water flow patterns. Overall, the watershed is not able to provide adequate hydrologic function to proper nutrient, energy.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences – Soils

3.2.2.1 Alternative A

Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to not meet the standard by not promoting proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil

type, vegetation, climate and landform to provides proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

3.2.2.2 Alternative B

The livestock grazing management changes proposed under this alternative would be a 45 percent reduction in active AUMs, which would be expected to improve soil site stability and/or hydrologic function and progress towards meeting the standard through the proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform to provides proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

3.3 Wildlife – Including Special Status Animal Species

3.3.1 Affected Environment – Wildlife – Including Special Status Animal Species

The area around and including Isom Allotment is historic Columbian sharp-tailed grouse range and the species appears to be expanding its currently reduced range back into historic areas. Greater sage-grouse habitat (a Type 2 Range-wide/Globally Imperiled Sensitive Species) in West-central Idaho extends to the southern portion of Isom Allotment. Being on the fringe of sage grouse habitat, Isom Allotment probably sees little sage-grouse use.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences – Wildlife – Including Special Status Animal Species

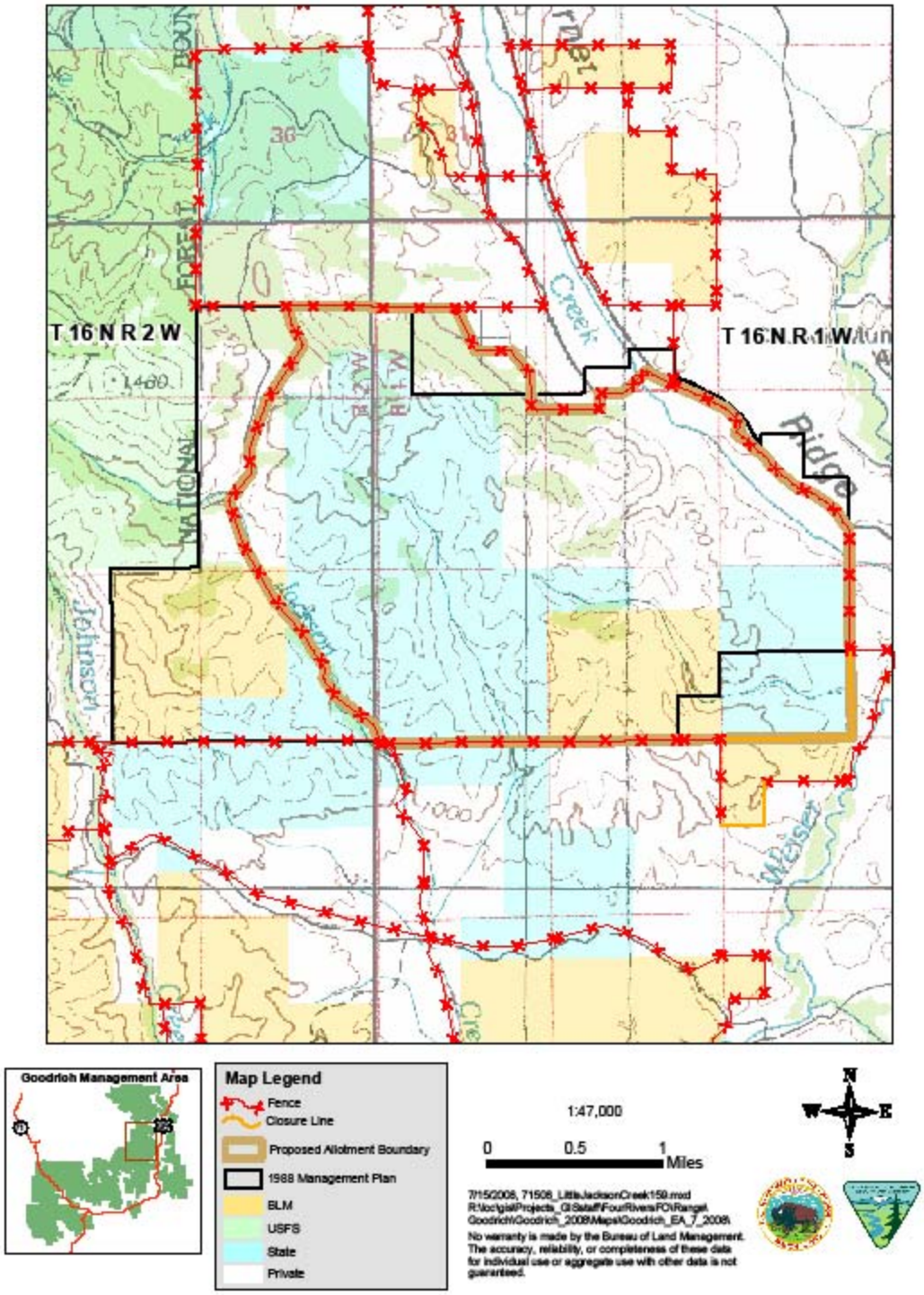
3.3.2.1 Alternative A

The Idaho rangeland health standard for special status animal species is not being met on this allotment. Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to not meet the standard by not maintaining or promoting healthy productive and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform.

3.3.2.2 Alternative B

Livestock grazing management changes proposed under this alternative are expected to make improvements to the vegetation and progress towards meeting the standard by maintaining or promoting healthy productive and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform. A reduced number of AUM's will be authorized in the eastern portion of the allotment (Little Jackson Creek) and the western portion of the allotment will be assigned to Jackson Creek Allotment and incorporated into a 3 pasture system. Both of these actions will have a positive effect on special status animal habitat.

3.4 Riparian Areas, Water Quality, and Fisheries

Due to allotment boundary changes, that portion of Jackson Creek that crosses public land is now within the boundaries of the North Pasture of Jackson Creek Allotment #158. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences are located in the discussion of Jackson Creek Allotment, found in Appendix 17.

Little Jackson Creek Allotment #159