

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Elko, Nevada**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
Hubbard Vineyard Allotment Multiple Use Decision  
BLM/EK/PL-2008/001**

Based on the attached environmental assessment (EA) for the Multiple Use Decision for the Hubbard Vineyard Allotment (BLM/EK/PL-2008/001), I have determined that the Proposed Action, as described and analyzed in the EA, will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required prior to my issuance of the decision..

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts, as discussed in the EA and summarized below.

Context:

The Proposed Action focuses on livestock grazing management on 112,215 acres of public land intermixed with 12,595 acres of private land within the Hubbard Vineyard Grazing Allotment located on the eastern flank of the Snake Range in northeastern Elko County. The BLM first issued an Allotment Evaluation (AE) in 1997, with a revised and updated AE re-released in 2007. The permittees had substantially changed livestock management practices on the allotment after the original release of the AE, with Holistic Management (HM) introduced in 1999. The AE concluded that objectives were being met or progress towards attainment were being made through the HM process.

Intensity:

1) *Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*

The analysis identifies both beneficial and adverse impacts on wetlands, riparian zones and aquatic and avian species of concern that may arise as a result of the proposed grazing permit renewal and range improvement projects. Measures are incorporated to avoid or reduce adverse impacts from grazing, conserve habitat for the sensitive species, and identify and protect cultural resources. The analysis of monitoring data included within the AE and the EA concluded that attainment of, or progress towards attainment of multiple use objectives and the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health were being made through implementation of HM on the Hubbard Vineyard Allotment, and continuation of HM is expected to provide for further significant progress towards and attainment of the standards.

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

The proposed action will have no effect on 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.*

The proposed plan incorporates procedures for the protection and management of historic and cultural resources and other unique areas in the Hubbard Vineyard Allotment. No park lands, special recreation management areas, prime or unique farmlands, or wild and scenic rivers exist in the allotment. Wildlife habitat and wetlands, including springs and riparian areas, and the Badlands Wilderness Study Area have been monitored and analyzed for effects of grazing against established management objectives. The analysis concluded that continuation of HM is expected to provide for further significant progress towards and attainment of the riparian and wildlife habitat standards and objectives throughout the allotment.

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

The analysis contained within the AE and EA concludes that existing management is resulting in adequate progress towards achievement of multiple use objectives and the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health. Ecological conditions on the allotment have shown consistent maintenance or improvement under HM management, and conditions are expected to continue to improve under the proposed action. The comments to the AE all indicated support for the continuation of the HM process on this allotment, but some comments submitted in response to the preliminary EA opposed the proposed action. BLM's responses to comments on the EA which expressed non-support for the HM process explain why the impacts of concern are not applicable in this situation.

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

Possible effects are not highly uncertain. The analysis is based on monitoring information, and all livestock grazing authorizations are subject to applicable procedures to prevent undue environmental harm and risk. The HM process and the adaptive management approach it entails includes continual monitoring and evaluation to address any uncertainty as to effects on an annual basis.

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

The ten-year grazing permit includes terms and conditions to protect resources from significant adverse effects. The HM process includes an annual planning and BLM approval component to ensure that resource protection objectives are met. This action does not make any commitments for BLM approval for any future actions. All proposed livestock management decisions would continue to be subject to further consideration in accordance with BLM grazing and NEPA regulations and policies.

*7) Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

All resources are evaluated for cumulative impacts in the EA, and no significant impacts are identified. As a standard procedure, cumulative impacts would continue to be subject to further review as projects are proposed, and on a site-specific basis.

