

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Prineville District – Central Oregon Resource Area

A. Background

Proposed Action Title: Grazing Lease Transfer, Gable Creek and Circle Bar allotments

CE Number: DOI-BLM-OR-P040-2009-067-CX

Project or Serial Number: 3605390, 3605281

Location: Approximately two miles west of Mitchell, Oregon. Maps attached.

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is the transfer of existing lease for the Gable Creek (#2516) allotment from Woodward Companies to Bridge Creek Ranch, LLC and for the Circle Bar (#2531) allotment from Derby Smith Partners to Bridge Creek Ranch, LLC. The existing Terms and Conditions and management practices of the leases would remain unchanged.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The above proposed action has been found to be in conformance with the following BLM plans.

Two Rivers Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision, Rangeland Program Summary (Two Rivers RMP), June 1986

Page 10, Goal and Objectives, No. 1: “Maintain forage production and livestock use at 17,778 AUMs.”

Page 43, Appendix C: “2531 Circle Bar, Acres Public Land 5,294, Current Active Use 192 AUMs...”

Page 47, Appendix D: “2531, ... Grazing Period Begin-End 06/01 – 09/30...”

Sutton Mountain Coordinated Resource Management Plan Decision Record (Sutton Mtn CRMP), March 1996.

Pages 18 - 21: “...Circle Bar, Public Land AUMs, 637, Season of use: Cattle, November 1 to April 1, Sheep April 1 to May 30... Gable Creek, Public Land AUMs 210, Season of use Cattle November 1 to December 30, Sheep March 15 to May 1”.

C. Compliance with NEPA

Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.5.D (1), effective August 14, 2007, “Approval of transfers of grazing preference”. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed and none of the extraordinary circumstances apply as described in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, and effective June 21, 2005. See attached CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation checklist beginning on page 3.

I considered the above Proposed Action, land use plan, compliance with 516 DM 11.5.D (1), and the lack of extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment information provided. Based on this review, there is no potential for significant impacts so further NEPA analysis is not needed.

D. Signature

Authorizing official: /S/ Jennifer Eberlien Date 12/18/09
Jennifer Eberlien, Central Oregon Field Manager

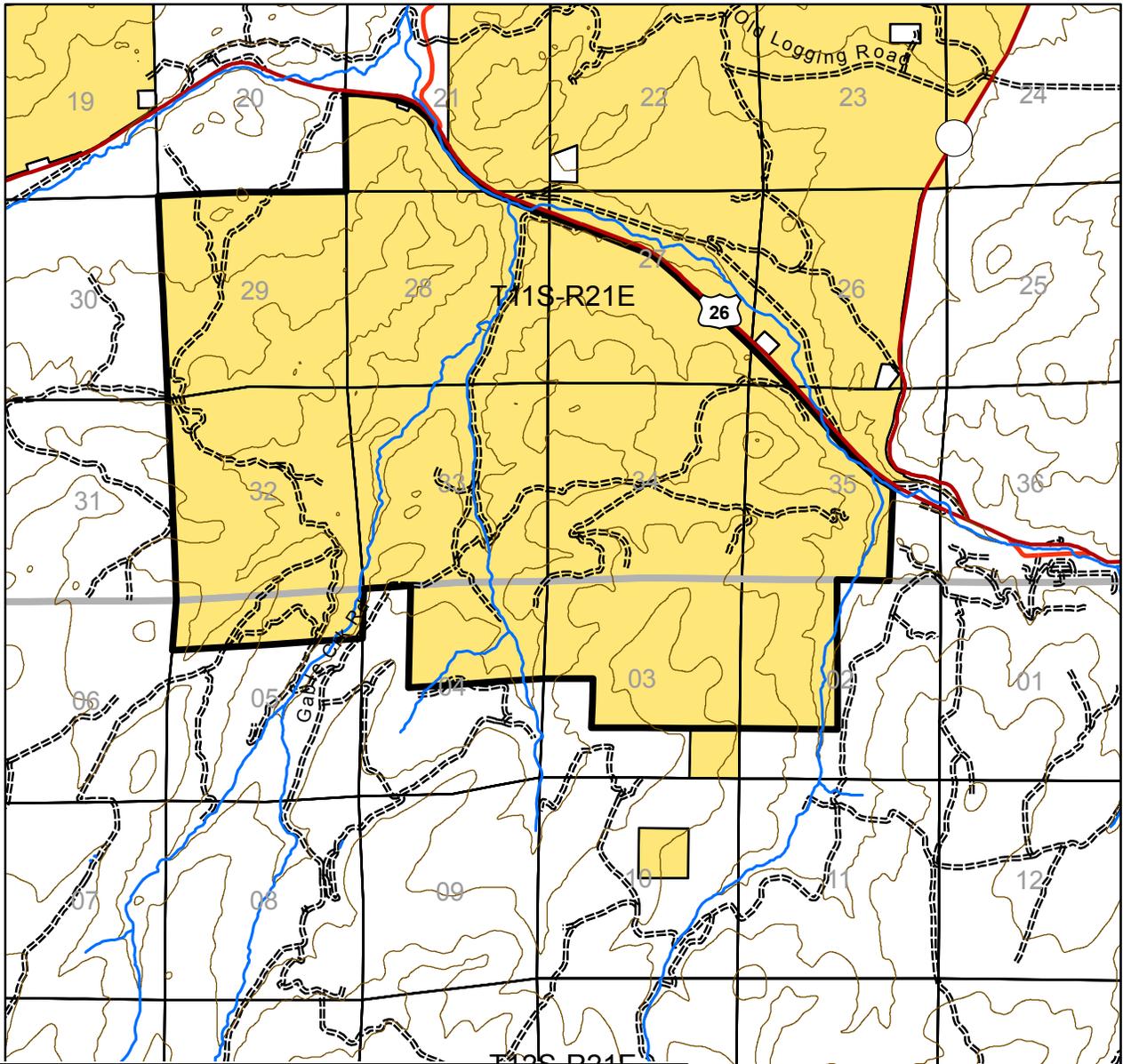
Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact Craig Obermiller, Rangeland Management Specialist at the Prineville District Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, 541-416-6761, craig_obermiller@or.blm.gov.

