

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Environmental Assessment
10 Year Permit Renewal for
Thompson and Woodring Allotments**

Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506

DOI-BLM-CO-130-2013-0033-EA

July 2014



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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND:

This environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared by the BLM to analyze the issuance of a 10 year grazing permit for grazing use on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments. The previous ten year permit expired on September 30, 2013 and was subsequently renewed under the Appropriations Act of 2013. A livestock producer (permittee/lessee) must hold a grazing permit/lease to graze livestock on public land. Grazing Permits specify all authorized use including livestock grazing, suspended use, class of animal, total number of AUMs, season of use, percent public land, and the area authorized for grazing use (CFR §4100.0-5).

The Thompson and Woodring Allotments are located approximately 15 miles south of Grand Junction on the east end of Pinon Mesa (Appendix 1, Map #1 of the allotments). Annual average precipitation is approximately 10 -12 inches and elevation varies from 7,000 ft. to 8,200 ft. The Thompson allotment consists of approximately 5,282 acres of public land and 1,138 privately owned acres. The Woodring allotment consists of approximately 1,110 acres of public land and 1,014 acres of private land. In both allotments the private land is unfenced from public lands and used in conjunction with the appropriate allotment as shown in percent public land (%PL) in the authorized use. These allotments are used as cattle move to and from private land used as summer grazing. The terrain is a mixture of mesa, cliffs, steep hillsides, rolling hills, and occasional open draws. Pinon/Juniper and mountain shrub vegetative communities dominate sloped areas and sagebrush parks occupy the gentler slopes.

Grazing allotments within the GJFO have been placed in one of three management categories that define the intensity of management: (1) Improve, (2) Maintain, and (3) Custodial. These categories broadly define rangeland management objectives in response to an analysis of an allotment’s resource characteristics, potential, opportunities, issues, and needs. Both the Thompson and Woodring Allotments are in the maintain category meaning there are no inherent resource condition concerns or resource use conflicts.

The current authorized grazing schedule is:

Allotment/#	Category	Livestock #/Kind	Grazing Period	%PL	Type Use	AUMS₁
Thompson #06148	Maintain	85 Cattle 85 Cattle	05/20 - 06/20 10/20 - 11/21	30	Active	54
Woodring #26304	Maintain	86 Cattle 70 Cattle	05/05 – 06/01 10/15 – 11/15	50	Active	75

Table 1.1-1 Grazing Schedule

Total permitted use in the Thompson allotment is 54 AUMs with 54 active AUM’s and 0 suspended. Total permitted use in the Woodring allotment is 126 AUMs with 75 active AUM’s and 51 suspended.

¹ AUM is an Animal Unit Month meaning the amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or its equivalent for a period of 1 month.

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: #0507118

PROJECT NAME: Grazing Permit Renewal for the Woodring and Thompson Allotments

PLANNING UNIT: Grand Junction Field Office

APPLICANT: Grazing Permittee

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

The Woodring and Thompson Allotments are located in Mesa County approximately 15 miles south of Grand Junction, Colorado. The allotments are located in Township 13 and 14 South, Range 100 and 101 West, 6th Principal Meridian (Appendix 1, Map #1 for Thompson and Woodring allotments).

1.3 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the proposed action is to allow grazing on public lands in a responsible manner that is compatible with other resource uses and objectives. The purpose can be met by fully processing the renewal of the qualified applicant's grazing permit preference for the Thompson (06148), and Woodring (26304) allotments.

The need for the action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) and the Taylor Grazing Act, to respond to an applicant's request for a grazing authorization on public land. The proposed action would provide the opportunity for the continuation of livestock grazing through the issuance of a grazing permit for the permittee on mentioned allotments. In order to graze livestock on public land, the livestock permittee must hold a valid grazing permit. The need for this action is to ensure that grazing is authorized by a valid grazing permit and is compatible with Standards for Public Land Health, other resource uses and objectives, and in compliance with grazing regulations under 43 CFR §4100.

1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1.4.1 Public Scoping: Scoping, by posting this project on the Grand Junction Field Office NEPA website, was the primary mechanism used by the BLM to invite public involvement. No comments were received.

Issues Identified: No issues were identified during public scoping.

43 CFR §4130.2 (b) requires, "The authorized officer shall consult, cooperate and coordinate with affected permittees or lessees, the state having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public prior to the issuance or renewal of grazing permits or leases."

1.4.2 Internal Scoping: Maps of the Thompson and Woodring Allotments and description of the proposed action were distributed to the GJFO Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and discussed at the 2013 Grazing Permit Renewal Meeting. Documentation of which resources would be impacted based on internal scoping is included in Table 3.1.

Issues Identified: Potential impacts on cultural resources and Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive species, and the Thompson allotment contain 190 acres of proposed unoccupied critical habitat for Gunnison sage-grouse. No additional issues were identified at the 2013 Grazing permit Renewal Meeting.

1.5 DECISION TO BE MADE

The BLM will decide whether to approve the proposed Thompson and Woodring Allotment grazing permit renewal based on the analysis contained in this EA. This EA will analyze impacts to resources from cattle grazing on the allotments. The BLM may choose to accept the proposed action, modify the proposed action, accept an alternative to the proposed action or reject the application in whole. The finding associated with this EA may not constitute the final approval for the proposed action.

The BLM will determine if the applicant has a satisfactory record of performance in accordance with 43 CFR §4110.1 (b) (1).

CHAPTER 2 – PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information on the Proposed Action and Alternatives. Alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail are also discussed.

The Proposed Action or Alternative chosen from this EA would be the basis for management of livestock on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments.

2.2 ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

2.2.1 Best Management Practices (BMPs) Common to All Grazing Alternatives

1. Grazing systems and management practices should be directed at increasing perennial fire-tolerant grasses.
2. All uses including grazing should be designed to take into account the highly erodible nature of these soils.
3. All open topped water tanks would include a wildlife escape ramp that have a slope no steeper than 45 degrees, in all directions, is securely attached to the tank, and meets the inside wall of the tank, and extend down the inside wall of the tank/trough (in both directions), making contact with the bottom of the tank.

4. Grazing should be carefully monitored to ensure impacts to Gunnison Sage Grouse is minimal as well as direct competition with deer and elk for forage.
5. Monitoring would continue on these allotments to measure any impacts to resources or resource uses. The monitoring program would include appropriate consultation, cooperation and coordination with the rangeland users, other agencies, and interested publics. Close coordination between the permittee or their representative, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the BLM of all livestock related field monitoring is essential to determine conformity with the terms and conditions of the permits.

2.2.2 No Action Alternative (Current Permit)

The No Action Alternative would be to issue a ten year permit resulting in the continuation of management identified in the current grazing permit. Under this alternative, the grazing permit would be:

Table 2.2.2-1 No Action

Allotment/#	Category	Livestock #/Kind	Grazing Period	%P L	Type Use	Federal Acres	AUMs		
							Active	Suspended	Total
Thompson 06148	Maintain	85 Cattle	05/20 – 06/20	30	A	5,282	54	0	54
		85 Cattle	10/20 – 11/21						
Woodring 26304	Maintain	86 Cattle	05/05- 06/01	50	A	1,110	75	51	126
		70 Cattle	10/15 – 11/15						

2.2.3 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue the applicant a 10 year term grazing permit for livestock grazing on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments. The term of the new Grazing Permit would be October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2024. The proposed action is in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4130.2.

