

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)

Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hill

Activity

Range Management

Overlay Reference

Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

MACON FLAT ALLOTMENT (0432)

RECOMMENDATION

RM 2.1

Determine carrying capacity for National Resource Lands and private and state lands offered for exchange of use license, and adjust stocking rates accordingly.

RATIONALE

The URA indicates that adequate forage is not available to satisfy the present Class I demand (see 1605.44A2c(5)(a)). Present policy provides that "Initial stocking rates...must not exceed the existing livestock grazing capacity...". (WO Instruction Memo 75-407).

Idaho's 5-year goals are to bring livestock use in line with existing grazing capacity for those areas in less than satisfactory condition as a result of excessive livestock use.

It is anticipated that the present forage production capacities can be interpolated from Soil & Vegetative data to be gathered during the summer of 1976 and succeeding years.

Multiple-Use Analysis

URA indicated stocking rates may be in excess of the carrying capacity. This recommendation could result in reduction of grazing use, and would, therefore, have an adverse economic impact on the livestock operations. With proper management and/or land treatment part of this impact may be mitigated over the long-term.

This recommendation does not conflict with any other activity recommendations.

Supporting recommendations include the following: watershed, W 1.2, 1.3, 5.2; wildlife, WL 1.1, 3.1, 3.2, 8.2, 12.1; recreation, R 1.1, 2.1; ~~range management, RM 1.1 & 2.2 (0432).~~

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Accept the recommendations as stated above.

Reasons

1. The stocking rates must be reasonably close to the carrying capacity to implement a rotation-grazing system that will improve range condition.
2. Herbaceous vegetative cover left on site will reduce erosion and improve water quality.
3. Competition for forage with all wildlife species will be reduced and minimum cover requirements will be left for wildlife.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

Form 1600-21 (April 1975)

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Activity	Range Management
Overlay Reference	
Step 1 No. 1	Step 3

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Page 1 of 3

RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

RM 1. & 2.2

Revise the present AMP as follows:

1. Adjust the grazing system to one that will provide for plant vigor, seed production, seed tump, and seedling establishment of the key native forage species. (See URA Step 4 for minimum grazing treatment opportunity.)

The present grazing system is not designed to propagate or provide for the physiological need of the key native forage plant. A grazing system which provides for these treatments will increase the density and vigor of the native forage species and improve range conditions and increase forage production to maximum potential. Approximately 1475 additional AUMs can be produced annually within a 15- 20 year period with proper management.

2. Adjust grazing use so that no more than 50 percent of the Class I demand and exchange of use is utilized during the critical spring growing season.

Most of the Class I demand is used during the critical spring growing season which overloads the forage producing capacity of the vegetation. Excessive grazing during that period is detrimental to the vegetation and will result in deteriorated range conditions and loss of forage production.

3. Adjust license flexibility to meet manual requirements and specify as a minimum the normal operation, maximum numbers allowed to graze, and season of use flexibility not to exceed five days before and after the normal operation.

Flexibility allowed in the present AMP does not conform to manual requirements.

4. Include both sheep and cattle in the grazing system.

The impact of grazing on the vegetation is the same regardless of class of grazing animal. Dual use, where sheep graze in early spring followed by late spring cattle use, causes heavy utilization of the vegetation and results in detrimental range conditions if not properly regulated.

Support Needs:

Improve and provide additional access in the allotment to facilitate use supervision and livestock movement.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Activity
Range Management
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

Page 2 of 3

Multiple-Use Analysis

Revision of the present AMP, as recommended, would result in adjustment of spring use allowed from about 90 percent of the qualified demand to 50 percent of the qualified demand, and a reduction of grazing area for sheep and probably for cattle during the spring season. This adjustment would result in reduced use in the allotment, and would, therefore, have an adverse economic impact on the range users. In addition less flexibility in the grazing license would occur. A long-term beneficial input would occur because the recommendations favor establishment of perennial grasses which will stabilize and increase forage production.

Wildlife, WL 1.1, 3.1, 12.1, and watershed, W 1.3 identify the need to retain 40 percent to 50 percent of the herbaceous vegetation. This conflicts with the recommendation because utilization in the heavy use pastures of the grazing system would likely be greater than 60 percent. Wildlife, WL 6.2, 9.1, 13.1 identifies the need to exclude livestock grazing on wet meadows, springs and streams. This would reduce availability of high quality forage and restrict access to water, which would contribute to the livestock distribution problems. Minerals, M 1.2 proposes leasing, with minimal restrictions, the geothermal resource. This could restrict livestock grazing because development would prohibit use of up to 1/3 of the land surface under lease.

The recommendation conflicts to a minor degree with the following activity recommendations: WL 1.4; R 1.1, 2.1. These conflicting proposals should be addressed at the time the existing ~~Clover Creek~~ AMP is revised to insure all resource values are given proper consideration.

Supporting recommendations include the following: WL 6.3, 9.2, 12.2; W 1.2, 3.2, 5.2; R 1.1, 2.1; ~~RM (0432), 1. & 2.1.~~

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Modify the recommendation to include the following provisions in addition to those stated above:

1. Do not exceed 60 percent utilization of herbaceous vegetation in any pasture where grazing occurs.

Adequate herbaceous vegetation should be left to provide adequate forage and cover for all wildlife, including deer, elk, and upland game birds, and to provide litter to protect the soil from the erosive forces of nature.

