
Livestock Grazing

Key Points

- Under Alternatives A, B, and C, BLM-administered lands available for livestock grazing would decrease (from the No Action alternative), from 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area) to 366,231 acres (15 percent of the decision area). This change would occur through the BLM making 47 allotments or leases unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Under the Proposed RMP, BLM-administered lands available for livestock grazing would decrease (from the No Action alternative), from 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area) to 360,303 acres (15 percent of the decision area). This change would occur through the BLM making 52 allotments or leases unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Under Alternative D, the BLM would no longer authorize livestock grazing within the decision area, a change that would affect 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area). This change would occur by the BLM terminating existing livestock grazing authorizations and making all allotments unavailable for livestock grazing.

Summary of Notable Changes from the Draft RMP/EIS

The BLM identified five additional allotments as appropriate to consider making unavailable for livestock grazing in the Medford District. These five allotments are Upper Table Rock, Clear Creek, Deer Creek, Ferns Lease, and Billy Mountain. Upper Table Rock and Clear Creek held active permits, but the allotments had been in non-use status for more than 5 years, and the BLM worked with the permittees to close these permits since the release of the Draft RMP/EIS. The Deer Creek allotment has been vacant since 2005, and there are no proposals from current permittees to graze the allotment. The Ferns Lease allotment has no current livestock grazing authorization, no existing permit, and has been vacant for more than 10 years. There are no proposals from current permittees to graze livestock on this allotment. The Billy Mountain allotment underwent proclamation and relinquishment in December 2015.

Issue 1 includes additional information related to Special Recreation Management Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern designations. Issues 2 and 3 were moved to the ‘considered, but not analyzed in detail’ because of a lack of variation amongst the alternatives and the Proposed RMP.

Background

The 1934 Taylor Grazing Act (43 U.S.C. 315 *et seq.*) which established a system for granting livestock grazing privileges on Federal land provides for livestock grazing management on both BLM-administered lands within a livestock grazing district (through Section 3 permits) and those outside a livestock grazing district (through Section 15 leases). The BLM manages Section 3 permits and Section 15 leases under different policies. The only permits administered under Section 3 in the decision area are within a livestock grazing district described as the ‘Gerber Block’ in the Klamath Falls Field Office.

The majority of BLM-administered lands within the decision area are outside of established livestock grazing districts. Where livestock grazing does take place, Section 15 of the Taylor Grazing Act permits livestock grazing on this land through leases. These allotments are comprised of private land intermingled with BLM-administered lands. The private land typically provides the majority of livestock grazing acres. The BLM gives preference for leases to the owner of the private land nearby and adjoining BLM-administered lands. The term of BLM permit or leases is generally for a period of 10 years.

Only the Coos Bay District, Klamath Falls Field Office, and Medford District administer livestock grazing in the decision area. The BLM does not currently administer livestock grazing within the Eugene, Roseburg, or Salem Districts.

Issue 1

How would each of the alternatives affect the number of allotments available for livestock grazing and the associated acres of BLM-administered lands and animal unit months of forage allocated for livestock grazing?

Summary of Analytical Methods

The BLM compared the number of allotments that would be available for livestock grazing on BLM-administered lands under each alternative and the Proposed RMP. The number of acres and animal unit months (AUMs) associated with the available allotments were also considered. The BLM did not include small enclosures within an allotment that exclude livestock grazing for the purpose of this analysis. Variability exists between legacy acreage and geospatial acreage; for consistency, geospatial data was typically used.

The Planning Criteria provides more detailed information on analytical assumptions, methods and techniques, and geographic and temporal scales, which is incorporated here by reference (USDI BLM 2014, pp. 62–65).

Affected Environment

The Coos Bay District, Klamath Falls Field Office, and Medford District currently have 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area) of BLM-administered lands that authorize livestock grazing allotments in the planning area (Table 3-87).

Table 3-87. BLM-administered livestock grazing allotments in the decision area

District/ Field Office	Allotments* (Number)	Total BLM-administered Lands Within Allotments (Acres)	Active Use (AUMs)	Permittees (Number)
Coos Bay	4	544	120	4
Klamath Falls	94	203,582	13,219	63
Medford	91 [†]	285,920	11,886	43
Totals	189	490,047	25,225	110

* Allotments include those vacant and without a current permit/lease and closed. These do not include unallotted lands.