Under the proposed action, timing and number of cattle on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments would remain the same as the current permit. The only change to the current permit would be the addition of Adaptive Management and additional terms and conditions. Changes to the grazing schedule would be considered when modifications would benefit vegetative resources. The permittee or BLM would be allowed to change the grazing dates by two weeks prior to and two weeks after the grazing dates shown on the permit if authorized by the BLM. Adaptive management would allow for flexibility in changes in climate and annual weather patterns including timing of moisture received and temperatures during growing seasons. These factors would influence plant growth and range readiness. This flexibility would also allow for minor adjustments to the permittees operation. Based on this addition of adaptive management grazing could occur anytime between the following dates for each allotment:

Thompson: 05/06 to 07/04
 10/06 to 12/04

Woodring: 04/22 to 06/15
10/01 to 12/01

If an adjustment in grazing dates is made based on the adaptive management the number of AUM's allowed for that grazing period would not change. For example, if grazing use starts earlier than the permit date livestock would be removed earlier. Total AUM's allowed for each grazing period (spring or fall) would not increase. Livestock numbers may also vary but total AUM's allowed would not. All changes in use would be approved by the BLM Authorized Officer (AO). This adaptive management would be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the grazing permit.

Temporary Non-Renewable use may be authorized the BLM Authorized Officer (AO) if additional forage is available due to above normal precipitation or optimal growing conditions and utilization levels would not exceed 50% on key species.

Satisfactory results from range trend studies and a Land Health Assessment confirm that continuation of the current grazing authorized on the Thompson and Woodring allotments should continue. The allotments will remain in the "M" category management status based on satisfactory resource conditions and no major resource concerns at this time. If resource conditions change or resource issues develop this category would be subject to change. Monitoring will continue on these allotments to determine if conditions changes or conflicts arise.

A component of the grazing permit is the maintenance of range improvements in accordance with associated Cooperative Agreements for the improvement and BLM policy. The following list of range improvements would remain in active status and be maintained.

Thompson allotment:

DENEH Reservoir 1	#274089	T13S, R100W, section 34, SENE
DENEH Reservoir 3	#274090	T14S, R100W, section 4, SESW
DENEH Reservoir 4	#274091	T14S, R100W, section 8, NENW
DENEH Reservoir 2	#274094	T14S, R100W, section 4, SWNE
Snyder Flats Stock Trail	#270507	T13S, R100W, section's 35, 36 T14S, R100W, section's 2,3,8,9

Woodring allotment:

Snyder Flats Stock Trail	#270507	T14S, R100W, section 13,
Snyder Creek Detention Dam 1	#274628	T14S, R100W, section 8, SESW
Snyder Creek Detention Dam 2	#274629	T14S, R101W, section 13, SWNE

If the improvement is no longer needed or beyond repair it would be removed or abandoned. A general description of the maintenance activity required for the various types of range improvements is described below:

Reservoirs/Retention Dams: Removal of deposited sediment from catchment area by heavy equipment. Removed sediment would be placed on the dam area to reinforce the dam. The disturbed area while cleaning would not exceed the area originally disturbed during construction

of the project. Collection ditches may be associated with the reservoir and would require cleaning.

Fences: Replacement or repair of wooden or steel posts, broken wire, staples, clips, or stays. Maintenance would be performed on horseback, foot, or motorized vehicles on designated routes.

Cattleguards: Removal of soil underneath cattelguard grate, replacement of cattle guard supports or repair/replacement of wings. Heavy equipment such as backhoe would be required to remove cattleguard, remove soil and replace cattleguard. Some cattleguards allow for cleaning by hand digging. The disturbed area would not exceed the area originally disturbed by the installation.

Springs and Pipelines: Replacement or repair of collection box of spring, exclosure surrounding spring, troughs, or pipelines. Heavy equipment may be necessary to excavate spring box or pipelines. The disturbed area would not exceed the area originally disturbed by the installation.

All heavy equipment would be washed and free of debris before entering BLM lands.

PROPOSED GRAZING PROGRAM:

Proposed Permitted Use

Table 2.2.2-2 Proposed Action

Allotment/#	Category	Livestock #/Kind	Grazing Period	%P L	Type Use	Federal Acres	Active	Suspended	Total
Thompson 06148	Maintain	85 Cattle 85 Cattle	05/20 – 06/20 10/20 – 11/21	30	A	5,282	54	0	54
Woodring 26304	Maintain	86 Cattle 70 Cattle	05/05- 06/01 10/15 – 11/15	50	A	1,110	75	51	126

Terms and Conditions of the Proposed Action would be:

1. To allow for variation in climate, plant growth conditions, and flexibility in permittee livestock operations, the BLM may adjust the authorized grazing period by up to two weeks before or after the permitted grazing period if rangeland conditions are determined by the Authorized officer to be satisfactory for livestock use and AUMs are not exceeded.
2. Temporary Non-renewable (TNR) may be approved by the authorized BLM officer if additional forage is deemed available within the authorized grazing period and the vast majority of the grazing area is meeting Land Health Standards.

3. Livestock grazing utilization levels on key forage species (Indian ricegrass, blue grasses, squirreltail grass, perennial wheat grasses, ryegrasses, sand dropseed grass, needle and thread grass, galleta grass, serviceberry and snowberry) should not exceed 50%. If utilization levels are approaching allowable use, livestock would be required to be moved to areas within the allotment that are not approaching allowable use levels. When such areas are not available, livestock would be removed from the allotment when allowable use rates are met. Management adjustments would be made the following year to avoid recurring instances of over utilization.
4. Use supervision checks by BLM staff would be conducted to assure grazing compliance. The Grand Junction Field Office would use utilization checks, collect trend data, and evaluate allotments whenever necessary. Evaluation of monitoring would be used to make appropriate changes to grazing management in order to protect land health.
5. This permit is subject to change if results from a land health or riparian proper functioning condition assessment conclude that the Standards for Rangeland Health are not being met and livestock grazing is determined to be the cause or a contributing factor due to other uses and demands on the system.
6. Salting and mineral blocks would be placed at least one quarter (1/4) mile or further from water sources and riparian areas. Less than one quarter mile may be allowed if terrain does not allow for one quarter mile distance and approved by the BLM AO.
7. All new range improvement projects would be in accordance with BLM standards.
 - Example - wildlife escape ramps are required in water troughs under BLM standards.
8. Water source areas would be monitored by the permittee and BLM for infestation of noxious weeds. The permittee and BLM would coordinate to treat and eradicate any weed infestations should they occur.
9. Upon approval by the Authorized Officer (AO), the permittee would have the option to apply for more cattle over a shorter time period as long as AUMs are not exceeded in a grazing season and use is within the season of use.
10. Maintenance of all structural rangeland improvements (RI) and other projects are the responsibility of the permittee to which they have been assigned. Maintenance would be in accordance with cooperative agreements and/or range improvement permits (43 CFR 4120.3-1). Failure to maintain assigned projects in a satisfactory/functional condition may result in withholding authorization to graze livestock until maintenance is completed. Construction of new RI on BLM administered lands is prohibited without approval from the authorized officer.
 - a. The BLM authorized officer would be contacted prior to any range project maintenance activity involving soil surface disturbance. An example includes but not

limited to cleaning of ponds with heavy equipment, which would involve soil surface disturbance. All heavy equipment would be washed and free of debris before entering BLM lands.

11. Permittees or lessees should provide reasonable access across private and leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands related to grazing administration.
12. Grazing would be deferred on new vegetation treatments and rehabilitated burned areas to allow two growing seasons of rest unless otherwise authorized. Coordination and cooperation would occur with the permittee prior to any treatment.
13. The permittee should submit an Actual Use form within 15 days after completing their annual grazing use as outlined in 43 CFR 4130.3-2(d).
14. It is the responsibility of the Permittee to inform all persons associated with work on federal lands subject to the permit that they would be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts.
15. Surface disturbing range improvements associated with the allotment (e.g., fences, ponds) are subject to compliance requirements under Section 106 and would undergo standard cultural resources inventory and evaluation procedures.
16. If newly discovered cultural resources are identified during project implementation, work in that area should stop and the BLM Authorized Officer should be notified immediately (36 CFR 800.13).
17. Notify the Authorized Officer (AO) by telephone and with written confirmation, immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Activities would stop in the immediate area of the find, and the discovery would be protected for 30 days or until notified to proceed in writing by the AO.
18. During dry and drought conditions adjustments would be made that involve reduction of AUMs or non-use as stated under 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4110.3-2 “Decreasing active use. (a) Permitted use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, And 43 CFR 4110.3-3 “Implementing changes in active use. (a) After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected permittee or lessee,...., reductions of permitted use shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision of the authorized officer. (b) When the authorized officer determines that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on the public lands require immediate protection because of conditions such as drought, fire,, the authorized officer shall close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or modify authorized grazing use notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section.”
19. Should the allotment become suitable habitat for the Gunnison sage-grouse habitat objectives identified in the Rangewide Conservation Plan (Appendix H) objectives would be measured

and maintained. Habitat objectives may be adjusted if more localized habitat structural data is available in coordination with CPW and the FWS.

