

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
SURPRISE FIELD OFFICE**

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

**Project Name: South Larkspur Allotment Livestock Grazing Authorization**

**NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-CA-N070-2009-0005-CX**

**Project Description:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to re-issue the existing livestock grazing permit on the South Larkspur Allotment for a 10 year period.

**South Larkspur Allotment Terms and Conditions**

Permitted Use Summary

Allotment	Operator	Active AUMs	Suspended AUMs	Total Permitted Use
South Larkspur	Bordwell Family Trust	1040	0	1040

Livestock Numbers and Season of Use

Operator	Auth. Number	No. of livestock	Kind	Season of use	Public AUMs	% Public Land
Bordwell Family Trust	0402605	95	C	4/05 - 4/15	29	83
		202	C	4/16 - 10/15	1009	
TOTAL				4/5 - 10/15	1038	83

This permit will be subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Grazing use offered or authorized by BLM is subject to all provisions of the grazing regulations (43 CFR Parts 4100) and other applicable law and regulation. Grazing use authorization may be modified in accordance with regulation to attain progress towards achieving rangeland health standards (subpart 4180.1 and 4180.2 Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration). Any changes to the permit would occur after consultation, cooperation and coordination with the grazing permittee and other interested parties).

2. Grazing use on the South Larkspur Allotment will be in accordance with this Proposed/Final Grazing Decision and other provisions of the South Larkspur Allotment

Management Plan. Any livestock use found outside the limits of flexibility of the AMP, without prior authorization, will be subject to unauthorized use actions.

3. Billing will be based on your actual use reports which are to be submitted within 15 days of your last authorized take off date for each allotment. If actual use reports are not submitted within 30 days, the permittee will be billed and liable for their full active preference. Repeated delays in submitting actual use reports and/or paying grazing billings will revoke actual use billing privileges.
4. Salt and/or mineral supplements will be placed no closer than ¼ mile from any public water source.
5. All range improvements must be maintained to BLM standards prior to livestock turnout. All assigned fence maintenance must be completed annually, even if your permit is not activated. Failure to complete assigned fence maintenance may result in suspension of your grazing authorization.
6. The livestock operators are responsible for moving livestock in a timely manner before allowable use levels are exceeded.

**Project Location:** The South Larkspur Allotment is located at T45N, R17E in northeastern California and northwestern Nevada. The allotment consists of 17,315 acres of public land and 1,590 acres of private land.

The public was notified of the project in January 2008, and a scoping letter was sent to 66 interested publics of record on January 17, 2008. Western Watersheds Project and Nevada Department of Wildlife contributed comments that were carefully considered.

**Project Purpose and Need:**

The purpose of the action is to authorize livestock grazing use on the South Larkspur Allotment. All grazing would be in accordance with 43 CFR 4100 and consistent with the provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act, and Federal Land Policy and Management Act. In addition, the action will ensure that all authorizations implement provisions of, and are in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Surprise Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Record of Decision of April 2008, and the Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada, Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management 2000.

Washington Office policy, through Instruction Memorandum No.2003-071, calls for all grazing permits to be fully processed by the end of FY 2009, including evaluations of grazing and appropriate NEPA documentation. In accordance with that policy, the Surprise Field Office proposes to issue a fully processed livestock grazing permit to Bordwell Family Trust for the South Larkspur Allotment in 2009.

A copy of the land health standards determination for the South Larkspur Allotment can be found at the Surprise Field Office, and is posted on the Surprise Field Office web page at [http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/surprise/grazing\\_permit\\_renewals.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/surprise/grazing_permit_renewals.html). The determination concludes that all of the applicable land health standards are being met or, if standards are not being met, it is due to factors not attributable to existing livestock grazing.

The grazing permit or authorization (including crossing or trailing permits) will include the type and level of use authorized, including the kind and number of livestock, the period of use, and the amount of active and suspended use in animal unit months (AUMs), and terms and conditions for grazing use.

Attachment 1 provides this information including terms and conditions common to all the permits to be issued, as well as terms and conditions specific to the South Larkspur Allotment. The Surprise Field Office is not proposing any changes to the existing grazing permit for the South Larkspur Allotment.

The term permit and any future crossing/trailing permits would be implemented through Proposed and Final Grazing Decisions, with provisions for protest, appeal, and petition for stay, in accordance with 43 CFR 4100, and would be sent to the permittee(s) and interested publics of record.

### **Plan Conformance**

The proposed action is in conformance with the Proposed Surprise Field Office Resource Management Plan and final environmental impact statement issued in May 2007 as adopted by the Record of Decision approved in April 2008.

