

Prineville District
Land Use Plan Conformance and
Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
Review and Approval

Name of Proposed Action: Dunham South Allotment (#5228) Grazing Lease Renewal

DNA Number: OR-056-08-106

Location of Proposed Action: Approximately 19 miles south of Prineville, Oregon. (See attached map).

Allotment Summary: 2853 public land acres; 163 Active AUMs.

Purpose of and Need for Action: The current lease will expire in 2009, and there is a need to renew it.

Description of the Proposed Action: Renew the grazing lease for a period of ten years. No changes would be made to the terms and conditions shown on the current lease.

Plan Conformance:

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable Land Use Plan because it is specifically provided for in the following:

Upper Deschutes Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, September 2005

Objective LG-1: *...provide for continued livestock grazing... (P76)*

Allocation/Allowable Uses:

8. Livestock grazing will continue to be allowed for allotments in the "Open" category on the Grazing Matrix... (p78)

The above allotment is classified as "Open" on the above mentioned Grazing Matrix

Livestock grazing specific to this allotment is on page 247.

Applicable NEPA document and related documents:

The following NEPA documents and related documents address the proposed action:

Brothers Grazing Management Program Final Environmental Impact Statement, 1982

Brothers/La Pine Resource Management Plan, July 1989

Brothers/La Pine Final EIS, October 1987

Upper Deschutes Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, September 2005

Upper Deschutes Final EIS, January 2000

NEPA Adequacy Criteria:

1. Is the current proposed action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Yes. The current proposed action (continuation of grazing in the above allotment) was previously analyzed in the Upper Deschutes PEIS. Alternatives for each allotment are shown in

Appendix G, pages 207-211, UD FEIS.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances? Yes. Alternatives in the planning document (summarized on pages 6-9 of the Upper Deschutes *RMP/ROD*) ranged from emphasis of shared versus separate trail use, managing for primary and secondary wildlife habitats, urban development versus rural areas, and areas available for continued livestock grazing use during the life of the plan. Discontinuation of grazing was considered for all allotments, but it was only analyzed where potential conflicts (between livestock grazing and other uses and values of public land and adjacent private land) were above a certain threshold. Conflicts were not expected to exceed the threshold in these allotments under any of the seven alternatives. This range appears to be appropriate given the current issues, and the plan was recently updated (September 2005).

3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (including, for example, riparian proper functioning condition [PFC] reports; rangeland health standards assessments; Unified Watershed Assessment categorizations; inventory and monitoring data; most recent Fish and Wildlife Service lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action? In 2004 (prior to the issuance of the ROD for the UDRMP), an interdisciplinary team completed a rangeland health assessment for the above allotment. This team concluded that the allotment did not meet BLM's standards and guidelines. Significant causal factors for not meeting Standards I, II and III were western juniper occupation, historic livestock grazing practices, drought, severe thunderstorms, and clay soils. For Standard V, additional factors included road designs, current livestock grazing, presence of fences and the absence of escape ramps in water troughs. (Standard IV was deemed to be not applicable). Juniper thinning, fence and water work, and annual adaptive livestock grazing management have since been applied. Subsequent monitoring of sites where juniper was thinned during 2002-2004 has indicated a sharp improvement in the health and functioning of these sites.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action? Yes. The Upper Deschutes FEIS compared the relative likelihood of conflicts in grazing allotments across the Planning Area, and analyzed the effects of discontinuing grazing in areas where potential for conflicts was highest. This approach is appropriate for the current proposed action, as no new information has become available, and conditions in the allotment and planning area have not changed. The Upper Deschutes *RMP/ROD* (page 77-79) provided Allocations, Allowable Uses and Guidelines to facilitate maintenance or improvement of existing ecological condition trends.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document sufficiently analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action? The direct, indirect, and site-specific effects of renewing this grazing permit were adequately addressed in existing NEPA documents.

The Upper Deschutes FEIS considered continuing vs. discontinuing grazing in many allotments (summary of alternatives for each allotment is on pages 207-211, Volume 3), and described the effects of allotment closures on forage availability, the local economy, BLM management costs, permittee costs, and other factors (pages 183-192). The effects of livestock grazing on soil, vegetation, and ecological processes are summarized on page 14 of Volume 2, and there is an acknowledgement that, "The alternatives do not

propose to change stocking levels or grazing systems; therefore there is little variation in effects [to soil, vegetation, ecological processes] among the various alternatives." Similarly, on page 31 of Volume 2 the FEIS states, "Specific effects of continuation of current grazing systems on wildlife resources is also not analyzed here because specific grazing systems were not within the scope of this FEIS/PRMP."

6. Can you conclude without additional analysis or information that the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Yes.

The Upper Deschutes FEIS addressed the issue of the declining rate of authorized use in Central and Eastern Oregon over the past few decades, pages 191-192. In recent years, there have been steady decreases in the supply of private grazing lands in the region as rapid population growth, resort and other residential development have reduced or fragmented the existing land resources, making grazing less attractive or cost-effective.

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequately for the current proposed action? Yes. A copy of this DNA will be mailed to the permittee upon his request.

Mitigation Measures:

The following mitigation measures will be implemented as part of the proposed action:

A manual supplement, entitled, "Rangeland Monitoring in Oregon and Washington", was developed and adopted by the BLM as a guidance document. The Prineville District also developed a district-monitoring plan. Both of these documents receive periodic review and revision. These documents provide a framework and minimum standards for choosing the timing and study methods to collect information needed to issue decisions which affect grazing management as well as watershed, wildlife and threatened and endangered species.