[†] This count includes 11 allotments that have been removed from the reporting system due to inactivity (no livestock grazing has occurred) since before the 1995 RMP but have never had decisions considered regarding their availability for livestock grazing.

Since adoption of the 1995 RMP, the number of vacant allotments has increased across the planning area. A vacant allotment is an allotment that currently does not have an active permit or lease. Some allotments have been vacant since the 1970s. The reasons for the increase in vacant allotments include:

- Relinquishment by operators
- Cancellation due to nonuse or noncompliance
- Lack of interest
- Difficulties within an allotment because of intermingled private land

- Conflicts with other users of public land
- Lack of fencing to control livestock on public land
- Change of boundary fencing that excludes BLM-administered lands

Table 3-88. Current livestock grazing levels compared to 1995 RMP levels

District/ Field Office*	1995 RMP Levels			2014 Levels [†]		
	Available AUMs	Active Allotments	Vacant Allotments	Active Use (AUMs)	Active Allotments	Vacant Allotments
Coos Bay	270	7	-	120	0	4
Klamath Falls	13,662	95	-	13,210	82	13 [‡]
Medford	17,458	99	18	12,000	46	45
Totals	31,390	201	18	25,225	128	63

* For reporting purposes, all allotments and AUMs the districts administer are counted including vacant allotments and their associated AUMs. Active allotments in this table are allotments with a current permit or lease. Some of these allotment acres and associated AUMs do not occur within the planning area. Suspended AUMs are not counted in this table.

[†] Previous decisions within the planning area have made allotments unavailable since 1995 levels and are not reflected in the 2014 levels.

[‡] Several of these vacant allotments in the Klamath Falls Field Office have been made unavailable to livestock grazing through decisions preceding this RMP revision.

Existing livestock grazing leases or permits within the BLM-administered lands in the decision area authorize 25,225 AUMs. Current levels of available livestock grazing are 6,165 AUMs less than permitted levels in 1995. These AUMs are available for livestock grazing, but some allotments are vacant and not being used. Actual levels of livestock use vary due to annual fluctuations of individual livestock operations or environmental conditions such as relinquishment by operators, transfers, and drought, or changes in livestock grazing leases or permits due to nonuse, noncompliance, or lack of interest. The change in use of allotments is due to several reasons including the voluntary elimination of livestock grazing associated with the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, the combination of multiple allotments into one, the division of allotments into more than one, and the reduction in livestock grazing for resource protection.

There are six allotments within the planning area containing acreage in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in addition to acreage in the decision area. All acres within the monument are outside the decision area. **Table 3-89** displays the acres of each allotment that overlaps the decision area and the monument. The Klamath Falls Field Office administers the Dixie and Buck Mountain Allotments, and the Medford District administers the Deadwood Allotment. The Keene Creek Allotment, Siskiyou Allotment, and Soda Mountain Allotment have been made unavailable to livestock grazing through previous decisions and public law and are not evaluated as part of this analysis.

Table 3-89. BLM-administered livestock grazing allotments in the decision area that overlap the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM)

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	CSNM (Acres)	Decision Area (Acres)	Total AUMs	Availability Status
Buck Mountain	00103	739	7,416	204	Available
Deadwood	20106	37	7,967	788	Available
Dixie	00107	1283	4,439	320	Available
Keene Creek	10115	10,600	13,019	-	Made unavailable for livestock grazing through previous decision and law (Pub. L. 111-11)
Siskiyou	10118	2,163	260	-	Made unavailable for livestock grazing through previous decision and law (Pub. L. 111-11)
Soda Mountain	10110	35,619	413	-	Made unavailable for livestock grazing through previous decision and law (Pub. L. 111-11)

Environmental Consequences

Under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP, all components of livestock grazing authorizations (acres for livestock grazing, number of allotments, AUMs, and permittees/lessees) would either remain the same or decrease as shown in **Table 3-90**. The No Action alternative would retain all allotments in their current management status and level of livestock grazing authorizations. Alternatives A, B, and C, would make allotments that have generally been vacant or inactive for 5 or more years unavailable for livestock grazing. Under the Proposed RMP, the BLM would make unavailable to livestock grazing those allotments that have generally been vacant, inactive, or in non-use status for 5 years or more (see **Appendix B** for those allotments proposed to be made unavailable). Under Alternative D, the BLM would cease to authorize any livestock grazing within the decision area and receive no payments for AUMs.

