

Request for Motorized/Mechanized Use in the Big Springs Allotment

In order to adequately distribute livestock in the wilderness portions (Owyhee and Pole Creek Wilderness Areas) of the Big Springs allotment, the permittee proposes to use a motorcycle or ATV 2-3 times per week during the active grazing season. This is estimated to be April 1 - June 30th mostly in the Owyhee Wilderness area and August 1 - October 31st mostly in the Pole Creek Wilderness area. I also propose an estimated 1 excursion per week when cattle are not in the wilderness, but during the permitted season of use from April 1 to October 31. This will account for monitoring, fence maintenance, reservoir checks, salt placement, and finding individual animals that have strayed due to the lack of physical cross fence boundaries within JBS Use Area.

The rationale includes the distance from Cow Camp to canyon rim (within wilderness) estimated at 12 miles. There are between 7 to 8 miles within wilderness. These distances are not conducive to moving livestock with enough frequency to protect natural resources without motorized methods or cross fences. All current plans for livestock management in JBS Use Area require motorized herding in absence of cross fences.

We have used Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring (salt distribution, fence checking, scouting) since the early 1960's. First for monitoring/gathering and very soon after herding/gathering/monitoring as an aid to manage livestock in an area with unique challenges for management (i.e. no internal physical boundaries or cross fences).

The practice of Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring was accepted in this permit by BLM in the whole JBS Use Area including areas that were Wilderness Study and areas that were outside Wilderness Study but became Wilderness without Wilderness Study. It was recognized as a management tool that was integral to stewardship. In fact, the Stewardship award I received from BLM in 2008 was a reflection of my management using the tool of motorized herding. I cannot achieve that level of stewardship in what is a fence free area without Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring to control timing and duration of grazing in the respective areas. Without Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring we will need to consider fencing areas to control timing and duration of grazing to achieve that level of stewardship.

The modern motorcycles and ATV's that I use have quiet mufflers that also have spark arresters. The tires I use on all machines are chosen to leave very little trace of passage.

April 1 through October 31, Motorized monitoring 1 day a week. Total 4 trips (trips for herding/gathering can accomplish monitoring tasks).

April 1 through June 31 Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring 3 times a week. Total 36 trips.

August 1 through October 31, Motorized Herding/Gathering/Monitoring 2 times a week. Total 26 trips.