

Rangeland Health Standards Assessment

Allotment #421 Rosebud

Allotment Overview:

Allotment Boundaries: refer to attached map.

Allotment Acres: BLM 10,640

Other 2,040

Total 12,680

7.5 Minute Topographic Maps: Sheep Lick Draw, St. Patrick Mtn., Diablo Peak, and Ana River.

AUMs of Authorized Use: Active Preference is 158 AUMs.

Permitted Season: Winter 11/15-1/13

Allotment Category: M

Allotment #421 is located 4 miles east of the town Summer Lake, Oregon.

No vegetation monitoring data is available. Monitoring plots are scheduled to be established in the future.

STANDARD 1- Upland Watershed- Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates, moisture storage, and stability that are appropriate to soil, climate, and land form.

Meets Standard.

Indicators used to evaluate this standard are Soil Surface Factor (SSF), which documents erosion class and soil susceptibility to accelerated erosion; and plant community composition, which indicates the root capacity of the soil profile.

Soil Surface Factor is used to determine soil erosion condition. Soil Surface Factors used in the rating process are: soil movement, surface litter, surface rock, pedestalling, flow patterns, rills and gullies. Each factor is allotted points according to erosion conditions and the points totaled. Erosion condition classes are assigned based on a 0-100 scale. The following classes were used:

<u>Erosion condition class</u>	<u>Points</u>
Stable	0-20
Slight	21-40
Moderate	41-60
Critical	61-80
Severe	81-100

Refer to Appendix A for tables summarizing the available Ecological Site Inventory (ESI) data rating the SSF by acre within the allotment.

The second factor used to evaluate Standard one is plant community composition, which indicates root occupancy of the soil profile (**Please refer to Standard 5 for a list of native plant species with observed on the allotment tour**).

STANDARD 2- Riparian-wetland areas are in properly functioning physical conditions appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Meets standard.

The Rose Bud Allotment contains 603 acres of palustrine and 144 acres of Lacustrine wetlands in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC).

STANDARD 3- Healthy, productive, and diverse plant and animal populations and communities appropriate to soil, climate, and landform are supported by ecological processes of nutrient cycling, energy flow and the hydrologic cycle.

Meets Standard.

Botanical Report:

Rosebud Allotment #421 is in excellent condition in the areas evaluated. This area is primarily salt desert scrub mixed in with playas, springs, and wetlands. The allotment is healthy, as indicated by widespread and substantial numbers of indian rice grass, a species that indicates a high level of rangeland health. The allotment is vegetatively

productive with normal levels of plant growth and plant litter. The plant community is also diverse, within the limitations of salt tolerance. In the vicinity of springs riparian plant types appear to be thriving as well. See Standard 5 for native plant species noted during September 2003 evaluation.

ESI vegetation information (1987) in Rosebud is incomplete, although a greasewood/saltgrass community is indicated. These plants are currently present and are thriving throughout the allotment.

Livestock usage in the northern portion of the allotment was undetectable with no scat or trailing disturbances found. Minimal usage in the south was around springs.

Some of the introduced plant species found include *Bromus tectorum* (cheatgrass), which is primarily along the northern margin. A few pockets of *Elaeagnus angustifolia* (Russian olive) have escaped private land within the allotment onto BLM land. *Lepidium perfoliatum* (clasping pepperweed), like cheatgrass, is adjacent to roadways. *Polygomon monspeliensis* (beardgrass/rabbitfoot grass) was found in one of the spring sites.

Wildlife report:

Ecological processes within this allotment appear to be functioning well. Wildlife species within this allotment appear to be at appropriate levels both in population and diversity for the types of habitats present. Introduced non-native plants are established here, but do not appear to be able to dominate within these systems. This standard is being met for wildlife.

STANDARD 4- Surface water and groundwater quality, influenced by agency actions, complies with State water quality standards.

Meets Standard.

Hydrologist Report:

The surface water nor groundwater within the allotment has been listed for exceeding State water quality standards.

STANDARD 5- Native, T&E, and locally important species. Habitats support healthy, productive and diverse

populations and communities of native plants and animals (including special status species and species of local importance) appropriate to soil, climate and landform.

Meets Standard.

Botanical Report:

Native Plant Species: *Agropyron spicatum*, *Agrostis* sp., *Arabis* sp., *Artemesia spinescens*, *Artemesia tridentata*, *Atriplex spinosa*, *Carex nebrascensis*, *Carex* ssp., *Castilleja* sp., *Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*, *Descurainia* sp., *Distichlis spicata* var. *stricta*, *Elymus cinereus*, *Elymus elymoides*, *Ericameria nauseosus*, *Erigeron* sp., *Festuca idahoensis*, *Gayophytum* sp., *Juncus* sp., *Juniperus occidentalis*, *Lygodesmia spinosa*, *Mentzelia albicaulis*, *Mimulus guttatus*, *Muhlenbergia* sp., *Navarretia minima*, *Oryzopsis hymenoides*, *Sarcobatus vermiculatus*, *Scirpus maritimus*, *Senecio* sp., *Spartina gracilis*, *Stipa comata*, *Tetradymia canescens*, *Thelypodium* sp., and *Typha* sp.