Table 3-90. Livestock grazing availability for the Coos Bay District, Klamath Falls Field Office, and Medford District

District/ Field Office	Alternative/ Proposed RMP	Allotments Available for Livestock Grazing (Number)	BLM- administered Lands (Acres)	Active Use (AUMs)	Permittees (Number)
Coos Bay	No Action	4	544	120	4
	Alt. A, B, C	-	-	-	-
	Alt. D	-	-	-	-
	PRMP	-	-	-	-
Klamath Falls	No Action	94	203,582	13,219	63
	Alt. A, B, C	92	203,377	13,199	63
	Alt. D	-	-	-	-
	PRMP	92	203,377	13,199	63
Medford	No Action	91	285,920	11,886	43
	Alt. A, B, C	50	162,854	9,588	43
	Alt. D	-	-	-	-
	PRMP	45	151,949	9,197	41
Totals	No Action	189	490,047	25,225	106
	Alt. A, B, C	142	366,231	22,787	106
	Alt. D	-	-	-	-
	PRMP	137	355,326	22,396	104

Although the Proposed RMP shows a decrease in permittees and allotments, these were allotments in non-use or vacant status. Therefore, these decreases would not reduce the number of allotments or permittees that currently have an active permit or lease in 2015.

Under Alternatives A, B, and C, the number of allotments available for livestock grazing would decrease from 189 to 142. The associated acres of BLM-administered lands and AUMs of forage available for livestock grazing through the issuance of livestock grazing leases or permits would decrease from 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area) and 25,225 AUMs, to 366,231 acres (15 percent of the decision area) and 22,787 AUMs (**Table 3-90**). In the Proposed RMP, an additional four allotments would be made unavailable for livestock grazing. The associated acres of BLM-administered lands and AUMs of forage available for livestock grazing would decrease an additional 5,928 acres and 216 AUMs on the Medford District compared to Alternatives A, B, and C. In Alternative D, the BLM would terminate existing livestock grazing authorizations and make all allotments unavailable for livestock grazing. The number of AUMs billed would remain at current levels in all alternatives except Alternative D.

Figure 3-105 and **Figure 3-106** show the acres and number of allotments available for livestock grazing and **Figure 3-107** shows the associated AUMs available.