Additional Standard Terms and Conditions can be found on the signature page of the Grazing Permit.

2.2.4 No Livestock Grazing Alternative

This alternative would mean that a Term Grazing Permit would not be issued and no grazing would be allowed on the allotment.

2.3 PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Grand Junction Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: JANUARY, 1987

Decision Number/Page: Page 2-17

Decision Language: Manage livestock grazing as described in the *Grand Junction Grazing Management Environmental Statement*. Reevaluate existing allotment management plans to ensure consistency with objectives for riparian and critical erosion goals.

Applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

Name of Document: Thompson and Woodring Allotments' renewal for grazing permit #0507118 CO-GJFO-03-36-EA

Date Approved: July 28, 2003

In January 1997, the Colorado State Office of the BLM approved the Standards for Public Land Health and amended all RMPs in the State. Standards describe the conditions needed to sustain public land health and apply to all uses of public lands.

Standard 1: Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, land form, and geologic processes.

Standard 2: Riparian systems associated with both running and standing water function properly and have the ability to recover from major disturbance such as fire, severe grazing, or 100-year floods.

Standard 3: Healthy, productive plant and animal communities of native and other desirable species are maintained at viable population levels commensurate with the species and habitat's potential.

Standard 4: Special status, threatened and endangered species (federal and state), and other plants and animals officially designated by the BLM, and their habitats are maintained or enhanced by sustaining healthy, native plant and animal communities.

Standard 5: The water quality of all water bodies, including ground water where applicable, located on or influenced by BLM lands will achieve or exceed the Water Quality Standards established by the State of Colorado.

Because standards exist for each of these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in Chapter 3 of this document.

CHAPTER 3 – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND EFFECTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a description of the human and natural environmental resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action and presents comparative analyses of the direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the affected environment stemming from the implementation of the actions under the Proposed Action and other alternatives analyzed.

This EA draws upon information compiled in the Grand Junction Resource Area RMP (BLM 1987).

3.1.1 Elements Not Affected

The following elements, identified as not being present or not affected will not be brought forward for additional analysis:

Geological – (livestock grazing would not affect the geology),

Mineral Resources – (livestock grazing would not affect mineral resources),

Paleontological – (livestock grazing would not affect paleontology),

Transportation and Access – (livestock grazing would not affect transportation and access),

Prime or Unique Farmlands – (prime or unique farmlands are not on the allotments),

Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs etc.) – (special designations are not on the allotments),

Wild and Scenic Rivers – (no wild and scenic rivers are on the allotments),

Wild Horse and Burros – (no wild horses and burros are on the allotments),

Land Tenure, ROW and Other Uses – (livestock grazing would not affect land tenure, ROWs and other uses),

Visual - (livestock grazing would not affect visual resources).

Wilderness – (No wilderness areas or WSA's exist on the allotment).

3.1.2 Past, Present, Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the cumulative effects of proposals under their review. Cumulative effects are defined in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR §1508.7 as "...the impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency...or person undertakes such other actions." The CEQ states that the "cumulative effects analyses should be conducted on the scale of human communities, landscapes, watersheds, or airsheds" using the concept of "project impact zone" or more simply put, the area that might be affected by the proposed action. The area that may be affected by this project includes the Thompson and Woodring Allotments primarily in the East Creel Watershed. To assess past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions that may occur within the affected area a review of GJFO NEPA log and our field office GIS data was completed. The following list includes all past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions known to the BLM that may occur within the affected area:

Past Actions:

Recreation and Hunting – Public Access to these allotments is limited. The Snyder Hunter Access road is open during hunting season, otherwise access is by foot or horseback or permission through private property.

Livestock Grazing – Thompson and Woodring Allotments and surrounding Allotments (early 1900s to now)

Fuels Treatments – A vegetation treatment involving rollerchopping was completed in 2009 to reduce pinon-juniper encroachment in old sagebrush parks.

Present Actions:

Recreation and livestock grazing are current actions.

Reasonably Foreseeable Actions:

Recreation and livestock grazing are expected to continue for at least the next 10 years.

Table 1– Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation Necessary?	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date	Comments
PHYSICAL RESOURCES						
Air and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ND 5/18/14	
Water (surface & subsurface, floodplains)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ND 5/18/14	
Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ND 5/18/14	
Geological/Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 7/8/13	
Special Status Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ARL 7/16/13	
Special Status Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HLP 8/23/13	I added a term and condition to the permit so that mitigation was in the proposed action
Migratory Birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HLP 8/23/13/13	
Other Important Wildlife Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HLP 8/23/13	
Vegetation, Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JRD 7/25/13	
Invasive, Non-native Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	MT 7/25/13	
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CS 8/1/13	Need to review last NEPA document to determine if new stipulations are necessary or if it analysis can be incorporated by reference.
Cultural or Historical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 8/14/13	
Paleontological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 7/8/13	
Tribal & American Indian Religious Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 8/14/13	
Visual Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/18/13	
Social/Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CS 8/1/13	
Transportation and Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/18/13	
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AK 7/8/13	
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/18/13	
Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs, WSR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/18/13	
Wilderness & Wilderness Characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/18/13	
Range Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JRD 7/25/13	
Wild Horse and Burros	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JRD 7/25/13	
Land Tenure, ROW, Other Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	RBL 7/26/13	
Fire/Fuels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JP 7/29/13	

3.2 PHYSICAL RESOURCES

3.2.1 Air Quality and Climate Change

Current Conditions:

Air quality in the project area is typical of undeveloped regions in the western United States. The closest Class I Airsheds are the West Elk Wilderness and Raggeds Wilderness areas located approximately 65 air miles to the east.

The primary sources of air pollutants in the region are fugitive dust from the desert to the west of the planning area, unpaved roads and streets, seasonal sanding for winter travel, motor vehicles, and wood-burning stove emissions. Seasonal wildfires throughout the western U. S. may also contribute to air pollutants and regional haze. The ambient pollutant levels are usually near or below measurable limits, except for high short-term increases in PM₁₀ levels (primarily wind-blown dust), ozone, and carbon monoxide. Within the Rocky Mountain region, occasional peak ozone levels are relatively high, but are of unknown origin. Elevated concentrations may be the result of long-range transport from urban areas, subsidence of stratospheric ozone or photochemical reactions with natural hydrocarbons. Occasional peak concentrations of CO and SO₂ may be found in the immediate vicinity of combustion equipment. Locations vulnerable to decreasing air quality include the immediate areas around mining and farm tilling, local population centers, and distant areas affected by long-range transportation of pollutants. Representative monitoring of air quality in the general area indicates that the existing air quality is well within acceptable standards.

The EPA General Conformity regulations require that an analysis (as well as a possible formal conformity determination) be performed for federally sponsored or funded actions in non-attainment areas and in designated maintenance areas when the total direct and indirect net air pollutant emissions (or their precursors) exceed specified levels. Since the GJFO is not within a non-attainment or a maintenance area, the Clean Air Act conformity regulations do not apply.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: No direct impacts are anticipated under the No-Action alternative. Both allotments are categorized as “Maintain” allotments meaning there are no inherent resource conditions concerns or resource use conflicts. Land health assessments conducted in 2013 (Glade Park LHA) verify that land health standards are being met in both allotments. Furthermore, BMPs common to all alternatives would be implemented as conditions warrant preserving resource conditions and sustainability of the permitted use type.