Special Status Plants: There are no known sensitive plants in this allotment.

Locally Important Plant Species: Cultural plants could include *Artemesia* sp. and *Typha* sp..

Wildlife report:

Special status wildlife species or their habitats that are present within this allotment include the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), and pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*). There are also three species with high public interest. These are mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), California bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) and pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*).

No nesting habitat exists within this allotment for the bald eagle. It is suspected that they are occasional visitors to the area. Bald eagles may occasionally feed on scattered carrion within the allotment. Nesting habitat is available for peregrine falcons and ferruginous hawks on a few cliff faces in the eastern edge of the allotment. These sites were surveyed for peregrine falcon nests in 1999, but none were located. No incidental sightings of peregrines exist within the allotment, but a historic hack site occurs

approximately four miles west of the allotment. There are several suitable foraging areas for peregrine falcons within close proximity of this allotment. No surveys have been conducted for ferruginous hawk. Ferruginous hawk foraging habitat exists through much of the allotment. There are no resource conflicts for peregrine falcons, ferruginous hawks or bald eagles.

Incidental sightings of burrowing owls have been observed within this allotment. No nesting activity has been observed. Inventories for burrowing owls were conducted in adjacent allotments in 2000 and only occasional sightings were documented. There are no resource conflicts for this species.

Western snowy plovers occur in this allotment. They are most closely associated with the playa lakebeds and alkaline flats. Intense monitoring of snow plovers has occurred on and off over the last decade. Plover numbers on or near Summer lake fluctuate between 100 - 300 adults. A survey in 2003 accounted for 298 adults. Nesting occurs on open playa where little or no vegetation occurs. No impacts to snowy plovers will occur from cattle grazing within this allotment.

Habitat is present for kit fox and pygmy rabbit, but no known locations exist within the allotment for these species. No inventories have been conducted for either of these species within the allotment, however there are occasional sightings within the surrounding area. Habitat quality is very poor for pygmy rabbits and it is suspected that they do not occur within the allotment, although the possibility does exist. Kit foxes are very uncommon, but suitable habitat does exist within the allotment. There are no resource conflicts for these species.

Bighorn sheep also inhabit the eastern edge of the allotment. There is little overlap in range between bighorns and cattle within the allotment. No major conflicts exist between bighorn sheep and cattle grazing within these allotments.

Pronghorn antelope are common in surrounding allotments and do occur in this allotment in small numbers. Pronghorn use is scattered across this allotment and is very light at best. No major conflicts exist between pronghorn and cattle grazing within this area.

Mule deer inhabit much of the area, but are widely spread and in low numbers. No conflicts exist between mule deer and cattle grazing within this allotment. Bitterbrush is not very abundant and sagebrush browse use appears to be somewhat stable at this time.

There are no known sage-grouse lek sites within the allotment. Large portions of this allotment are currently unusable to sage grouse due the amount of salt desert scrub. Current sage-grouse habitats within these allotments contain less than 3% (380 acres) nesting habitats. Brood rearing habitats occur on less than 5% (630 acres) and winter habitats 9% (1,150 acres). The other 83% (10,500 acres) of the allotment contains areas that are considered non-suitable for sage-grouse. This is primarily due to salt desert shrub communities that are scattered across much of the allotment. There is not much room for sage-grouse habitats within these allotments to improve. Much of the area has no potential for nesting or brood rearing habitats. No major conflicts exist between cattle grazing sage-grouse within this allotment at this time.

Overall, this standard is being met for wildlife species within this allotment. The amounts of salt desert shrub communities appear to be the limiting factors for sage grouse and most sagebrush wildlife habitats.

Weeds Report:

There are no known noxious weeds populations within the Rose Bud Allotment at this time.

Team Members

Title

Lance Okeson	RMS
Todd Forbes	Wildlife Biologist
Heather Partipilo	Botanist
Erin McConnell	Weed Management
Robert Hopper	Supervisory RMS
Ken Kestner	Supervisory NRS
Liz Berger	Hydrologist
Allen Munhall	Fisheries Biologist

Determination

Existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on the Rosebud Allotment promote achievement of significant progress toward the Oregon Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health and conform with the Guidelines for Livestock grazing Management.

Existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on the Rosebud Allotment will require modification or change prior to the next grazing season to promote achievement of the Oregon standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

James E. Resman

Field Manager, Lakeview Resource Area

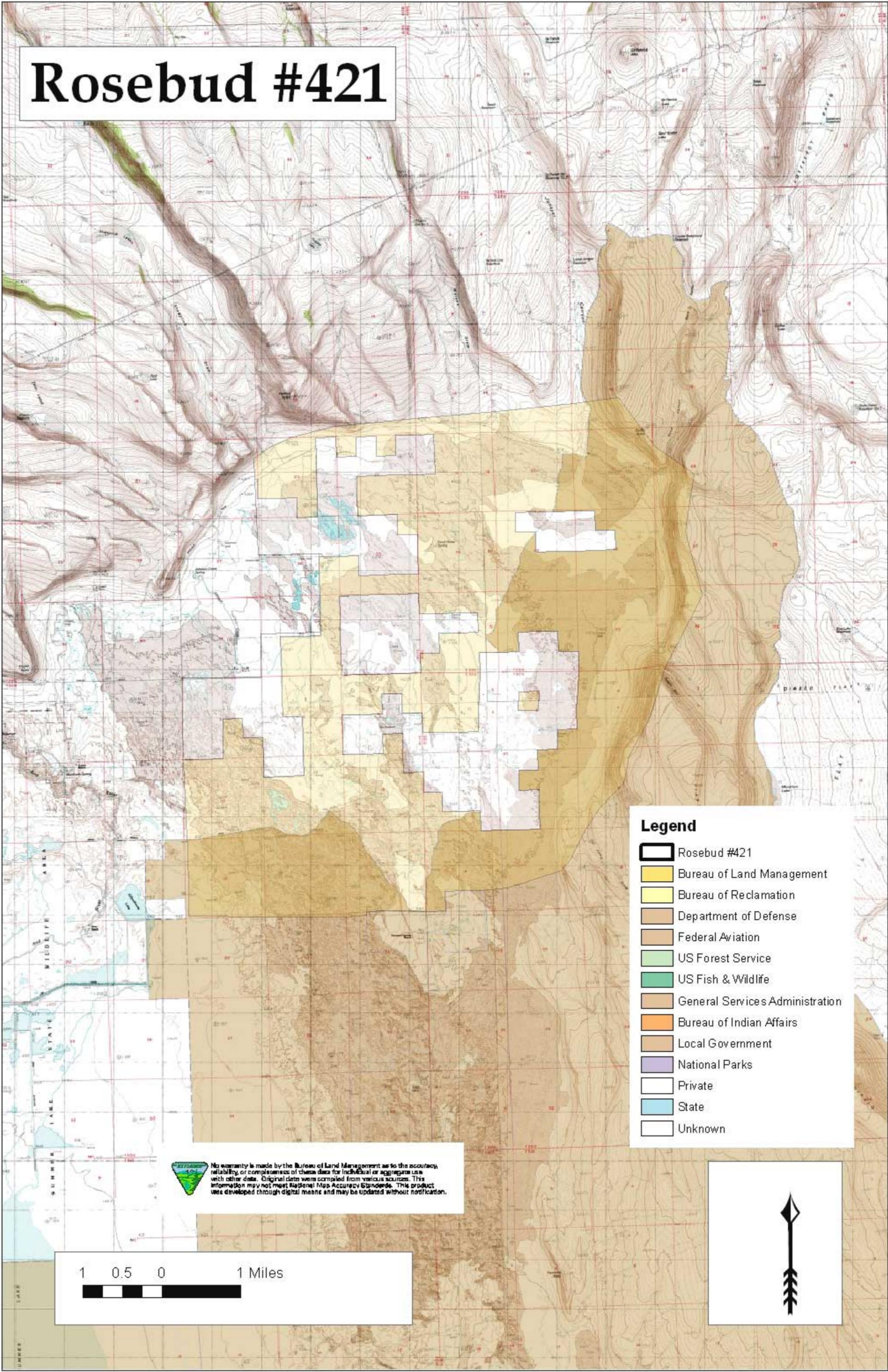
5/21/04

Date

Appendix A:

SI Data Allotment #421												
% of total acres	SSF Acres					OAT Acres			Acres of Vegetative Community in Seral Stage			
	Stable	Slight	Moderate	Critical	Severe	Down	Static	Up	PNC	Late	Mid	Early
77%			5593	33			2007	3619		1250	757	3619
21%												
2%												
<1%												
100%			5593	33			2007	3619		1250	757	3619

Rosebud #421



Legend

-  Rosebud #421
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  Bureau of Reclamation
-  Department of Defense
-  Federal Aviation
-  US Forest Service
-  US Fish & Wildlife
-  General Services Administration
-  Bureau of Indian Affairs
-  Local Government
-  National Parks
-  Private
-  State
-  Unknown



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