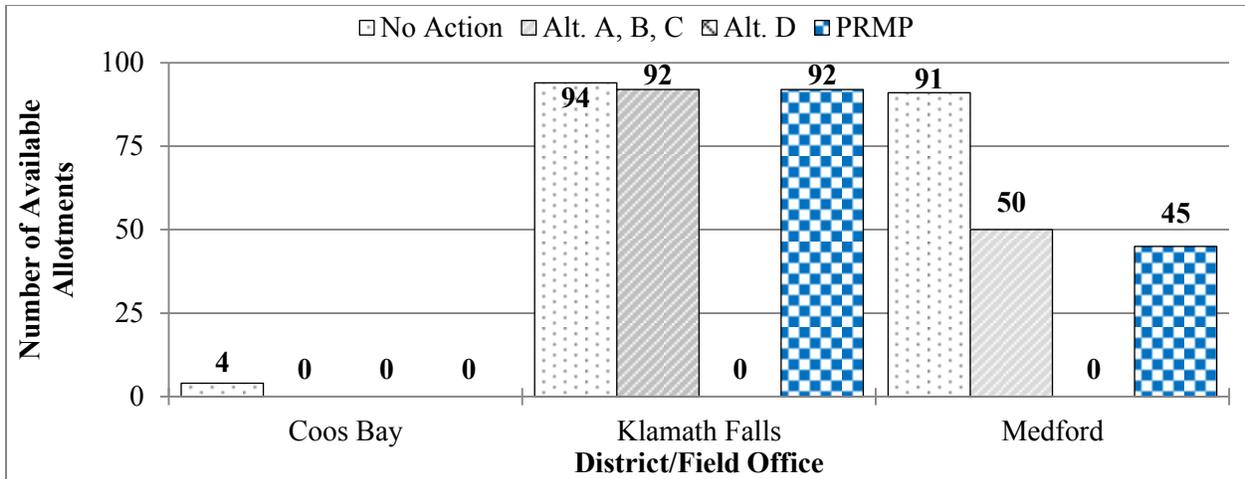


Figure 3-105. Allotments available for livestock grazing

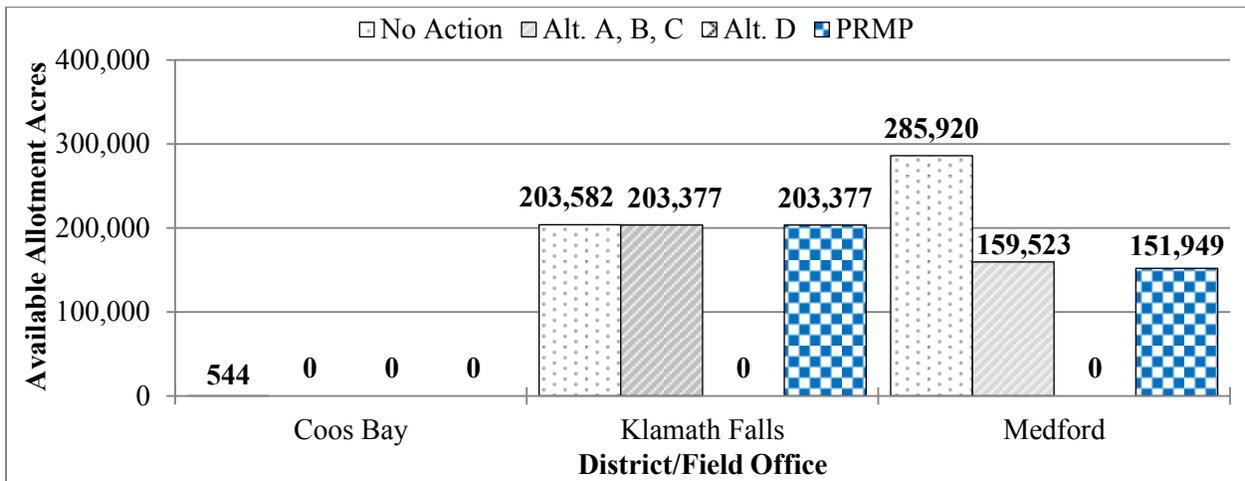


Figure 3-106. Acres available for livestock grazing

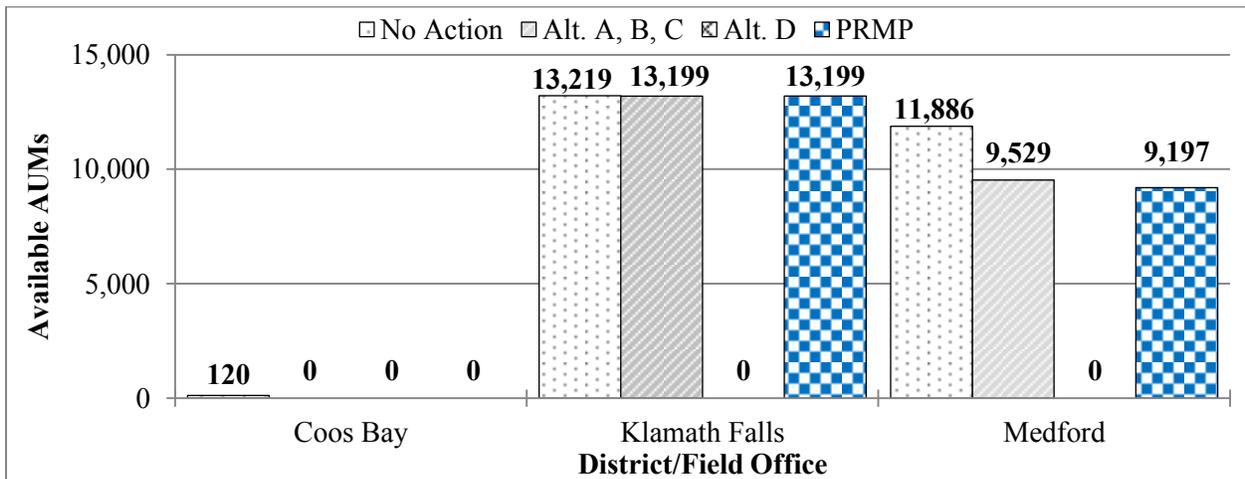


Figure 3-107. Allocated livestock grazing AUMs

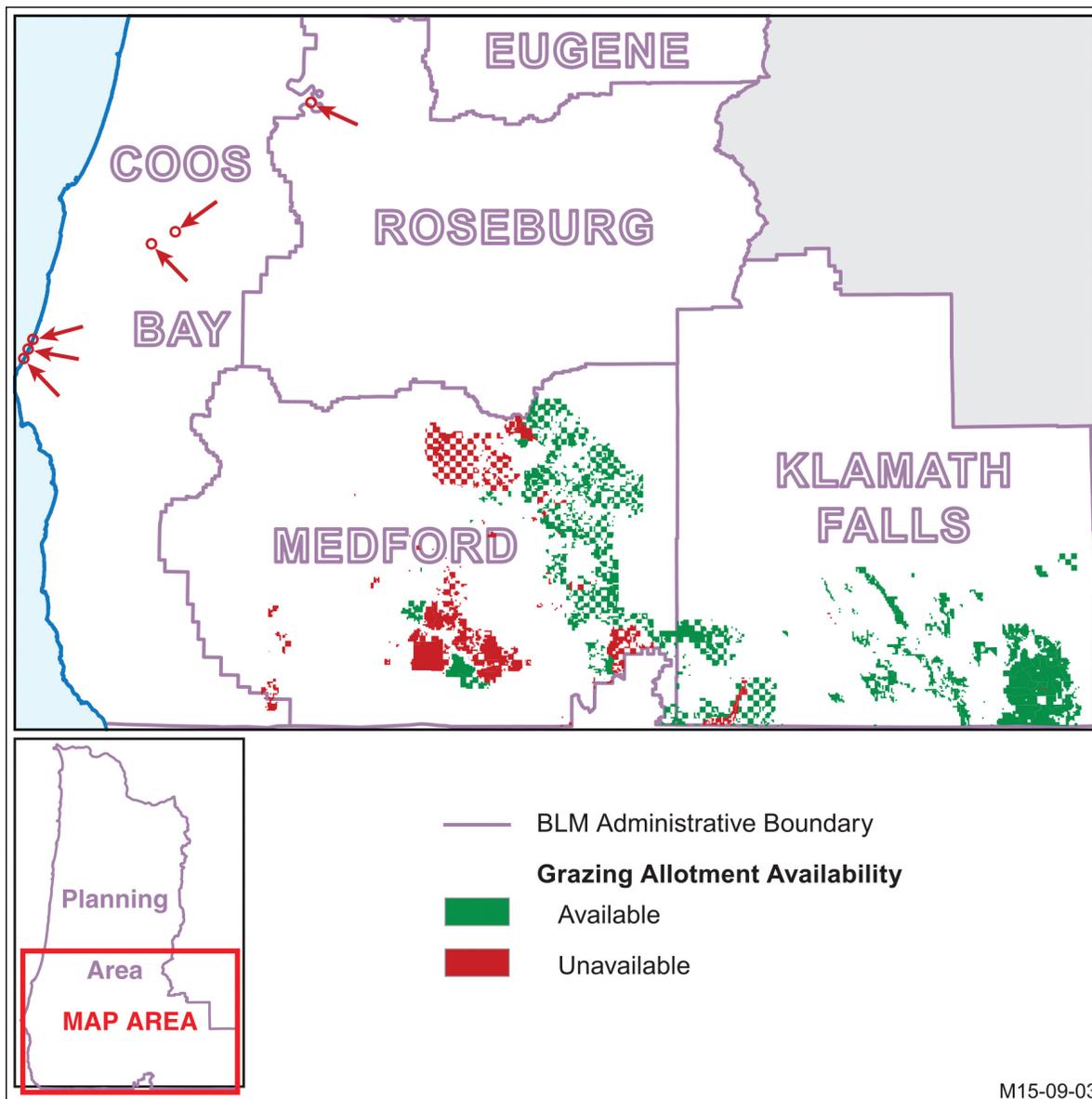
In the Medford District, Alternatives A, B, and C, and the Proposed RMP would decrease the number of available allotments as compared to the No Action alternative. This decrease would occur on allotments vacant for 5 years or more. In Alternatives A, B, and C, the BLM would reduce the number of available allotments by 47. The associated BLM-administered lands would decrease by 127,146 acres and by 2,497 AUMs. Under the Proposed RMP, the number of allotments would decrease by 52 from the No Action alternative with a decrease of 134,720 acres and of 2,829 AUMs.

