

## LAVA POT ALLOTMENT DETERMINATION

### Achieving Standards for Rangeland Health and Conforming with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management

<b>Field Office:</b> Shoshone		<b>Watershed Name/Number:</b> Little Wood 1704022101 Big Wood 1704021903	
<b>Allotment Name/Number:</b> Lava Pot/90934			
<b>Public Land (acres)</b>		<b>Streams on Public Land (miles):</b> 0 Miles	
<b>Upland:</b> 1047	<b>Riparian:</b> 0	<b>Total:</b> 1047	
<b>Date(s) of Field Assessment:</b> May 18, 2004		<b>Name of Permittee(s):</b> Richard Dinges	
<b>Assessment Participants (Name &amp; Discipline or Interest):</b> Doug Barnum, Joanna Forliano, Clare Josiatas, Codie Martin, Dan Patten, Diana Miller (Rangeland Management Specialists), Paul McClain and Gary Wright (Wildlife Management Biologists)			

#### Standard 1 (Watersheds)

Check those that apply: *[One or more boxes must be checked.]* Standard doesn't apply

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are <b>not</b> Significant Factors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources: Eleven indicators were evaluated on the Loamy 8-12" Artrt/Agsp (Basin Big Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass). Field measurements found that vascular plants provide 42% of the cover on average for this site, rock 11%, biotic crust 4%, litter in contact with soil 20%, and standing litter 4% with bare ground found on 19% of the transect points.

The overall rating for Standard 1 is slight to moderate (refer to Table3). Five indicators (45.5%) were marked none to slight, five indicators (45.5%) were marked slight to moderate, and one indicator (9%) was marked moderate to extreme.

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**Standard 2 (Riparian Areas and Wetlands) & Standard 3 (Stream Channel/Floodplain)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      X *Standard doesn't apply*

**Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      Standard doesn't apply

<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are <b>not</b> Significant Factors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources: One site was evaluated on native vegetation for this standard Cover data indicates that cheatgrass, basin big sagebrush, Sandberg’s bluegrass, and annual forbs are the dominant plant species. While perennial grasses and forbs native to the site are present, the abundance is substantially lower than expected. Dead and/or decadent sagebrush is present as well as many sagebrush seedlings. Cheatgrass is the dominant species throughout the allotment. There is the possibility that this could pose a threat to further expansion into neighboring public lands. Plants that were present in the allotment but not in the transect included phlox, bitterbrush, rabbitbrush, wild onion, and mustard.

According to the Ecological Site description, many other species of vascular plants should be present as well as a dominant visual aspect of this site. Some of these include bluebunch wheatgrass, sand dropseed, western yarrow, arrowleaf balsamroot, and lupine. None of these vegetative species were observed in May of 2004

The average rating for assessed indicators for Standard 4 is moderate. This average does not account for plant community composition and does not accurately reflect the health, productivity, and diversity of wildlife habitat. Cheatgrass is the most dominant vegetative species and because of that, this allotment is currently not providing a healthy, diverse, and productive wildlife habitat. One indicator (11%) was marked none to slight, four indicators (45%) were marked slight to moderate, two indicators (22%) were marked moderate, and two indicators (22%) were marked moderate.

**Standard 5 (Seedings)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      X *Standard doesn't apply*

**Standard 6 (Exotic Plant Communities, Other than Seedings)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      X *Standard doesn't apply*

**Standard 7 (Water Quality)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      X *Standard doesn't apply*

**Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals)**

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]      Standard doesn't apply

<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are <b>not</b> Significant Factors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources: The variation in habitat conditions and habitat structural components that currently exist on the allotment likely provides minimal suitable habitat conditions for each of the sensitive plants or animal species described above. The allotment provides relatively small and discrete areas of suitable or marginal winter habitat for the sage grouse. Picabo milkvetch (*Astragalus oniciformis*), a sensitive plant, is likely to occur within the allotment due to the presence of potential habitat and proximity to known populations in the Tunupa Allotment, a neighboring allotment. At this time, there are no documented populations in the Lava Pot Allotment.

**Determination:**

I have determined that Standard 1(Watersheds) is being met and Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities) and Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Species) are not being met but current livestock grazing management is not a contributing factor in the failure of these two standards in the Lava Pot Allotment. Standard 2 (Riparian Areas and Wetlands) and Standard 3 (Stream Channel and Floodplains), Standard 5 (Seedings), Standard 6 (Exotic Plant Communities), and Standard 7 (Water Quality) do not apply to the Lava Pot Allotment.

Even though the Lava Pot Allotment has not passed the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health, current livestock grazing is not considered to be a factor in the failure of Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities) and Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Species). The action listed below will be considered in the Environmental Assessment.

1. Renew a 10 year grazing permit in the Lava Pot Allotment for the same season of use and for the same active preference of 60 AUMs.

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Shoshone Field Office Manager

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Date