The Surprise Field Office RMP applicable goals and objectives of livestock grazing, as noted on page 2-34 and 2-35 include the following: 1) Sustainable, ecologically sound, and economically viable livestock grazing opportunities would be provided, where suitable, in the Surprise Field Office management area, 2) Adequate forage would be produced to support sustainable levels of livestock grazing where compatible with objectives for other resources and resource users, 3) Continue to modify and adjust grazing management within individual grazing allotments to ensure that a vigorous plant community is sustained in combination with livestock grazing.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada, Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (2000).

The action described above meets the specific criteria for the use of a Categorical Exclusion, as referenced in 516 DM 11.9(D) 11. This reference states the following as a Categorical Exclusion (CX):

*Livestock grazing permits/leases where:*

- a. *The new grazing permit/lease is consistent with the use specified on the previous permit/lease, such that*
  - 1. *the same kind of livestock is grazed*
  - 2. *the active use previously authorized is not exceeded, and*
  - 3. *grazing does not occur more than 14 days earlier or later than as specified on the previous permit/lease, and*
- b. *The grazing allotment(s) has been assessed and evaluated and the Responsible Official has documented in a determination that the allotment(s) is*
  - 1. *meeting land health standards, or*
  - 2. *not meeting land health standards due to factors that do not include existing livestock grazing.*

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**Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances:** The following exceptions (extraordinary circumstances) apply to individual actions within the CX, as listed in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2. The action has been reviewed to determine if any of the below listed exceptions to categorical exclusion documentation apply.

<i>Exceptions</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Specialist Initials</b>
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X	SM
<b>Rationale:</b> The allotment has no significant impacts on public health or safety near public areas. There are no known circumstances in which public health or safety would be impacted or jeopardized.			
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	PB/AU

<p><b>Rationale:</b> The South Larkspur Allotment has no prime farmlands and no drinking water aquifer is associated with the allotment. No floodplains have been identified by FEMA on this allotment. There are no known unique natural resources or geographic characteristics contained within the South Larkspur Allotment. Approximately two-thirds of the South Larkspur allotment lies within the North Hays Range Cultural Resource Management Area. A total of 1,196 acres have been inventoried on this allotment for cultural resources. As a result, three archaeological sites were recorded. At this time there are no known effects occurring to cultural resources from cattle on the South Larkspur Allotment. This allotment is scheduled for a Cultural Resource Assessment in 2009 as per the Supplemental Procedures for Livestock Grazing Permit/Lease Renewals, A Cultural Resources Amendment to the State Protocol Agreement Between the California BLM and the California State Historic Preservation Officer. Because the permit renewal will not include any changes in terms and conditions, no significant impacts to any cultural resources are expected. The allotment does not affect any designated wilderness, wilderness study areas or wild and scenic river segments.</p>			
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2) (E)].		X	SM
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Continuing grazing as it has been on the allotment will not have any highly controversial environmental effects. There are no known conflicting interests on the allotment.</p>			
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X	SM
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Grazing the allotment in the same manner as previously permitted will have no uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects.</p>			
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principal about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X	SM
<p><b>Rationale:</b> The proposed grazing authorization is based on review of site specific monitoring information and guidance from the applicable Resource Management Plan. Decisions regarding livestock use on this allotment are not related to site specific decisions regarding uses in other allotments; therefore, there is no possibility for the proposed action to be considered as a precedent or to influence future actions in other areas.</p>			
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X	SM
<p><b>Rationale:</b> No new grazing related actions are proposed for this allotment. There are no other actions occurring in this local geographic area making the risk of cumulative effects negligible.</p>			

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	PB
<b>Rationale:</b> See Item 2, above.			
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	EFJ
<b>Rationale:</b> No listed species or their habitats are known to exist within the allotment. <i>Distichlis</i> sp. communities (habitat for the Carson wandering skipper) exist in the South Larkspur Allotment; however, based on current literature, a field review of occupied Carson wandering skipper habitats outside the field office boundaries, and observations of habitat made in the allotment during 2008, it has been determined that the allotment does not likely have suitable habitat for this species.			
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X	PB
<b>Rationale:</b> This project would not violate any State, local, tribal or federal laws.			
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898, 'Environmental Justice').		X	SM
<b>Rationale:</b> This project would not negatively effect low income or minority populations.			
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	PB
<b>Rationale:</b> Access to public lands in the area would not be limited. Native American consultation has taken place for this permit renewal. There were no concerns expressed by the tribes regarding the permit renewal.			
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	<a href="#">SM</a>

<b>Rationale:</b> There are no known, large-scale infestations of any noxious weeds on the allotment. Non-native species such as cheatgrass and Japanese brome exist in some communities, but have not become a dominant part of the plant community. Native species are successfully competing with cheatgrass and Japanese brome. Grazing the allotment in the same manner as previously permitted will not contribute to the spread of the non-native species.	
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**Land Use Plan conformance and Categorical Exclusion review confirmation:**

Lead Preparer: Steve Mathews Date: 3/18/009

NEPA/ Environmental Coordinator: Shane DeForest Date: 3/18/2009

Based on a review of the project description described above and field office staff recommendations, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the resource management plan and is categorically excluded from further analysis.