Cultural Resources: It is recognized that grazing level decisions, as documented in Allotment Management Plans (AMP), AMP amendments, allotment evaluations, and Land Use Plans (LUP) constitute undertakings as defined in 36 CFR 800. However, given the normally low level of definable threat to cultural resource values associated with such actions, the following procedure shall be applied:

Allotment Management Plans, AMP amendments, allotment evaluations and similar actions associated with dispersed livestock grazing decisions shall be exempted from the Section 106 procedures except for locations within allotments where specific land disturbing developments are initiated by that action or where sites particularly sensitive to grazing levels are known.

If specific ground disturbing developments are proposed for the allotment, such as fence construction, spring development, etc, or water trough or salting stations are established that congregate livestock in specific locations, the rangeland management specialist will inform the cultural resource specialist about those proposed actions and the appropriate level of cultural clearances will be completed in accordance with the Oregon Protocol Agreement.

List of Reviewers/Preparers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Resource Represented</u>
Bill Dean	Wildlife, Special Status Animals
Ron Gregory	Cultural Resources
Ron Halvorson	Botany, Special Status Plants

Michelle McSwain	Hydrology, Riparian, Watershed
Jim Eisner	Fisheries, Special Status Fish
Teal Purrington	NEPA
John Swanson	Range/Livestock Grazing

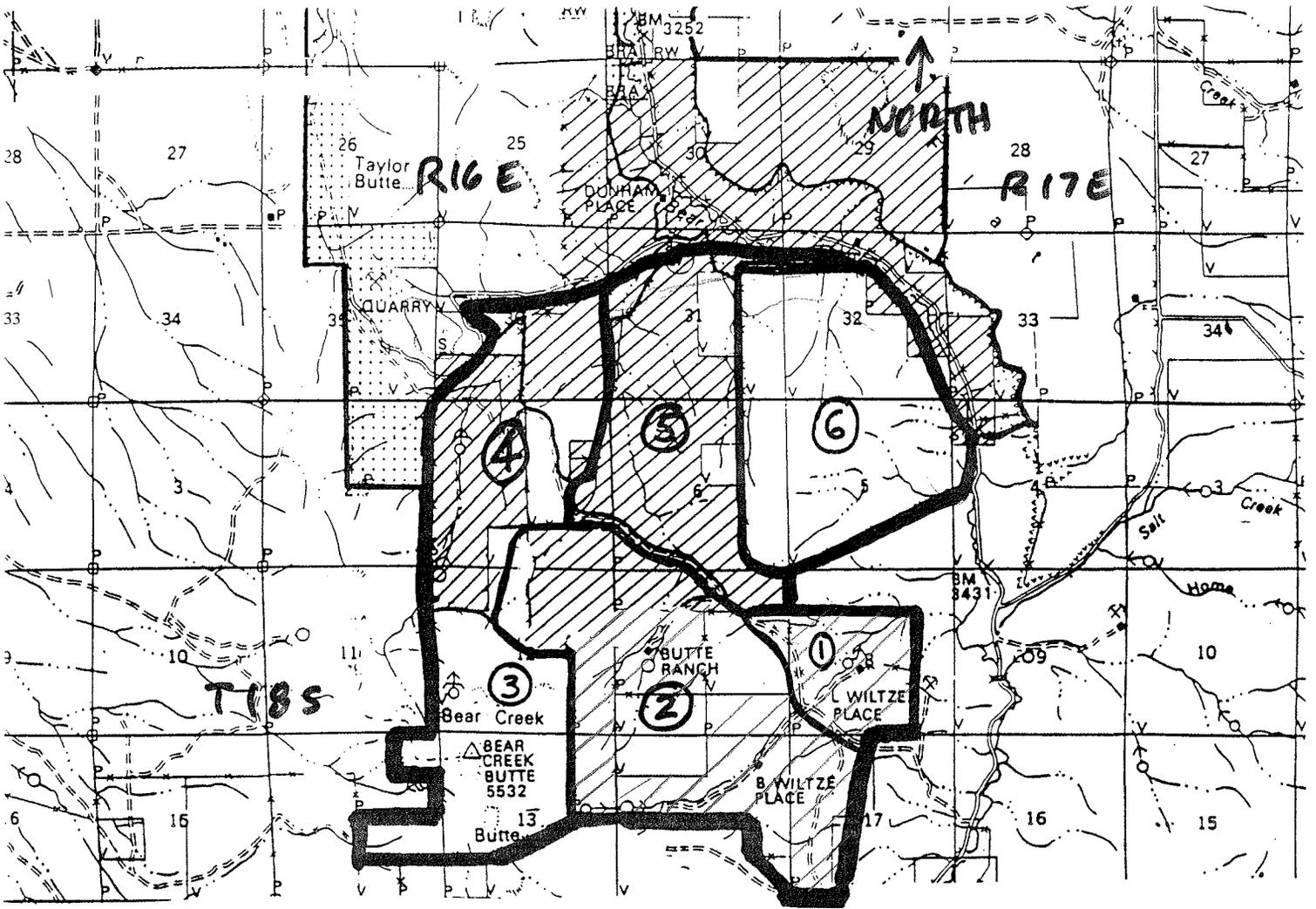
Approval

The proposed action and any specified mitigation measure(s) has been determined to meet the criteria for a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA). No additional environmental analysis required. All cultural specialists and T&E plant, wildlife and fish specialists have provided clearances for the proposed project.

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Approved By:  Date 3/5/08
Molly Brown
Field Manager

Note: The signature on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and can not be appealed.



PUBLIC

PRIVATE 

DUNHAM SOUTH ALLOTMENT

Pastures

- ① EAST WILTZE
- ② WEST WILTZE
- ③ BEAR CREEK BUTTE
- ④ LOWER BEAR CR. BUTTE
- ⑤ UPPER DUNHAM
- ⑥ DUNHAM