

Appendix A15 Cambridge Allotment #154

1.0 Introduction

Cambridge Allotment was established in 1999 by combining North Allotment #154 and South Allotment #155. This consolidation resulted in there being approximately 1,622 acres of public land and 160 acres of private land within the allotment boundary. Public land in South Pasture is in a large block that is contiguous with public land in neighboring allotments; public land in North Pasture is surrounded by private land. There is no public access to either of these parcels.

Through the Evaluation and Determination, it was determined that:

- Livestock management is in conformance with the Watershed (#1), Native Plant Communities (#4), and Threatened and Endangered Species (#8) standards;
- Compliance with all applicable guidelines for livestock grazing management is being achieved.

2.0 Description of the Alternatives

2.1 Alternative A – No Action /Continue Current Management

Through the 1999 decision, a two-pasture rotational grazing system was initiated, season of use was modified, and active preference was changed from 286 AUMs to 122 AUMs (164 AUMs held in suspension). The approved grazing rotation system is:

Even Years: South Pasture: May 1 through May 30
 North Pasture: June 1 through June 30

Odd years: North Pasture: May 1 through May 30
 South Pasture: June 1 through June 30

Livestock grazing authorization would continue as describe above, with the current grazing permit expiring February 28, 2009. Mandatory terms and conditions of the grazing permit are:

Permittee	Livestock	Season of Use	Percent Public Land	Grazing Preference (AUMs)		
				Active	Suspended	Total
Nick and Debra Wiebe	67 cattle	05/01 to 06/30	91%	122	165	287

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

1. The allotment(s) listed on this grazing permit are subject to the requirement of 43 CFR 4180 – Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. This permit shall be modified (if necessary) to meet these requirements upon completion of a standard and guidelines assessment and determination as scheduled by the Authorized Officer.

2. Turn-out is subject to Boise District range readiness criteria.
3. Your certified Actual Use Report is due within 15 days of completing your authorized annual grazing use.
4. Salt and/or supplement shall not be placed within one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) mile of springs, streams, meadows, aspen stands, playas or water developments.
5. Changes to the scheduled use require prior approval.
6. 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.
7. Livestock exclosures located within your grazing allotment(s) are closed to all domestic grazing use.
8. Range improvements must be maintained in accordance with the cooperative agreements and range improvements permits in which you are a signator or assignee. All boundary fences must be functioning prior to allowing livestock into the allotment.
9. All appropriate documentation regarding base property leases, lands offered for exchange-of-use, and livestock control agreements must be approved prior to turn-out. Leases of land and/or livestock must be notarized prior to submission and be compliance with Boise District policy.
10. Failure to pay the grazing bill within 15 days of the due date specified 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 made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR 4140.1(b)(1) and shall result in action by the Authorized Officer under 43 CFR 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

2.2 Alternative B – Proposed Action

Based on field mapping of existing fences and information provided by the permittee, the acreage for Cambridge Allotment #154 has been recalculated. There are 138 fewer acres of public land and 97 fewer acres of private land in the proposed allotment boundary than are shown in the RMP. The allotment now contains approximately 1,547 acres, including 1,484 acres of public land (96 percent) and 63 acres of private land (4 percent). These revised acres 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. Modify the allotment boundary to correspond to existing fencelines;
2. Modify the percent public land term of the grazing permit to 96 percent;
3. Modify season-of-use and grazing system;
4. Develop the spring source located in T14N, R3W, Section 8: SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, if it is determined to be a feasible location and access is available for the needed equipment;
5. 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.

6. Use Annual Indicators as a tool to insure continued conformance with Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

Based on the proposed action, livestock grazing would be authorized for a maximum of 122 AUMs from mid-April through mid-July. Livestock use would generally occur between April 20 and June 30. 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.

Due to the southern exposure of South Pasture, vegetation is ready earlier in the season than the North Pasture, and water is difficult to provide later in the year. These two circumstances makes it difficult to use South Pasture second in the rotational scheme; therefore, the general grazing system would be to use South Pasture first each year, and North Pasture second. However, at least every third year South Pasture would be used lightly or rested. This would provide plants with a rest during their critical growth period and would allow for improvement of the native plant community.