**D. Signature**

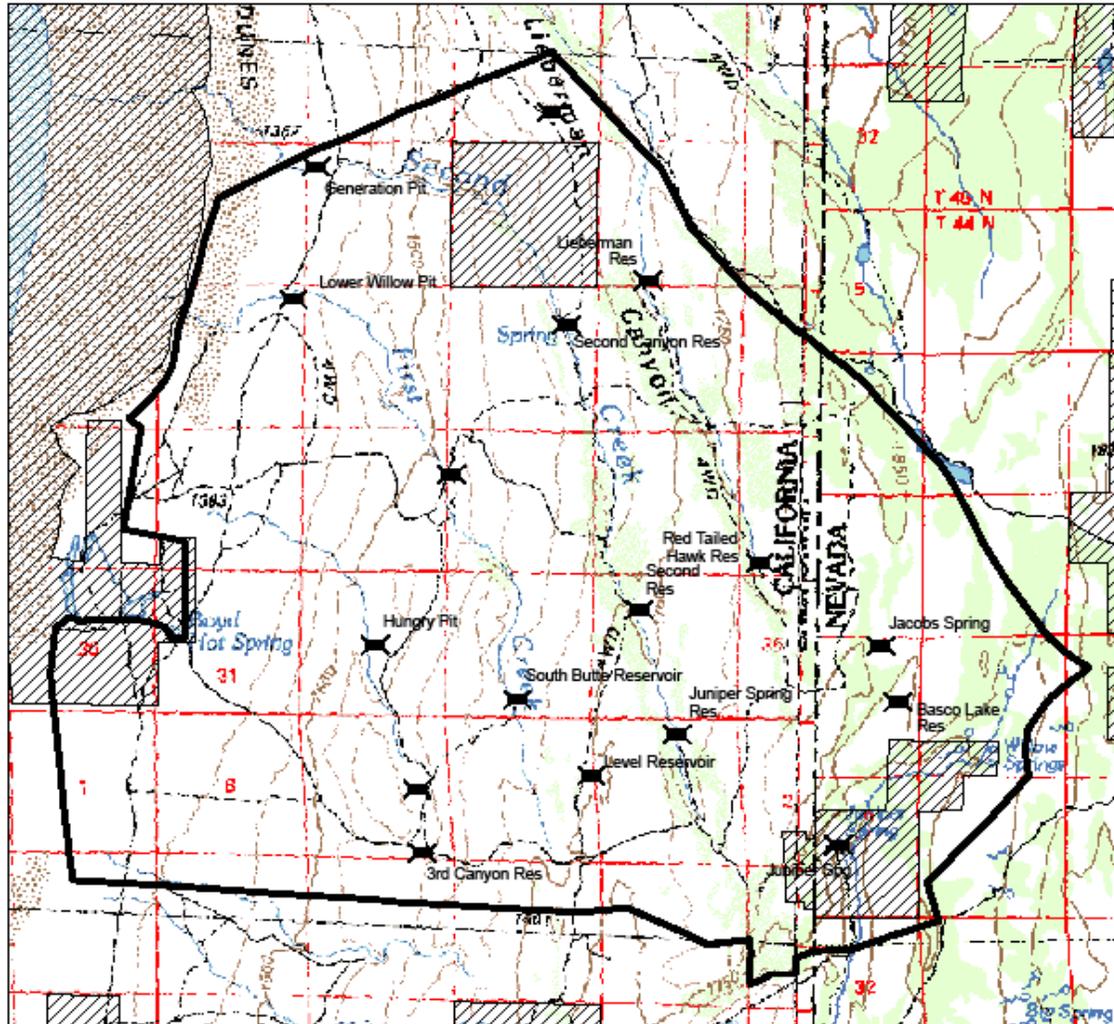
Shane DeForest Date: 3/18/2009

Shane DeForest  
Surprise Field Manager

**E. Contact**

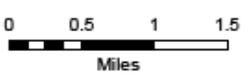
For more information, contact:  
Steve Mathews  
Rangeland Management Specialist  
Phone: (530) 279-6101  
Email: smathews@ca.blm.gov

**Attachment 1**  
**South Larkspur Allotment Map**



**South Larkspur Allotment**

- Legend**
- Developed Spring
  - Pit Reservoir
  - Windmill
  - Private Lands
  - South Larkspur Allotment



Approximate Ownership Acres  
 Bureau of Land Management 17,315  
 Private 1,590

US Department of the Interior  
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**  
 Bureau Field Office  
 Bishop, California  
 93526-0001  
 www.blm.gov/bishop  
 Date Prepared: 10/2008  
 Project: south\_larkspur.pdf

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**Location Map**