In the Klamath Falls Field Office, Alternatives A, B, C, and Proposed RMP would decrease the number of allotments available to livestock grazing by two compared to the No Action alternative. A portion of the Edge Creek, Chicken Hills, and Chase Mountain allotments (5,908 acres) is fenced off from livestock grazing and is included in the Klamath River Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The BLM would cease authorizations for livestock grazing in Alternatives A, B, and C, and the Proposed RMP. No AUMs are currently associated with these ACEC acres and no livestock grazing is currently occurring. The remainder of the Edge Creek Allotment would continue to be available for livestock grazing. The BLM would also cease authorizations for the Plum Hills Allotment, a vacant allotment with 160 acres and 20 available AUMs.

In the Coos Bay District, all action alternatives and the Proposed RMP would decrease the number of available leases as compared to the No Action alternative. The decrease would occur on four allotments covering approximately 544 acres with 120 AUMs that would be unavailable for livestock grazing. As these allotments are currently vacant, the number of permittees would not change.

Under Alternative D, the BLM would no longer authorize livestock grazing within the decision area, a change that would make 189 allotments unavailable. This would occur on 490,047 acres (20 percent of the decision area) compared to the No Action alternative. A total 25,225 AUMs would be unavailable for livestock grazing, and the BLM would terminate existing permits and leases for 106 permittees. The BLM would no longer collect fees on these AUMs. The BLM addresses the effect of the termination of grazing permits under Alternative D on revenues to the BLM under Issue 1 and on jobs and earnings in the planning area under Issue 2 of the Socioeconomics section of this chapter. Alternative D would have the greatest effect to livestock grazing for the Klamath Falls Field Office and the Medford District when compared to the other alternatives and the Proposed RMP.

Figure 3-108 shows allotted BLM-administered lands within the planning area by allotment status within the Coos Bay District, the Klamath Falls Field Office, and the Medford District.



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Figure 3-108. Livestock grazing allotments on BLM-administered lands by livestock grazing availability under the Proposed RMP

Livestock Grazing within SRMAs and ACECs

Acres and total number of allotments within Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) or Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) vary by alternative (see Chapter 2). Some SRMAs and ACECs may additionally regulate or restrict livestock grazing within the designated areas' boundaries. These discussions do not include Alternative D, under which all allotments would be unavailable to livestock grazing.

Special Recreation Management Areas

In the Medford District and the Klamath Falls Field Office in Alternatives A, B, and C, and the Proposed RMP, management of SRMAs could have an effect on the number of acres available for livestock grazing through site-specific protection (e.g., exclosures) or management actions (e.g., restricting season of use).

The BLM may decrease stocking levels through subsequent agreements or necessary decisions.

The BLM would still issue land use authorizations through leases, permits, and easements if livestock grazing was compatible with SRMA recreation objectives and not interfere with recreation opportunities and setting characteristics.⁷⁹ Those areas designated as SRMAs would decrease acres available to livestock grazing as shown in **Table 3-91** if livestock grazing is determined to be incompatible within those areas. Alternatives B and C, and the Proposed RMP would decrease 3 percent and Alternative A would decrease 0.4 percent of acres currently available to livestock grazing.