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION		YES	NO
The proposed categorical exclusion action will:			
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: The proposed action, managed livestock grazing within the John Day Basin, was determined not to have significant impacts on public health or safety based on “preferability” of the Preferred Alternative in the Two Rivers RMP (No. 3, page 7).			
2.2	Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
Rationale: The proposed action does not have significant impacts on the items listed. The proposed action does not have park, refuge, wilderness, national natural landmarks, principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, national monuments, and ecologically significant or critical areas. The Two Rivers RMP and Sutton Mtn CRMP provided management guidance for livestock grazing concerning cultural resources and recreation.			
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: The proposed action is in conformance with the Two Rivers RMP, which did not identify any highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. Grazing is provided for in the Livestock Grazing Directions, page 14: “The availability of forage will remain at 17,778 AUMs in the short term.” Also, it is specifically provided for in the Sutton Mtn CRMP, pages 18 – 21, “Circle Bar, Public Land AUMs, 637, Season of use: Cattle, November 1 to April 1, Sheep April 1 to May 30... Gable Creek, Public Land AUMs 210, Season of use Cattle November 1 to December 30, Sheep March 15 to May 1”.			

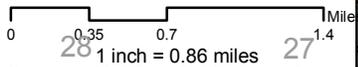
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: Grazing practices, as described in the listed land use planning documents, for the proposed action have shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Thousands of grazing permit/lease transfers have occurred every year since 1935 so the proposed action would not be regarded as precedent setting with potentially significant environmental effects. Due to the management constraints imposed by the Two Rivers RMP and Sutton Mtn CRMP, the proposed action is within the limits of acceptable environmental effects.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Similar past actions, to the proposed action, did not result in significant direct, indirect or cumulative environmental effects. The proposed action does not alter the magnitude of environmental effects because it is an administrative action which involves people completing forms in an enclosed office environment.		
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
Rationale: The Two Rivers RMP determined grazing, as described in the Plan, would have a low impact on historic places (see Table 1, page iii).		
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: Analysis of grazing impacts was determined to 'may effect, likely to adversely affect' steelhead habitat on both the Gable Creek and Circle Bar grazing allotments. Consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service has established the conditions of continued grazing on the allotments.		

2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	X
Rationale: The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Two Rivers RMP and Sutton Mtn CRMP, both of which comply with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act.	
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	X
Rationale: The transfer of an active grazing permit/lease would have no measurable effect on low income or minority populations; however, it would provide public grazing land for a ranch operation which may employ low income or minority persons.	
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	X
Rationale: There is no documentation of limited access or use of sacred Indian ceremonial sites regarding the proposed action. In addition, there is no documentation that the physical integrity of such sites, if they exist, has been significantly adversely affected. Should an adverse situation arise, action would be taken to alleviate the problem.	
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).	X
Rationale: The proposed action would not measurably change the rate of introduction, continued existence or spread of noxious weeds or invasive species. Livestock entering public lands have the potential to transport some viable undesirable seed via hide or gut; however, the possibility of introducing undesirable plants, not already in the area, is remote.	