Cumulative Effects: The timing of use under the current grazing schedule would not be adjustable under varying climatic conditions. This could lead to reduced health and vigor of desirable vegetative species over time (length of renewed grazing permit, 10 years) under some climatic conditions. As a result, soils could become increasingly vulnerable to erosional processes and air quality could be degraded due to elevated fugitive dust production from the grazed landscape.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the proposed action, the timing of livestock grazing could be modified to accommodate variability in climatic conditions. As a result, the health and vigor of desirable vegetation could be more easily preserved under different climatic conditions. Likewise, the potential for improved soil stability would be maintained or improve which would decrease potential for fugitive dust production and air quality degradation at any scale.

Cumulative Effects: Reduced potential for dust production resulting from successful implementation of the proposed grazing management schedule could contribute incrementally towards potential air quality improvements under some climatic conditions when compared to the no action alternative.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the no-grazing alternative, vegetative health would not be impacted in any way by livestock grazing. Soil stability would be maintained or improve which could decrease potential for fugitive dust production and air quality degradation at any scale. However, impacts to air quality resulting from climatic variations, livestock grazing or grazing by wild ungulates would be difficult to decipher from one another.

Cumulative Effects: Reduced potential for dust production resulting from removal of grazing from this allotment could contribute incrementally towards potential air quality improvements under some climatic conditions when compared to the proposed action and no action alternative. However, impacts to air quality resulting from climatic variations, livestock grazing or grazing by wild ungulates would be difficult to decipher from one another.

3.2.2 Soils (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Current Conditions:

Soils in these allotments are developing in sandstone sediments and residuum of the Entrada, Wingate, and Kayenta Formations. Aeolian deposits and influences are common throughout the area. Depth to hard sandstone ranges from deep to very shallow (less than 10 inches). In the canyon bottoms and on benches and some mesa tops, soil textures may be fine sandy loam to loamy fine sand throughout the profile. Soil profiles with sandy clay loam, clay loam, and clay horizons are also present. Upland soils are often stony, particularly on the surface, and inclusions of flat-lying sandstone bedrock exposures are scattered throughout many of the soil map units. Ground cover and vegetation production is generally in static or slightly upward trends. There does not appear to be widespread accelerated erosion or sediment production.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 1: A formal land health assessment was conducted in this area by BLM in 2013. Public land health standard 1 was identified as “meeting” throughout both allotments.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: No direct impacts are anticipated under the No-Action alternative. Both allotments are categorized as “Maintain” allotments meaning there are no inherent resource conditions concerns or resource use conflicts. Land health assessments conducted in 2013 (Glade Park LHA) verify that land health standards are being met in both allotments.

Furthermore, BMPs common to all alternatives would be implemented as conditions warrant preserving resource conditions and sustainability of the permitted use type.

Cumulative Effects: The timing of use under the current grazing schedule would not be adjustable under varying climatic conditions. This could lead to reduced health and vigor of desirable vegetative species over time (length of renewed grazing permit, 10 years) under some climatic conditions. As a result, soils could become increasingly vulnerable to erosional processes and watershed function (and ultimately water quality) could be vulnerable to degradation due to increased erosion and sedimentation potential from the grazed landscape.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 5: The finding for public land health standard 1 is not anticipated to change from the current finding under continued grazing as outlined in the current grazing management plan.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Grazing activities can result in soil compaction and displacement that increase the likelihood of erosional processes, especially on steeper slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur naturally during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. Under the proposed action, the timing of livestock grazing could be modified to accommodate variability in climatic conditions. As a result, the health and vigor of desirable vegetation could be more easily preserved under different climatic conditions. Likewise, the potential for improved soil stability and watershed function would be maintained or improved.

Cumulative Effects: Improved watershed function and condition resulting from successful implementation of the proposed grazing management schedule could contribute incrementally towards potential watershed and water quality improvements under some climatic conditions when compared to the no action alternative.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 1: Public land health standard 1 would continue to be met under the proposed action. Soil health may improve under the more flexible management strategy outlined in the proposed action.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the No-Action alternative livestock grazing would not be permitted. As a result, potential negative impacts to soil resources from continued grazing would be eliminated.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative benefits to soil health and watershed function are anticipated to follow however, these benefits may be difficult to distinguish from benefits associated with natural variability in soils and watershed conditions.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 1: Public land health standard 1 would continue to be met under the No Grazing alternative.

3.2.3 Water (surface and groundwater, floodplains) (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Current conditions:

Surface Water Quality: The proposed action is situated entirely within Water Quality Control Division (WQCD) stream segment 4a of the Lower Gunnison River Basin. Affected portions of water quality stream segment 4a within the allotment boundaries are tributary to segment 6 of the Lower Gunnison River Basin. Stream segment 4a is defined as “All tributaries to the Gunnison River, including all wetlands which are not on national forest lands from the outlet of Crystal Reservoir to the confluence with the Colorado River, except for specific listings in the North Fork and Uncompahgre River sub-basins and in Segments 3, 4b, 4c, 5 through 10, 12 and 13.” The State has classified this stream segment as "Use Protected". The antidegradation review requirements in the Antidegradation Rule are not applicable to waters designated use-protected. For those waters, only the protection specified in each reach will apply. For this reach, minimum standards for physical and biological, inorganics and metals are listed in Table 1 (CDPHE-WQCC 2013).

Water quality stream segment 6 of the Lower Gunnison River Basin is defined as “Mainstem of Roubideau Creek from Potter Creek to the Gunnison River; mainstem of Escalante Creek from the national forest boundary to the Gunnison River; mainstem of Little Dominguez from the national forest boundary to Big Dominguez Creek; mainstem of Big Dominguez from the national forest boundary to the Gunnison River, mainstem of East Creek from the source to the Gunnison River.”. Segment 6 is not classified as “Use Protected” thus the Antidegradation Rule is applicable. For this reach, minimum standards for physical and biological, inorganics and metals are listed in Table 1 (CDPHE-WQCC 2013).

Principal drainages affected by the proposed action are Snyder Creek (Woodring Allotment), North East Creek (Thompson Allotment) and East Creek (Woodring and Thompson Allotments). North East Creek and East Creek are both perennial streams. North East Creek is tributary to East Creek which is a tributary to the Gunnison River near Whitewater, Colorado. Snyder Creek is an ephemeral stream also tributary to East Creek. Other unnamed ephemeral tributaries to East Creek, North East Creek and Snyder Creek are also located within the allotment boundaries. No springs or seeps have been identified on BLM lands within either of the allotments.

Table 1 identifies stream classifications and water quality standards for Lower Gunnison River Basin stream segments 4a and 6 as outlined in CDPHE, Regulation No. 35.