Table 3-91. Acres of SRMAs within available allotments within the planning area

SRMA Lands Within Allotments	Alt. A (Acres)	Alt. B (Acres)	Alt. C (Acres)	PRMP (Acres)
Allotments Available for Livestock Grazing	1,426	10,809	10,531	9,372

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

In the Coos Bay District, the Klamath Falls Field Office, and the Medford District, under the No Action alternative, Alternatives A, B, and C, and the Proposed RMP, ACEC designations may affect the number of acres available for livestock grazing. Effects may occur through site-specific protection (e.g., exclosures) or management actions (e.g., restricting season of use) to maintain or enhance relevant and important values. The BLM may decrease stocking levels through subsequent agreements or decisions.

Designation of ACECs would allow land use authorizations through leases, permits, and easements when compatible with the special management needed to retain relevant and important values of the ACEC. Where livestock grazing is found to be incompatible with protection of the relevant and important values of the ACEC, those areas may require management that would decrease acres available to livestock grazing. **Table 3-92** shows the total acres of ACECs that would be designated that occur within authorized grazing allotments under the alternatives and the Proposed RMP. The No Action Alternative would decrease the largest number of acres available to livestock grazing, affecting 16,453 acres (3 percent) of the planning area. The Proposed RMP would decrease 7,165 acres (2 percent) of acres available to livestock grazing. Alternative A would decrease 8,195 acres (2 percent), and Alternative B would decrease 4,622 acres (1 percent) available for livestock grazing.

Table 3-92. Acres of ACECs within authorized allotments for each alternative and the Proposed RMP within the planning area

ACEC Lands Within Allotments	No Action (Acres)	Alt. A (Acres)	Alt. B (Acres)	Alt. C (Acres)	PRMP (Acres)
Allotments Available for Livestock Grazing	16,453	8,195	4,622	4,713	7,165

⁷⁹ New guidance on applying RMA allocations on BLM-administered lands creates a marked difference in how RMA designations are defined under the No Action alternative and the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP. SRMAs, under the No Action alternative, would include lands not managed for recreation as the primary use, and the BLM would not manage SRMAs under the No Action in a manner that would prioritize recreational uses over other land management uses, including livestock grazing. Because the RMA designation definitions differ between the No Action alternative, the action alternatives, and the Proposed RMP, the relative ranking analysis can only be used for the action alternatives and the Proposed RMP.

Issues Considered but not Analyzed in Detail

How would each of the alternatives affect the attainment of Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management on those lands allocated for livestock grazing?

Current livestock grazing regulations direct the BLM to manage livestock grazing in accordance with Standards for Rangeland Health. The BLM developed the 1997 Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (USDI BLM 1997) in consultation with Resource Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Committees, tribes, and others. These standards are the basis for assessing and monitoring rangeland conditions and trend. The BLM implements appropriate action to address the failure to meet standards or conform to guidelines resulting from livestock grazing management or practices on BLM-administered lands through 43 CFR 4180.2(c). Implementation of livestock grazing under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP except Alternative D would be required to conform to these standards, guidelines, and regulations. Alternative D does not authorize livestock grazing and therefore these standards, guidelines, and regulations are not applicable.

The BLM has assessed 65 percent of livestock grazing allotments and leases within the decision area to determine whether they are meeting rangeland health standards. Completed Rangeland Health Assessments by allotment are available on BLM web sites for the Lakeview and Medford Districts. As shown in **Table 3-93**, the BLM found livestock grazing to be a contributing factor in not meeting rangeland health standards in twelve allotments: five in Medford and seven in Klamath Falls. In those allotments, the BLM has taken appropriate action by adjusting livestock grazing management pursuant to direction in 43 CFR 4180.2(c) to ensure significant progress toward meeting the standards and to eliminate livestock grazing as the causal factor for not meeting the health standard. Adjusting livestock grazing management generally requires changes in livestock numbers, season of use, and animal unit months, construction of range improvements, or implementation of intensive livestock grazing systems. Under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP, except Alternative D, the BLM would continue to manage livestock grazing on these twelve allotments in a manner that will result in significant progress toward fulfillment of the standards. Under Alternative D, the BLM would cease to authorize livestock grazing. This removal of livestock grazing would allow some allotments not meeting rangeland health standards to recover at a faster rate when compared to the other alternatives and the Proposed RMP.