It is not anticipated that this restriction will seriously impact grazing since livestock gains normally begin to decline after 60 percent of the forage has been utilized.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Activity
Range Management
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

Multiple-Use Recommendations (cont)

Reasons (cont)

Page 3 of 3

2. Protect wet meadows, springs, streams, and ~~canals~~ ^{reservoirs} from intensive livestock use which normally occurs as follows:

Springs: Coordinate protection with wildlife needs. Where significant wildlife values are identified, fence spring source area to exclude livestock and make water available to livestock outside the enclosure.

Wet Meadows: After revision of the grazing system fence wet meadows to exclude livestock only where it is demonstrated after one or two grazing cycles that significant wildlife habitat is being destroyed by livestock grazing.

Streams & reservoirs: Fence streams and reservoirs where major critical waterfowl nesting areas and fisheries potentials are identified. Provide water gaps no farther than 1/2 mile apart.

3. Allow mineral leasing.

Support Needs: Accept the recommendations as stated above. Acquire easement on private lands.

Livestock congregating on spring source areas denude vegetation essential to sage grouse broods and other wildlife species.

It is anticipated that damage caused by livestock grazing will be mitigated by implementation of a proper grazing system.

Grazing livestock utilize and destroy riparian vegetation needed for waterfowl nesting and fisheries habitat.

Restriction of livestock grazing by geothermal development is improbable, but if it occurs it should be allowed because of the greater value generated to the local and regional economy by mineral development.

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Range Management
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Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

Page 1 of 2

MACON FLAT ALLOTMENT (0432)

RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

RM 1. & 2.3

Remove competing brush species on approximately 6,000 acres and remove brush and seed approximately 3400 acres of National Resource Land to release and establish desirable perennial forage species.

These treatments combined with management, are needed to meet the objectives within a reasonable timeframe of 10- 15 years. Approximately 1160 additional AUMs will be produced annually from the treatment.

Multiple-Use Analysis

The recommendation would result in an increase in forage production. The increase would partially offset expected losses in allowable grazing use resulting from the adjustments recommended in range management, RM 2.1 (0432) (adjust stocking rate to grazing capacity). Thus a positive economic impact would occur. Where wildlife values are involved the Idaho Fish & Game Dept. will be consulted in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between that agency and the Bureau.

This recommendation is in conflict with the recreation, R 4.1, 4.3, 14.12, and 14.15; and minerals, 1.2 which would restrict or constrain layout and/or method of land treatment. The recreation recommendations deal primarily with visual impact of land treatments and the effect the recommended treatments might have on archaeological sites. The minerals conflict involves the restriction on land treatments should development of potential geothermal resources take place.

The recommendation conflicts with wildlife, WL 7.1 which would prohibit any land treatment. The wildlife proposal would prohibit brush control on sage grouse ^{nesting and} wintering areas within the allotment, as proposed.

The recommendation conflicts to a minor degree with the following activity recommendations: WL 9.3, R 1.1, 2.1. These conflicting proposals will be addressed prior to implementation of land treatments to insure resource values involved are adequately considered.

Supporting activity recommendations include the following: WL 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 6.1, 12.2; W 1.4, 1.5, 5.2; ~~RM 1. & 2.2 (0416)~~.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Accept and modify the recommendation to subject brush removal and seeding proposals to the following constraints before projects are started.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

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Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

Page 2 of 2

Multiple-Use Recommendations (cont)

1. Revise the allotment management plan and implement a sound and acceptable grazing system.

2. Coordinate all land treatment proposals with wildlife, watershed, and recreation activities to assure all multiple-use conflicts are mitigated. Criteria to be used in mitigating conflicts are found in Appendix I (MFP Step II).

3. Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range *AND nesting grounds - Refer to criteria in #2 above.*

4. Allow leasing of minerals (geothermal resources) with no constraints on land treatment projects.

5. Prohibit land treatment projects on known archaeological sites.

Reasons (cont)

Sound management is needed to assure success of revegetation projects and to protect the investment made in the project.

Disruption of livestock use can be minimized by planning treatments within grazing pastures and in accord with the grazing sequence.

This is BLM policy.

On-site information is not adequate to identify specific conflicts and resulting impacts at this time. This requires that no projects be started until on-site inspections can be made and impacts of the project on the multiple-use values are determined and mitigated.

Projects which alter the vegetation have long-term impacts and must be coordinated so as not to destroy other resource values.

The need to produce livestock forage to minimize the economic impact of the anticipated reduction in stocking rate (RM 2.1 (0432)) is considered to be as important as the need for increased sage grouse populations. Proposed brush treatments should be closely coordinated to allow only brush removal that is not critical to sage grouse winter habitat *AND nesting*.

Present information is insufficient to determine impacts of geothermal development on land treatment. Any mineral development at this time appears to be improbable.

Bureau policy requires protection of cultural resources.

MACON FLAT ALLOTMENT

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Existing AMP