Table 1:	Designation	Classification	Numeric Standards		
Stream Segment			Physical and Biological	Inorganic (mg/l)	Metals (ug/l)

COGULG04a	Use Protected	Aq Life Warm 2 Recreation P Water Supply Agriculture	D.O.=5.0 mg/l pH=6.5-9.0 E.Coli=205/100ml	NH ₃ (ac/ch)=TVS Cl ₂ (ac)=0.019 Cl ₂ (ch)=0.011 CN=.005 S=0.002 B=0.75 NO ₂ =0.5 NO ₃ =10 Cl=250 SO ₄ =WS	As(ac)=340 As(ch)=0.02-10(Trec) Cd(ac/ch)=TVS CrIII(ac/ch)=TVS CrVI(ac/ch)=TVS Cu(ac/ch)=TVS Fe(ch)=WS(dis) Fe(ch)=1000(Trec) Pb(ac/ch)=TVS Mn(ch)=WS(dis) Mn(ac/ch)=TVS Hg(ch)=0.01(Tot) Ni(ac/ch)=TVS Se(ac/ch)=TVS Ag(ac)=TVS Ag(ch)=TVS Zn(ac/ch)=TVS
COGULG06		Aq Life Cold 1 Recreation E Agriculture	T=TVS(CS-II) oC D.O.=6.0 mg/l D.O.(sp)=7.0 mg/l pH=6.5-9.0 E.Coli=126/100ml	NH ₃ (ac/ch)=TVS Cl ₂ (ac)=0.019 Cl ₂ (ch)=0.011 CN=.005 S=0.002 B=0.75 NO ₂ =0.05 NO ₃ =100	As(ac)=340 As(ch)=7.6(Trec) Cd(ac)=TVS(tr) Cd(ch)=TVS CrIII(ac/ch)=TVS CrIII(ch)=100(Trec) CrVI(ac/ch)=TVS Cu(ac/ch)=TVS Fe(ch)=1000(Trec) Pb(ac/ch)=TVS Mn(ac/ch)=TVS Hg(ch)=0.01(Tot) Mo(ch)=160(Trec) Ni(ac/ch)=TVS Se(ac/ch)=TVS Ag(ac)=TVS Ag(ch)=TVS(tr) U(ac)=TVS U(ch)=16.8-301(Trec) Zn(ac/ch)=TVS

Table data from CDPHE-WQCC 2013

The CDPHE —Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report-2012 update to the 2010 305(b) Report was reviewed to determine the current status of assessment and determination of water quality within the project area. The Colorado Integrated Reporting Category (IR) value assigned to the assessment units in the —Status of Water Quality in Colorado – 2012 document was: IR category 4a for Stream segment 4a which is identified as fully supporting secondary contact recreation but not supporting aquatic life warm 2, water supply or agriculture. Stream Segment 6 was listed in IR category 1 and identified as fully supporting primary contact recreation, aquatic life cold 1 and agriculture. In Colorado, the majority of the assessed surface waterbodies fall into IR Categories 1, 2, and 3. In some cases, a complete assessment of all uses cannot be completed due to the lack of data, but the data that is available indicates that at least some of the uses that were assessed are fully supporting. An example would be instances where an aquatic life assessment has been completed, but analytical results to assess water supply uses were not available. These segments would fall into Category 2. Colorado places segments that lack topical and conclusive evidence regarding attainment of standards on the M&E list, which could fall into Category 2 if other uses are assessed or into Category 3 if no other uses are assessed. Also included in IR category 3 are those waterbodies that were not assessed or for which no data exists during the current 305(b) assessment cycle. Segments for which an EPA approved TMDL has been completed are placed in IR Category 4a. In some cases, segments that previously were classified as IR Category 4a, have been re-assessed and placed in Category 1, as they are now are in attainment of all classified uses. Regulation #93, Colorado’s section 303(d) list of impaired waters tabulates all those segments that require a TMDL, and tabulates all those waterbodies that are classified as IR Category 5. This fulfills requirements of section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act which requires that states submit to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency a list of those waters for which technology-based effluent limitations and other required controls are not stringent enough to implement water quality standards. If some impairment is suspected, but data are inconclusive or inadequate, the segment is placed on the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) list (CDPHE-WQCC. 2012).

The 2012 CDPHE-WQCC Regulation No. 93 Section 303d List of Impaired Waters and Monitoring and Evaluation List, was reviewed to determine if the affected stream segments were listed. No portion of the affected stream segments are identified as impaired or potentially impaired (CDPHE-WQCC. 2012b).

Groundwater quality:

The primary source of usable groundwater within the allotment boundaries is contained in shallow, localized alluvial deposits near surface water drainages as well as landslide and colluvial deposits adjacent steep slopes. However, no constructed groundwater wells exist within the allotment boundaries. Bedrock aquifers may be present within the allotments and would generally be represented by sandstone and fractured bedrock such as sandstone, shale and siltstone. However, Pre-Cambrian basement rocks (metamorphic) may also serve locally as a viable bedrock aquifer. Fine-grained rocks require significant fractures to transmit and store groundwater. The extent of fractures in many of the rocks is unknown and aquifer characteristic data are limited.

Water quality in the nearby Gunnison alluvial aquifer system is typically very good with most total dissolved solids (TDS) values below the secondary drinking water standard of 500 mg/L (Topper et.al., 2003). Wells completed in alluvial deposits have been reported to produce from 1 to 750 gpm averaging 39 gpm and typically yielded calcium sulfate bicarbonate type water (Brooks, 1985 and Topper et. al., 2003).

The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission promulgates regulation No. 41 entitled “The Basic Standards for Ground Water” under the authority to classify waters of the state and to establish water quality standards to support those classifications. The regulation establishes a system for classifying ground water and describing those classifications by use and quality. The standards, when applied to specific classes of ground water, become the baseline by which one can establish if water quality has been degraded or water use has been impaired or precluded. Regulation 41 outlines both numeric and narrative standards for water quality associated with different classifications. Water developments for livestock operations (typical on public lands within the planning area) fall under the “Agricultural Uses” definition which includes existing or potential future uses of ground water for the cultivation of soil, the production of crops, and/or the raising of livestock . Water developments for “Domestic Uses” are those existing or potential future uses of groundwater for household or family use, including, but not limited to: drinking, gardening, municipal, and/or farmstead uses (CDPHE, 2013b).

Status of Public Land Health Standard 5: Affected portions of stream segments 4a and 6 are not identified on the State’s 303d or M&E lists. Furthermore, BLMs LHA of the Glade Park area identified both of the allotments as meeting land health standard 5.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: No direct impacts are anticipated under the No-Action alternative. Both allotments are categorized as “Maintain” allotments meaning there are no inherent resource conditions concerns or resource use conflicts. Land health assessments conducted in 2013 (Glade Park LHA) verify that land health standards are being met in both allotments. Furthermore, BMPs common to all alternatives would be implemented as conditions warrant preserving resource conditions and sustainability of the permitted use type.

Cumulative Effects: The timing of use under the current grazing schedule would not be adjustable under varying climatic conditions. This could lead to reduced health and vigor of desirable vegetative species over time (length of renewed grazing permit, 10 years) under some climatic conditions. As a result, soils could become increasingly vulnerable to erosional processes and watershed function (and ultimately water quality) could be vulnerable to degradation due to increased erosion and sedimentation potential from the grazed landscape.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 5: The finding for public land health standard 5 is not anticipated to change from the current finding under continued grazing as outlined in the current grazing management plan.

Groundwater: The No-action alternative is not anticipated to have any impact on groundwater resources in either allotment.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the proposed action, the timing of livestock grazing could be modified to accommodate variability in climatic conditions. As a result, the health and vigor of desirable vegetation could be more easily preserved under different climatic conditions. Likewise, the potential for improved soil stability and watershed function would be maintained or improve which would be beneficial to water quality.

Cumulative Effects: Improved watershed function and condition resulting from successful implementation of the proposed grazing management schedule could contribute incrementally towards potential watershed and water quality improvements under some climatic conditions when compared to the no action alternative.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 5: Public land health standard 5 would continue to be met under the proposed action. Watershed health may improve under the more flexible management strategy outlined in the proposed action.

Groundwater: The proposed action is not anticipated to have any impact on groundwater resources in either allotment.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the No Action alternative grazing would be eliminated both allotments. Under this alternative potential negative impact to water quality from grazing would be eliminated. Livestock would no longer utilize forage within the affected watersheds thus watershed function and condition would not be altered in any way by future livestock grazing.

Cumulative Effects: Potential for cumulative impacts from continued livestock grazing would be eliminated.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 5: Public land health standard 5 would continue to be met under the No Livestock Grazing alternative.

Groundwater: The No-grazing alternative is not anticipated to have any impact on groundwater resources in either allotment.

