



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
email address: Medford_Mail@blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

4120(ORM060)

JUN 09 2009

Dear interested citizen:

Enclosed is a scoping letter providing you with information and inviting your comments on Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposal to renew the grazing lease for the Deadwood Grazing Allotment.

The BLM will be preparing an Environmental Assessment as part of the lease renewal process. Please submit any comments you have by June 26, 2009. Comments that clearly articulate site specific issues or concerns are the most useful for identifying issues and developing alternatives and mitigation measures.

If you would like to remain on the mail list and receive a copy of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proposal, please fill out and return the interest response form printed on the back of this letter. We

look forward to your involvement in this process.

Sincerely,

John Gerritsma
Field Manager
Ashland Resource Area

Enclosure



An Invitation to Comment...

Grazing Lease Renewal for the Deadwood Allotment Ashland Resource Area Medford District Office Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Ashland Resource Area, welcomes your comments on the proposal to issue a Grazing Lease Renewal for the Deadwood Allotment. This proposed lease renewal would allow the current lessee of the allotment to renew their grazing lease on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands, within this allotment, for 10 years.

The Deadwood Allotment is located east of Howard Prairie Lake in T. 38 S., R. 3 E., in Sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, W.M.; T. 38 S., R. 4E., in Sections 7, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, and 35, W.M.; T. 39 S., R. 4 E., in Sections 3, 4, and 9, W.M. The entire allotment is approximately 11,890 acres. The BLM-managed portion of the allotment is 8,004 acres.

Background

Livestock grazing is a component of the Medford District's multiple-use program. It contributes to the social and economic well being of the lessees, who rely on public range resources for subsistence.

The 2008 Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP) provide Management Objectives and Direction for Grazing on the Medford District. Livestock grazing will be managed in accordance with the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the States of Oregon and Washington. Grazing is to be maintained at levels listed in Appendix H of the RMP unless adjustments are needed to make progress towards meeting the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health for Oregon and Washington.

A Rangeland Health Assessment was completed for the Deadwood Allotment April of 2008 and a determination on the results of the assessment was made July 8, 2008. These documents are available on BLM's Website: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/inventas.php> The BLM determined that one of the five standards, Upland Watershed Function, was being met. The Standards for Riparian/Wetland Watershed Function, Ecological Processes, Water Quality, and Native, T & E, and Locally Important Species were not being met due in part to current livestock grazing management practices.

Proposal

The Medford District Office of the Bureau of Land Management is proposing to renew the existing grazing lease on the Deadwood allotment within the Ashland Resource Area. The proposed action would reduce the previously permitted use by 50 percent and would eliminate the late season of use (August 16 October 15). The proposed action would permit 197 cows from June 15 - August 15 for a total of 394 Animal Unit Months on 8,004 acres of the Medford District Bureau of Land Management livestock allotment for a term of 10 years. One AUM is the amount of forage needed to feed one cow/calf pair for one month. A reduction in use is proposed in order to make progress towards meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health as required by 43 CRF 4180.1.

Why Is This Grazing Lease Renewal Proposed?

The BLM issues grazing leases for a term not-to-exceed 10 years. The expiration date for this lease was February of 2006. Under existing law (Public Law 108-108, Section 325), grazing leases that expired during fiscal year 2004-2008, prior to the completion of the lease renewal process, were temporarily renewed with existing terms and conditions. There is now a need to conduct the required environmental analysis for renewal of this lease.

How Can You Participate?

We are in the scoping phase of the environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act. We are seeking comments you may have concerning the implementation of the proposed action. Comments you submit may be used to identify issues and develop alternatives and mitigation measures.

Comments that clearly articulate site specific issues or concerns are the most useful. While the BLM recognizes there is a range of values that people place on various resource uses of public lands, opinions agreeing with or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not very helpful in refining the proposed action.

Comments, including names, street addresses, and other contact information of respondents, will be available for public review at the office of the Bureau of Land Management, Medford, Oregon. Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Although you will be provided with an additional opportunity to make further comments upon completion of the environmental assessment, we are contacting you now so that your input can be considered early in the planning process.

Please submit your comments by June 26, 2009. Your comments should be mailed to:

**Attn: Kristi Mastrofini
Deadwood Grazing Lease Renewal
Bureau of Land Management
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504**

Who Should You Contact for Technical Information on This Project?

Steve Slavik is the project leader for the Deadwood Grazing Lease Renewal. Please feel free to contact him for clarification concerning technical aspects of grazing lease renewals (541) 618-2471. Please contact Kristi Mastrofini if you have questions concerning the planning process, such as project timelines, how to comment on this proposal, or to request a copy of the Environmental Assessment once it is prepared. (541) 618-2384.

MAP 1. DEADWOOD GRAZING ALLOTMENT

