PROJECT TITLE/TYPE:  Ketcham Allotment Fencing

PROJECT LOCATION:  The Ketcham Allotment is located southwest of Bonanza, Oregon in T39S, R11E, Section 19 (see attached map).

BLM OFFICE:  Klamath Falls Resource Area, Lakeview District

LEASE/SERIAL/CASE FILE #:  Grazing Lease #3601038

APPLICANT (IF ANY):  N/A

CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAND USE PLAN
This Environmental Assessment is tiered to the 1995 Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan (1995 RMP).  This analysis is also in conformance with a number of other supporting documents including:

- Range Reform FEIS (August 1995).
- Migratory Bird Policy
- Sage Grouse Management Policy

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION
Currently, the allotment boundary fence along the northeast portion of the Ketcham Allotment is not located on the BLM/private property line.  The existing fence runs along the bottom of a slope on the adjacent private property and dissects a corner of BLM-administered land.  The approximate location of the existing fence is shown in Figure 1 below.  The current fence is in need of replacement and the adjacent property owner has agreed to have the fence line constructed on the property line.
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION
The proposed action is to remove the existing fence and build a new section of fence on the property line. The proposed location of the new fence is shown in Figure 2 below.

The BLM would supply the materials for the new fence and the adjacent private landowner and the allotment lessee would supply the labor to remove the old fence and to construct the new fence. The fence would be built to BLM specifications which would allow for wildlife passage. Clearing for the fence location would require the removal of some juniper trees (1-5 trees) and the trimming of branches on several trees.

ALTERNATIVES
No Action
The No Action alternative would leave the allotment boundary fence in its current location.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT
The Ketcham Allotment has an authorized grazing preference of 20 animal Unit Months (AUMs) with a season of use from May 1 to June 15. The portion of the allotment next to the proposed fence construction is a
northeast facing slope with a juniper overstory and a mixed grass, forb, and shrub understory. A portion of the boundary line and the adjacent land (2-3 acres) that is currently on the private land side of the existing fence has had some clearing of juniper and sagebrush and soil cultivation for pasture seeding.

**LIVESTOCK GRAZING – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

**No Action**
The No Action Alternative would have no effect on the current livestock grazing on the Ketcham Allotment.

**Proposed Action**
The Proposed Action would have minimal effects to the livestock grazing on the Ketcham Allotment. There could be a minor amount of additional livestock forage from the area that was previously in seeded pasture. No adjustments would be made to the allocated Animal Unit Months for the allotment.

**Cumulative Effects**
There are no anticipated cumulative effects of the project on livestock grazing.

**SOILS – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**
The Natural Resources Conservation Service identified soil type 51E, the Lorella-Calimus association, in the immediate vicinity of the fence repositioning project. These soils are located on 15 to 35 percent north-facing slopes.

Soil depths vary from shallow to very deep, with surface textures of loam and very stony loam. Per NRCS interpretations, the erosion and rutting hazards of these soils are moderate, and they exhibit a low resistance to compaction. This soil type is poorly suited for fencing, specifically the ease of excavating and setting posts in the shallow and/or stony areas.

A field visit on June 9, 2010 confirmed the presence of soil type 51E. Soil pits dug in the vicinity revealed very cobbly loam and clay loam soils. The area directly southwest (upslope) from the existing fenceline did not show evidence of compaction, rutting, or erosion, resulting from the present grazing management. Recently, a new access road had been bladed-in directly uphill along what appeared to be the land boundary.

**SOILS – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

**No Action**
Under this alternative there would be no direct or indirect effects on the soil resource. The 51E soils straddle both sides of the existing and proposed fencelines.

**Proposed Action**
The proposed action is expected to have minor direct effects on the soil resource. Small, localized areas of soil disturbance may result from the fence construction and realignment. To minimize soil impacts, it is recommended that construction be restricted to dry soil conditions.

Although there was no indication of surface runoff at this time, a high-intensity and/or long duration precipitation event could result in sediment transport downhill along the cleared fenceline corridor. To prevent soil erosion in the fenceline corridor, the excavated property line may require planting native species or placement of large woody debris on the ground surface.

**Cumulative Effects**
There are no anticipated cumulative effects of the project on the soil resource.
TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE SPECIES – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT
This section focuses on the wildlife species that are considered special status species and would potentially be affected by management activities. Included are those species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA - listed, proposed and candidate species), those listed under the BLM special status species policy and considered to be Bureau Sensitive and land birds listed on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s “Birds of Conservation Concern 2008”. All of these species will be considered in this EA process. A complete list of BLM Special Status Species that occur on the Lakeview District, Klamath Falls Resource Area may be found at http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/agency-policy. The complete list of Birds of Conservation Concern considered is located at http://library.fws.gov/Bird_Publications/BCC2008.pdf

Threatened and Endangered Species
There are no Federally Proposed, Listed or Candidate (under the Endangered Species, act as amended 1973) terrestrial wildlife species or Designated Critical Habitat for terrestrial species that occur along the proposed fence line area or that would be affected by the project.