Term of the renewed grazing permit would be for ten years, from March 01, 2009 to February 28, 2019 and would be written as follows:

Allotment	Livestock (maximum)	Season of Use (maximum)	Percent Public Land	Grazing Preference		
				Active	Suspended	Total
Cambridge #154	67 cattle	04/15 to 07/15	96%	122	165	287

Following are allotment specific Terms and Conditions to be attached to the grazing permit:

1. Livestock grazing for Cambridge 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 into 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 by pasture 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 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 by pasture, and/or reducing livestock numbers by pasture. 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 (in accordance with BLM approved monitoring techniques) could 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 environments are discussed in the main body of this EA, with additional information provided below.

3.1 Vegetation

3.1.1 Affected Environment – Vegetation

Based on the amount of invasive plant species, the native plant community standard is not being met. However, the occurrence of invasive and noxious weeds are not restricted to this allotment, it is well documented throughout the county, occurring on state and private lands as well as federally managed lands.

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 due the amount of invasive and noxious weeds, and not current livestock grazing

management practices. Therefore, livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to not affect whether the standard is being met. However, due to recent changes in livestock grazing management practices, improvements are occurring in the composition and health of the native plant communities in this allotment. These improvements would be expected to continue with current management practices and will provide more improved ability to compete with weedy plant species.

3.1.2.2 Alternative B

Proposed changes to the livestock management practices under this alternative would result in livestock on the allotment 15 days earlier and 15 days later. Although total AUMs are not increased, the longer time would allow up to 42 cattle on the allotment for the full season of use which would lead to more use during the critical growth period for perennial grasses. Additionally, the pasture rotation would be modified to use the South Pasture first, two out of three years, followed by the North Pasture annually. Although under both alternatives use occurs during the critical growth period for the perennial grasses, livestock grazing under this alternative is less complementary to the needs of perennial grasses in North Pasture.

3.2 Soils

3.2.1 Affected Environment – Soils

The Idaho rangeland health standard for watersheds, based on soil site stability and hydrologic function, is being met on this allotment. The majority of the allotment is functioning within the normal range of variability for the ecological sites.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences – Soils

3.2.2.1 Alternative A

Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to meet the standard by promoting proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform to provide proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

3.2.2.2 Alternative B

Proposed changes to the livestock management practices under this alternative would result in livestock on the allotment 15 days earlier and 15 days later. Although total AUMs are not increased, the longer time would allow up to 42 cattle on the allotment for the full season of use which would lead to more use during spring thaw or rains and result in potential for increased soil damage.

3.3 Wildlife – Including Special Status Animal Species

3.3.1 Affected Environment – Wildlife – Including Special Status Animal Species

In North Pasture, wildlife habitat is limited, but offers spring forage for mobile species transitioning through the area. In South Pasture, some sage-grouse hens probably use the pasture for nesting, but most sage-grouse nesting occurs south of the allotment. A richness and

abundance of grasses and forbs was observed that support wildlife species and insects upon which many species feed.

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 being met on this allotment. Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to meet 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.

3.3.2.2 Alternative B

The Idaho rangeland health standard for special status animal species is being met on this allotment. Livestock grazing management under this alternative is expected to continue to meet 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.

3.4 Cultural Resources

3.4.1 Affected Environment – Cultural Resources

Cultural resource records in the Four Rivers Field Office indicate that some sites have been recorded within the Goodrich watershed on private and public lands. The cultural site records do not indicate that grazing activities are presently causing adverse impacts to recorded cultural resources.

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences – Cultural Resources

Livestock grazing has the potential to directly impact the cultural resources that may be found in the allotment pastures. Livestock trampling and trailing could adversely impact cultural resource sites. Range improvements such as fences, ponds, spring developments and troughs could impact cultural resources when they are constructed and maintained. Also access roads, portable water troughs and salting locations could impact cultural resource sites.

Livestock grazing also may cause indirect impacts to cultural resources. Indirect impacts may be consuming and trampling vegetation that in turn exposes cultural resource sites to increased erosion and makes the sites more vulnerable to vandalism and unauthorized excavating and unauthorized artifact collecting.