3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.3.1 Invasive, Non-native Species#

Current Conditions:

This area was inventoried for noxious weeds during the 2003 field season by the BLM weed staff. Some of the area was not covered due to lack of access at the time crews were in the vicinity. In general, this bench is in good shape from a noxious weed standpoint. The road on the way in to the area had a few isolated patches of Russian knapweed, but this weed was not found on either allotment at the time it was surveyed. Potential weeds in the area based on their presence in the Glade Park area are houndstongue, common mullein, musk thistle, burdock, and Canada thistle. In the early 2000s, the permittee participated in a weed class sponsored by the BLM which covered the identification and control of weeds common to our office.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The no action (current permit) alternative would not be significant from a weed perspective since the area is in good general health. As long as BMPs for livestock grazing are followed, there is no reason for the area to remain in good health in perpetuity.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The proposed action, which allows for some flexibility in timing, would likely benefit the resource from a weed perspective because it is tied to the phenology of plants, timing, etc. Good communication between the permittee and the range/weed staff will also be beneficial from a weed perspective because both parties can be looking for and treating any weed infestations that may arrive to the area.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Livestock grazing and the development and maintenance of range improvements are a disturbance to the system, and therefore the potential exists for the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. However, these two practices are not the only vectors of weed introduction and spread.vehicles, recreationists, wildlife, wind, etc., also contribute to weed problems. Nonetheless, if there were no livestock grazing, one could assume that there could be a net decrease in the introduction and spread of weeds in the short, medium and long term.

3.3.2 Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Current conditions:

There are no records for special status fish and wildlife, or plants on the allotments. Species for whom habitat exists on the allotment include big free-tailed bat, fringed myotis, brewers sparrow, golden eagle, and Gunnison sage-grouse. The allotments contain 190 acres of proposed unoccupied critical habitat for Gunnison sage-grouse. Of these 190 acres the majority of the vegetation type is pinion-juniper with a few small (less than three acres) open patches of sage brush. Because of the pinion juniper over-story this area is unlikely to be utilized by Gunnison sage-grouse. However if pinion juniper removal occurred the area could become suitable winter range for the Gunnison sage-grouse. Roller-chopping was conducted in some areas of the allotments to reduce pinion and juniper encroachment, 8 acres of these projects were conducted within the mapped proposed unoccupied critical habitat.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

The no action alternative would be a continuation of current grazing practices. The allotments are currently meeting land health standards with a stable to increasing trend. Current management is not believed to be affecting special status wildlife therefore the no action alternative would not be expected to affect special status wildlife.

Cumulative Effects:

Livestock grazing and elk and deer use will be the main cumulative actions on the allotments. Cumulative impacts to special status species would be minimal over most the allotments and low-moderate in small, localized areas (water ponds, crossing trails) where both cattle and wildlife would congregate.

Public Land Health Standard for TES species:

The no action alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land health standard 4 for TES species.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Effects under the proposed action would be similar to the No Action alternative. Having the Adaptive Management would allow for adjustments in grazing dates due to growth conditions of key forage species and habitat conditions. This would allow for adjustments in grazing use and should benefit special status species through habitat condition improvement.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative effects would be similar to the No Action alternative except for the benefit of the Adaptive management.

Public Land Health Standard for TES species: The proposed action is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land health standard 4 for TES species.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the no grazing alternative negative impacts to special status species may occur if water sources are not maintained. Impacts as a result of reduced ground cover would be minimized as only wildlife grazing would be occurring on the allotment.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative effects of wildlife use would continue.

Public Land Health Standard for TES species: The no grazing alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land health standard 4 for TES species.

3.3.3 Vegetation (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Current conditions:

Upland vegetation on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments is comprised of eight ecological sites. Vegetation communities and plant species in these sites include:

ECOLOGICAL SITES, PLANT COMMUNITIES AND DOMINANT PLANT SPECIES

ECOLOGICAL SITE / WOODLAND TYPE	PLANT COMMUNITY APPEARANCE	PREDOMINANT PLANT SPECIES IN THE PLANT COMMUNITY
Semidesert Juniper	Juniper/Salt Desert Shrub	Utah juniper, shadscale, sagebrush, Salina wildrye, galleta, Indian ricegrass, squirreltail prickly pear cactus
Mountain Pinyon	Pinyon Woodland	Pinyon pine, antelope bitterbrush, needle-and-thread grass, prairie junegrass, Indian ricegrass, hairy golden aster, rocky mountain penstemon.
Deep Loam	Grassland	Big sagebrush, serviceberry, mutton grass, slender and western wheatgrasses, needle-and-thread grass, indian paintbrush, arrowleaf balsomroot and lupine.
Foothill Juniper	Pinon/Juniper Woodland	Pinon pine, Utah juniper, Indian ricegrass, needle-and-thread grass, western wheatgrass, galleta, bottlebrush squirreltail, wild buckwheats, hairy goldaster,
Semi-desert Loam	Grass/Shrub	Wyoming big sagebrush, fourwing saltrush, galleta grass, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, scarlet globemallow, lupine, prickly pear.
Loamy Foothill	Pinon/Juniper Woodland/Grassland	Wyoming big sagebrush, serviceberry, western wheatgrass, muttongrass, , Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, scarlet globemallow,
Brushy Loam	Mountain Shrub/Grass	Serviceberry, snowberry, oakbrush, mountain brome, and slender
Foothill Swale	Grassland	Western and slender wheatgrasses, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, yarrow, Indian paintbrush, globemallow.

There are two range study sites in the Thompson allotment and one in the Woodring allotment. Study site are shown on the allotment map in Appendix 1. Following is a summary of the trend study's in each allotment.

Thompson allotment: Monitoring data consists of a photo point and apparent trend in two different areas. At site A-3 comparison of plot and aspect photos from 1977,1987,1990, and 2002 show an increase in pinon/juniper cover with sagebrush and other mountain shrubs remaining static and a slight increase in herbaceous cover. Apparent Trend from 1987,1990 and 2002 show a static trend. In 2009 the area was treated with a rollerchopper to reduce the fuel loading of primarily pinon and juniper. Included in the project was reseeding the treated area with a mixture of grass, forb and shrub species. The Apparent Trend in 2011 was upward noting that the project was successful in removing the woodland species and the grass and forb cover

increased due to the seeding. Elk and deer use was noted. Overall the area has improved due to the treatment. It was noted several times that there is very little livestock use in the area. At site B-2 comparison of plot and aspect photos from the same years show the shrub cover has increased slightly with a slight decrease in herbaceous cover. Apparent Trend shows a static trend. It was noted that there is very little sign of livestock use but elk sign is present. The vegetative community on this allotment is static with a trend towards an increase in woody species and decrease in herbaceous plants. A treatment may be necessary to return to an earlier seral stage. The vegetative community on the allotment is healthy and in satisfactory condition.

Woodring Allotment: Monitoring data consists of a photo point and apparent trend. Comparison of plot and aspect photos from 1977,1980,1981 and 2002 shows herbaceous and shrub cover has remained static with an increase in pinon and juniper cover. Apparent trend in 1980 and 2002 showed an upward trend. In 2002 it was noted that plants had decent vigor for a drought year, seed heads were present, no recent livestock sign and that pinon and juniper cover is increasing. In the future a vegetative treatment may be necessary to maintain the herbaceous and shrub plant cover. The vegetative community on the allotment is healthy and in satisfactory condition.

In 2013, a Land Health Assessment was completed for the Thompson and Woodring Allotments for acres Meeting Land Health, Meeting with Problems and Not Meeting with the following results.

Thompson and Woodring Allotment 2012 Land Health Standard 3 Assessment

Allotment and #	Acres	Acres in each category		
		Meeting	Meeting With Problems	Not Meeting
Thompson #06148	5,282	5,282 100%	0	0
Woodring #26304	1,110	1,110 100%	0	0

Status of Public Land Health Standard 3: The Land Health Assessment Completed in 2013 concluded that Vegetative Communities were meeting Standard 3.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the No Action Alternative, vegetation conditions would be expected to remain static or upward depending on timing and levels of precipitation. Current grazing use is resulting in a static to upward trend based on Apparent Trend data and plot photos. It would be expected that Land Health Standards would continue to be within the Meeting category by continuing with the current authorized grazing use. The stocking rate for both allotments is moderate with much of the use occurring on private lands which has the more reliable water sources.