Table 3-93. Rangeland Health Standards Assessments for the Coos Bay District, Klamath Falls Field Office, and Medford District

Assessments	Coos Bay		Klamath Falls		Medford	
	Allotments	Acres	Allotments	Acres	Allotments	Acres
Rangelands Meeting All Standards or are Making Significant Progress Toward Meeting the Standards	4	543	52	108,417	20	32,383
Rangelands Not Meeting All Standards with Appropriate Action Taken to Ensure Significant Progress Toward Meeting the Standard (Livestock was a contributing factor)	-	-	7	35,376	5	15,312
Rangelands Not Meeting All Standards or Making Significant Progress Toward Meeting the Standard Due to Causes Other Than Livestock Grazing	-	-	11	50,236	25	125,117
Allotments Assessed and Closed to Livestock Grazing with a Previous Decision	-	-	-	-	3	13,692
Total Assessed	4	543	70	194,029	50	186,504
Allotments Not Assessed	-	-	25	15,349	41	113,202
Totals	4	543	95	209,377	91	299,706

The BLM is completing Rangeland Health Assessments on the grazed allotments lacking an assessment within the decision area based on district priorities. Should assessments find livestock grazing to be a contributing factor to not meeting rangeland standards, the BLM would take appropriate action by adjusting livestock grazing management pursuant to direction in 43 CFR 4180.2 to ensure significant progress toward meeting the standards and to eliminate livestock grazing as the causal factor for not meeting the health standard.

Across 36 allotments within the decision area, 11 in Klamath Falls and 25 in Medford are currently not meeting all standards or making significant progress towards meeting standards for reasons other than livestock grazing. Opportunities to achieve desired rangeland health conditions may be limited in some areas due to past management activities and may not be possible to achieve through changes in livestock grazing management or even through removal of livestock grazing. An example of this would be historic vegetative treatments that converted an area from a perennial grass/forb understory to an invasive plant understory (e.g., medusahead, dogtail, and bulbous bluegrass). In this situation, the upland Rangeland Health Standard 1 may not be met though any livestock grazing management to include the removal of livestock unless intensive reseeding combined with intensive weed treatments are additionally implemented.

How would each of the alternatives affect the BLM's ability to provide forage on those lands allocated for livestock grazing?

Current forage conditions within individual allotments are variable based on historic livestock grazing levels, past management actions, and current livestock grazing management. Past timber harvest activities within allotments created canopy openings that provide increased forage for livestock. Forest management actions proposed under the alternatives considered in this analysis would be expected to continue to influence forage conditions. In alternatives including regeneration harvest within the analysis area (i.e., BLM-administered lands within allotments), forage production is assumed to temporarily improve during the initial years post-harvest due to the decreased competition between understory and overstory vegetation. Alternatives A, B, and C, and the Proposed RMP include varying intensities of regeneration harvest on varying acres within the analysis area; however, the overwhelming majority of the Harvest Land Base in the allotments are within the uneven-aged timber are and would receive uneven-aged forest management. Changes to forage production by alternative or the Proposed RMP, including the moderate increases of forage availability within the analysis area, may affect livestock distribution within allotments; however, no increases in stocking rate would occur due to increases in available forage. These alternatives and the Proposed RMP would continue to provide adequate livestock forage for livestock grazing levels. Alternative D closes all allotments and so there are no acres to consider for forage production.

References

- USDI BLM. 1997. 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. Oregon State Office, Portland, OR. 22 pp. http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/csnm/files/rangeland_standards.pdf.
- . 2014. Resource management plans for western Oregon planning criteria. Bureau of Land Management, Oregon/Washington State Office, Portland, OR. <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/plandocs.php>.
- Walburger, K. T., T. DelCurto, and M. Vavra. 2007. Influence of forest management and previous herbivory on cattle diets. *Rangeland Ecology & Management* **60**(2): 172–178. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2111/05-223R3.1>.