3.4.2.1 Alternative A

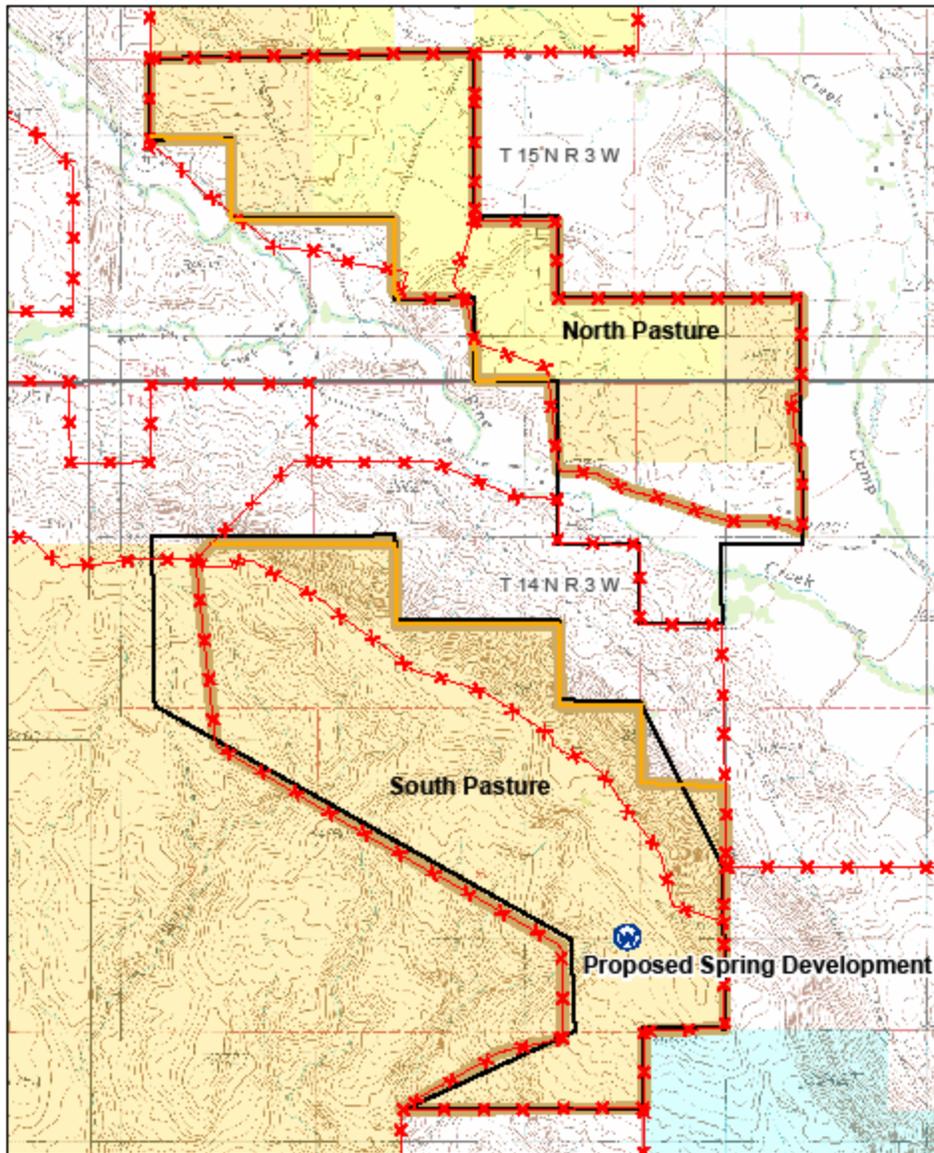
Under Alternative A, existing cultural resources would remain under present cultural resource management guidelines. The BLM would continue to protect and preserve cultural resources on public lands or mitigate adverse impacts to those cultural resources with input and coordination with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Additional new sites may be recorded and existing sites may be monitored for impacts as staff levels and budgets allow.

3.4.2.2 Alternative B

Under Alternative B, existing cultural resources would remain under present cultural resource management guidelines. The BLM would continue to protect and preserve cultural resources on public lands or mitigate adverse impacts to those cultural resources with input and coordination with the Idaho SHPO. Additional new sites may be recorded and existing sites may be monitored for impacts as staff levels and budgets allow.

It is proposed to develop a spring source in the southern portion of Cambridge Allotment #154, if the site is determined feasible for construction and access is available to bring equipment to the area. The Archaeologist would have to conduct a Class III Cultural Resource Survey and recommend that the spring be developed prior to any ground disturbing activities.

Cambridge Allotment #154



Map Legend	
	Fence
	Point-to-Point
	Proposed Allotment Boundary
	1988 Management Plan
	BLM
	Bureau of Reclamation
	State
	Private

1:28,000

0 0.5 1 Miles

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