Cumulative Effects: Livestock grazing and elk and deer use will be the main uses on these allotments. Changes to livestock grazing may be needed if vegetative conditions are not being met in the critical Gunnison Sage Grouse habitat. Future fuel reduction or habitat

improvement projects would continue to create a mosaic of age classes within each vegetative type increasing the forage species for both livestock and wildlife. There was no adjustment in livestock use following the treatment and subsequent increase in forage. Cumulative impacts to vegetation would be minimal over most of the allotments except for small, localized areas (water ponds, crossing trails) where both cattle and wildlife would congregate.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 3: Public land health standard 3 would continue to be met under the continuation of the current grazing management.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Effects under the proposed action would be similar to the No Action alternative. Having the Adaptive Management would allow for adjustments in grazing dates due to growth conditions of key forage species. This would allow for adjustments in grazing use on forage plants and minimize grazing of forage plants that are behind in the annual growth rate. This should result in more vigorous plants and increased seed production.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative effects would be similar to the No Action alternative except for the benefit of the Adaptive management.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 3: Public land health standard 3 would continue to be met under the proposed action. Vegetative health may improve under the more flexible management strategy outlined in the proposed action.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Without livestock grazing vegetation conditions would likely remain in satisfactory condition.

Cumulative Effects: With no livestock grazing there would be no cumulative effect of livestock grazing with other actions because it would be removed. Maintenance of water and fence projects would no longer occur. Deer and elk use would continue in the allotments.

Finding on Public Land Health Standard 3: Under the no livestock grazing alternative Public land health standard 3 would continue to be met. Vegetative health would remain in good condition or improve.

3.3.4 Wetlands & Riparian Zones (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Current conditions:

Snyder Creek is within the Woodring allotment. No other perennial streams or intermittent streams supporting riparian vegetation are located within the allotments. Northeast Creek is just north of the Thompson allotment border. Snyder Creek, located on both private and public land, is entrenched within a deep canyon dissecting the allotment. A formal inventory or PFC assessment has not been made on Snyder Creek. It would be expected the riparian vegetation would be functioning as expected due to the absence of unexpected impacts. There is no livestock access to the creek.

Status of Public Land Health Standard 2, Riparian: Standard 2 for Public Land Health in Riparian systems requires riparian systems with both standing and running water to function properly. Properly functioning riparian systems have the ability to recover. A formal inventory or PFC assessment has not been made on Snyder Creek. It would be expected the riparian vegetation would be functioning as expected due to the absence of unexpected impacts

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The riparian area would be not directly impacted by the current authorized grazing since there is no access to Snyder Creek by livestock. Given that the Land Health Standards are being met in the surrounding watershed of Snyder Creek negative indirect impacts would be not be expected to Snyder Creek or Northeast Creek and have not been noted.

Cumulative Effects: Potential impacts to Snyder Creek would be grazing by livestock and wildlife. Minimal amounts of recreation occur in the area due to limited public access. Future vegetative treatments on public and private could increase sediment runoff in the short term but would increase vegetative cover in the long term.

Finding on Standard 2: Under the No Action (Current management) Alternative Standard #2 would continue to be met.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The riparian area would be not directly impacted by the proposed action since there is no access to Snyder Creek by livestock. Given that the Land Health Standards are being met in the surrounding watershed of Snyder Creek negative indirect impacts would be not be expected.

Cumulative Effects: Potential impacts to Snyder Creek would be grazing by livestock and wildlife. Minimal amounts of recreation occur in the area due to limited public access. Future vegetative treatments on public and private could increase sediment runoff in the short term but would increase vegetative cover in the long term.

Finding on Standard 2: Under the Proposed Action Standard #2 would continue to be met.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: There would be no direct or indirect impacts to riparian resources from livestock under the No Livestock Grazing alternative.

Cumulative Effects: There would be no new cumulative effects within or near the project area associated with livestock grazing under the No Livestock Grazing Alternative. Livestock grazing would not occur under this alternative.

Finding on Standard 2: There would be no new cumulative effects associated with livestock grazing under the No Livestock Grazing alternative. Livestock grazing would not occur under this alternative.

3.3.5 Wildlife (includes fish, aquatic and terrestrial) (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Current conditions:

Birds of Conservation Concern likely to occur on the allotments include brewer's sparrow, cassins finch, gray vireo, juniper titmouse and pinyon jay. The allotments overlap winter range for Turkey, and overall winter range for Elk but does not include critical or sever winter range for mule deer or elk. This area is likely to be transitional, fall and winter habitat for deer and elk. North East Creek, which borders the Thompson allotment contains Rainbow trout.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The no action alternative would be a continuation of current grazing practices. The allotments are currently meeting land health standards with a stable to increasing trend. Current management is not believed to be affecting fish and wildlife, including migratory birds therefore the no action alternative would be expected to have minimal effects.

Cumulative Effects: Livestock grazing and elk and deer use will be the main cumulative actions on the allotments. Cumulative impacts to fish and wildlife would be minimal over most the allotments and low-moderate in small, localized areas (water ponds, crossing trails) where both cattle and wildlife would congregate.

Public Land Health Standard 3 for plant and animal communities: The no action alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land heath standard 3 for fish and wildlife species.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Effects under the proposed action would be similar to the No Action alternative. Having the Adaptive Management would allow for adjustments in grazing dates due to growth conditions of key forage species and habitat conditions. This would allow for adjustments in grazing use and should benefit fish and wildlife through habitat condition improvement.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative effects would be similar to the No Action alternative except for the benefit of the Adaptive management.

Public Land Health Standard 3 for plant and animal communities: The proposed action is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land heath standard 3 for fish and wildlife species.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the no grazing alternative negative impacts to fish and wildlife species may occur if water sources are not maintained. Impacts as a result of reduced ground cover would be minimized as only wildlife grazing would be occurring on the allotment. In addition the potential for migratory bird nests to be impacted through physical disturbance by cattle would be eliminated, and competition for forage between grazing wildlife and cattle would be eliminated.

Cumulative Effects: Cumulative effects on the habitat from wildlife use would continue.

Public Land Health Standard 3 for plant and animal communities: The no grazing alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet land health standard 3 for fish and wildlife species.

3.4 HERITAGE RESOURCES AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

3.4.1 Cultural Resources

Current Conditions:

Range permit renewals are undertakings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. For the purposes of Section 106 review, a cultural resource assessment of allotments in the GJFO began in 1999 and was completed in 2009 reviewing existing site and survey information to compare against the results of other known literature reviews conducted for grazing evaluation. A Class I assessment synthesizing ten years of permit renewal evaluations of 240 grazing allotments managed by GJFO was completed for the BLM by Grand River Institute (GJFO-CRIR 1109-09; Conner and Darnell 2009) which updated and upgraded the previous 5 year grazing permit renewal synthesis (McDonald 2003).

The Thompson and Woodring allotments are in Physiographic Unit E along the lowland benches of the Gunnison River south of Whitewater (Conner and Darnell 2009:48). The physiographic unit has been modified from the 2003 synthesis, and now includes the Uncompahgre Plateau south of the Gunnison River to the Forest Service Boundary and west dividing Unit B and Unit E at the public private land boundary from the East and West Creek Divide, north to Snyder Flats and Ladder Canyon to the Colorado Canyons Monument Boundary. By 2009, twenty four allotments had been previously evaluated and approximately 40,400 acres or 18.5 percent of the allotments have had cultural resource inventory completed on BLM lands. Based on previous inventories conducted previous to the 2009 Class I, the average site/acre ratio in this area in Unit E is 1:43 (Conner and Darnell 2009:50).