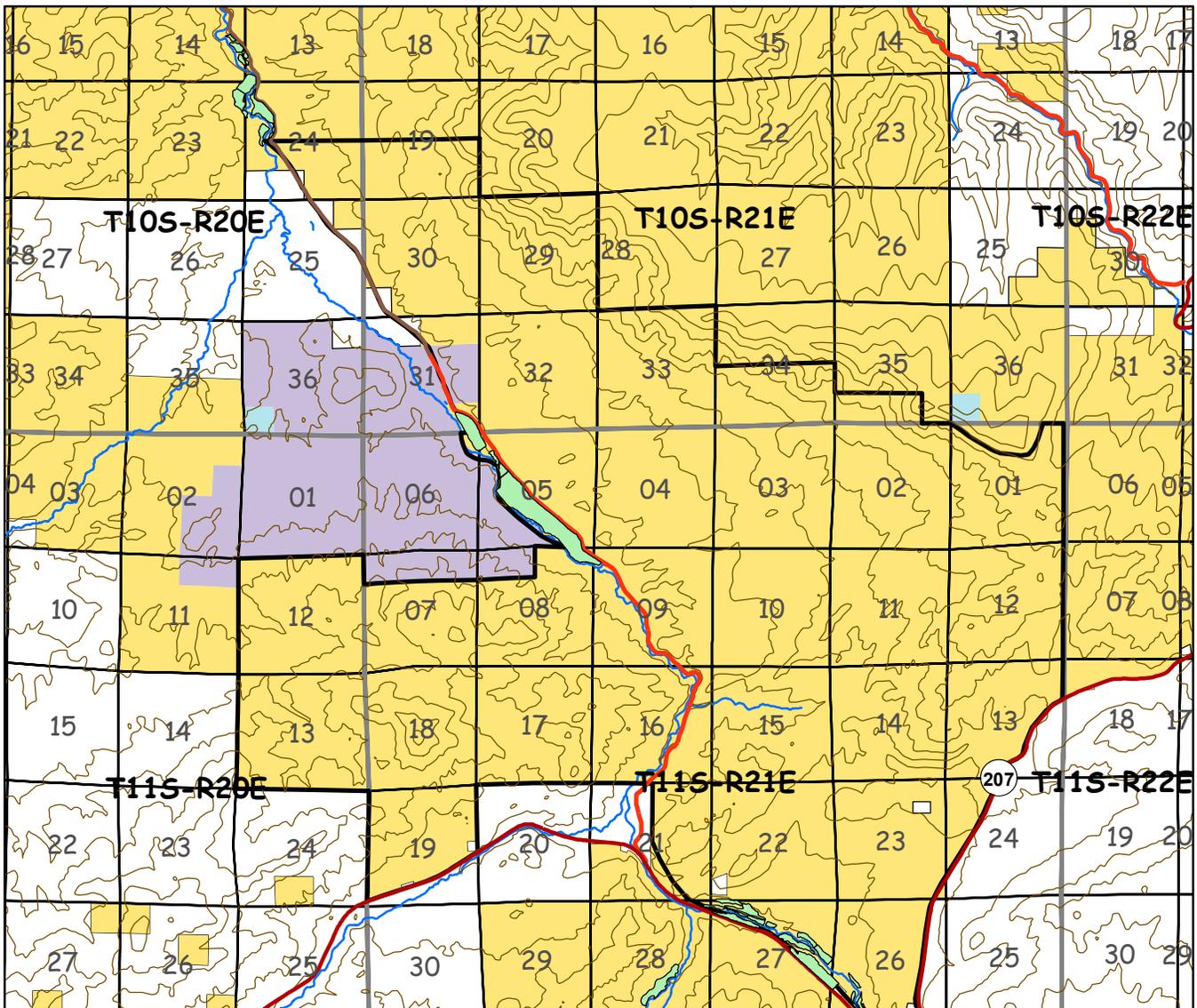
Gable Creek (#2516) Grazing Allotment

-  Allotment Boundary
-  Highways
-  Arterial Road
-  Collector Road
-  Local Road
-  BLM
-  State
-  Private



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

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Circle Bar (#2531) Grazing Allotment

 Allotment boundary	 Major highways
 Agricultural Fields	 Arterial road
 Private/Unknown	 Continuous perennial
 State	 250ft Contours
 National Park Service	
 Bureau of Land Management	



N

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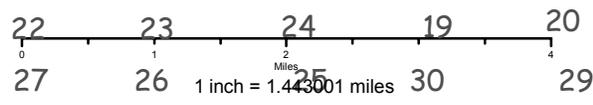



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1 inch = 1.44301 miles