Special Status Species
There are no special status species (BLM Sensitive or Birds of Conservation Concern) that would be affected by the proposed fence obliteration and construction of new fence.

Other Wildlife Species (Mule Deer - Odocoileus hemionus)
The area is classified as mule deer winter range (USDI BLM 1995) and therefore is important for mule deer especially in the winter months. Mule deer move through the area to their summer and wintering grounds with some year round residents.

TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE SPECIES – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Threatened and Endangered Species
Proposed Action and No Action
There are no Federally Proposed, Listed or Candidate (under the Endangered Species, act as amended 1973) terrestrial wildlife species or Designated Critical Habitat for terrestrial species that occur along the proposed fence line area or that would be affected by the project. Therefore there would be no effect to listed species from implementation of either the proposed action or the no action alternative.

Special Status Species
Proposed action and No Action
There are no special status species (BLM Sensitive or Birds of Conservation Concern) that would be negatively or positively affected by the proposed fence construction. Therefore there would be no effect to special status species from implementation of either the proposed action or the no action alternative.

Other Terrestrial Wildlife Species
Proposed Action
The proposed fence would not impede mule deer movement. The proposed fence height of no more than 40 inches allows for movement of deer by allowing the adults to cross over the fence line and the smooth bottom wire and 16 inch height of the bottom wire allows fawns to move under the fence. This is consistent with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife recommendations for fence building within mule deer habitat (personal communication, ODFW 2010). Therefore the proposed action would meet the objectives within the KFRA RMP to maintain or improve deer winter range habitat (BLM 1995).

Cumulative Effects
There are no anticipated cumulative effects of the project on wildlife.
CULTURAL RESOURCES – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT
Native American use of the area spans many millennia. The region was most likely used by the Modoc and/or Klamath peoples. On a map showing Modoc territory, Ray (1963) shows the Modoc territory lying within the project area with Klamath territory to the west of the project area.

The subsistence patterns of the Modoc revolved around the hunting of upland game, gathering roots such as epos or Ipos (*Perideridia* sp.) and camas (*Camassia quamash*), and fishing in Lost River for suckers (*Deltistes luxatus*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Their permanent village sites tended to be in the lowlands around Lost River. Sites in the uplands tended to be temporary task-related sites associated with hunting and gathering activities.

Historic contact between the Native American tribes and Euro-Americans began around the 1820s and culminated with the Klamath Lake Treaty of 1864 in which lands around the project area were ceded to the United States by the Klamath Tribes (Minor et al. 1979). The Klamath Tribes consist of the closely related Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin peoples.

Euro-American exploration near the analysis area began in 1843 when a band of “free trappers” led by Old Bill Williams, explored the Lost River region. Euro-American settlement did not occur until 1875. Euro-Americans began homesteading the region in the 1860s - 1870s, pursuing sheep and cattle ranching. The town of Bonanza, located near the project area, opened a post office in 1875. By 1878, a saw mill had been built in Bonanza. Early settlement focused on cattle ranching, farming, and logging (Follansbee and Pollock 1978).

Additional information about cultural resources in the analysis area may be found in various overviews of the history and prehistory of the region (Anderson 1994, Beckham 2000, Follansbee and Pollack 1978, Minor 1979, Ray 1963, and Spier 1930). The proposed project area has been previously inventoried (BLM cultural inventory report # OR014-CRR-FY00-011).

CULTURAL RESOURCES – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES
No Action
Under this alternative there would be no effects on historic properties.

Proposed Action
Under this alternative there would be no effects on historic properties.

Cumulative Effects
There are no anticipated cumulative effects of the project on historic properties.

NOXIOUS WEEDS – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT
On June 9, 2010, the project area (the existing fenceline, the proposed new fenceline, and the general area) was surveyed for noxious weeds and special status plants. No noxious weeds or special status plants were found.

NOXIOUS WEEDS – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES
No Action
Under this alternative there would be no direct or indirect effects the botanical resources.

Proposed Action
The proposed action is expected to have minor direct effects on the botanical resource, since no noxious weeds or special status plants were found. Washing all equipment to ensure it is free of weeds, seeds or soil prior to use on the proposed project site is recommended in order to prevent any introduction of noxious weeds.

Cumulative Effects
There are no anticipated cumulative effects of the project on the botanical resource.
PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED
Allotment lessee
Adjacent landowner

There is no federally listed species or designated critical habitat (Endangered Species Act 1973, as amended) within the proposed project area or that would be affected from the proposed action. Therefore the BLM has made a “No Effect” determination on all federally listed species and designated critical habitat from the proposed action.

The project area has been previously inventoried for cultural resources and no sites were located within the project area. Per verbal agreement with The Klamath Tribes, if there are no sites related to a small project, consultation is not required, as the project will have no effect on historic properties.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Jones, John W. 1999 Surveyor Quad Cultural Resource Survey, Klamath County, Oregon. Native-X Archaeological Services, on-file BLM Klamath Falls Resource Area (Rpt # OR014-CRR-FY00-011).


Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2010. Personal communication.


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