Approximately 867 acres (14% total, 16% of BLM-managed) of the 6412-acre **Thompson** allotment has been surveyed by project numbers GJFO CRIR 114797-01, 17307-01, 1108-01, 7109-01, and 1010-03. Forty-three cultural resource sites and 16 isolated finds have been documented and evaluated for eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) within this allotment. Sites considered eligible for listing on the NRHP include: four prehistoric open camps (5ME16337, 5ME16343, 5ME16348, 5ME16838); three prehistoric open lithic sites (5ME15934, 5ME15935, 5ME16344); one open architectural site (5ME16331); and five sheltered camps (5ME16325, 5ME16818, 5ME16820, 5ME16833, 5ME16834). Sites considered “needs data” for listing on the NRHP include: two prehistoric open lithic sites (5ME16336, 5ME16339); four prehistoric open camps (5ME16326, 5ME16328, 5ME16329, 5ME16326); and an historic brush fence (5ME16330). Sites considered not eligible for listing on the NRHP include: nineteen prehistoric open lithic sites (5ME16327, 5ME16332, 5ME16335, 5ME16338, 5ME16340, 5ME16342, 5ME16346, 5ME16349, 5ME16350, 5ME16361, 5ME16817, 5ME16819, 5ME16824, 5ME16825, 5ME16826, 5ME16827, 5ME16835, 5ME16836, 5ME16837); one prehistoric sheltered camp (5ME16347); one historic trash scatter

(5ME16353); and one historic copper mine (5ME17382). All 16 isolated finds are considered not eligible for listing on the NRHP (5ME15949-15956, 5ME16333, 5ME16374-16378, 5ME16853, and 5ME16854).

Approximately 397 acres (19% total, 36% of BLM-managed) of the 2103-acre **Woodring** allotment has been surveyed by project numbers GJFO CRIRs 11497-01 and 17307-01. Four cultural resource sites and 13 isolated finds have been documented and evaluated for eligibility for listing on the NRHP within this allotment. Sites considered eligible for listing on the NRHP include two prehistoric lithic sites (5ME15931 and 5ME15932). One prehistoric open lithic site is considered “needs data” for listing on the NRHP (5ME15930) and one historic corral (5ME15933) is considered not eligible for listing on the NRHP.

The 2003 grazing permit renewal for the Thompson and Woodring allotments (DOI-BLM-CO-2003-0036-EA) recommended no additional Class III cultural inventory or monitoring.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Same as the Proposed Action

Cumulative Effects: Same as the Proposed Action

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The direct impacts that occur where livestock concentrate include trampling, chiseling, and churning of site soils, cultural features, and cultural artifacts, artifact breakage, and impacts from standing, leaning, and rubbing against historic structures, above-ground cultural features, and rock art. Indirect impacts include soil erosion, gullying, and increased potential for unlawful collection and vandalism from possible upgrades to roads and trails.

Cumulative Effects: Continued grazing may cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to historic properties.

Protective/Mitigation Measures: If, during the course of the ten-year permit, it is determined that grazing is negatively impacting a cultural resource, mitigation to reduce or eliminate impacts will be addressed through discussion between cultural resource and range staff, as well consultation with SHPO and the tribes.

To better assess impacts from grazing, an additional 30 acres of survey is recommended for the **Thompson** allotment in the course of the 10-year grazing permit. These surveys should focus on areas where cattle congregate, such as around stock ponds, seeps, trails, and springs. Survey should emphasize the recording in and around the three stock ponds for which no survey has been completed. No sites are recommended for further monitoring.

No further work is recommended for the **Woodring** allotment.

Standard stipulations to protect cultural resources are incorporated as part of the terms and condition of the permit. If newly discovered historic properties are identified on BLM lands as a

result of future surveys, the BLM will evaluate the sites. If the BLM determines that grazing activities will adversely impact any of these newly recorded historic properties mitigation will be identified and implemented in consultation with the Colorado SHPO. The livestock impacts to these historic properties will be assessed within the term period of the permit.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: The removal of cattle from the allotment would eliminate the direct impacts described in the proposed action and eliminate those potential or actual impacts from cultural resources in the allotment, thus having a beneficial effect. Access and use on the public land that occurs from private land in-holdings, hunting, motorized recreation and dispersed camping all are conditions that have the potential to directly or indirectly impact cultural resources. The effects of trampling and concentration of cattle on sensitive sites such as rock shelters would be eliminated.

Cumulative Effects: Removing livestock from the allotment would return only a small portion of the Field Office to land use patterns that predate the historic settlement period.

3.4.2 Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns

Current Conditions:

American Indian religious concerns are legislatively considered under several acts and Executive Orders, namely the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (PL 95-341), the Native American Graves Environmental Assessment Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (PL 101-601), and Executive Order 13007 (1996; Indian Sacred Sites). In summary, these require, in concert with other provisions such as those found in the NHPA and ARPA, that the federal government carefully and proactively take into consideration traditional and religious Native American culture and life and ensure, to the degree possible, that access to sacred sites, the treatment of human remains, the possession of sacred items, the conduct of traditional religious practices, and the preservation of important cultural properties are considered and not unduly infringed upon. In some cases, these concerns are directly related to “historic properties” and “archaeological resources”. In some cases elements of the landscape without archaeological or other human material remains may be involved. Identification of these concerns is normally completed during the land use planning efforts, reference to existing studies, or via direct consultation. The Grand Junction Field Office consults with the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uinta and Ouray Agency, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe for grazing permit renewals annually. Previous consultations for grazing permit renewals have included information on the permit renewal process and maps showing the allotment locations, requesting the tribes to identify issues and areas of concern. In addition general annual project consultation for other projects in the area has been conducted with the same tribes. Concerns identified included eradication of sage, impacts to medicinal plants, and general modern intervention in the natural processes. The Ute have a generalized concept of spiritual significance that is not easily transferred to Western models or definitions. As such the BLM recognizes that they have identified sites that are of concern because of their association with Ute occupation of the area as part of their traditional lands. Grazing is a practice that is not part of the pre-contact Ute culture although many modern Ute are involved either directly or by occupation in livestock grazing.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Same as the Proposed Action

Cumulative Effects: Same as the Proposed Action

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The direct impacts that occur where livestock concentrate include trampling, chiseling, and churning of site soils, cultural features, and cultural artifacts, artifact breakage, and impacts from standing, leaning, and rubbing against historic structures, above-ground cultural features, and rock art. Indirect impacts include soil erosion, gulying, and increased potential for unlawful collection and vandalism from possible upgrades to roads and trails.

Cumulative Effects: Continued grazing may cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to unrecorded historic properties. Changes in grazing practices or location of new improvements, or temporary installation of improvements such as salt could affect cultural resources that are important to the Ute Tribes.

Protective/Mitigation Measures: If sites are reevaluated by other project survey or identified as new survey is conducted in the allotment further consultation with the Ute Tribes will be conducted.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Removing grazing from the allotment may have a beneficial effect on cultural resources. Direct impacts from grazing are well documented, especially in areas where cattle congregate, and along with indirect impacts from removal of vegetation and subsequent erosion the impacts to cultural resources would no longer be attributable to grazing if the No Action alternative was selected. It would not affect the impacts to the resource that are occurring from wildlife, specifically elk, using the area for grazing and the similar effect they have on both vegetation and soil.

Cumulative Effects: If this alternative was selected it would increase the acreage where no grazing impacts would be attributed to cattle.

3.4.3 Social, Economic, Environmental Justice

Current Conditions:

The issuance of a ten year grazing permit allows for the continuance of livestock grazing on the Thompson and Woodring Allotments which contributes to the operation of the grazing permittee. Permitted grazing use on public lands is a large factor in keeping the local ranching families and industry viable. This in turn has an effect in maintaining the stability of local economies with this economic effect of ranching generally increasing as community size decreases. Small communities in the planning area are much more economically dependent on ranching and agriculture than larger communities with more diverse economic bases.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The No Action Alternative would be the same as the Proposed Action for Social, Economics.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: The proposed action would provide for maintaining and improving conditions for vegetative and soil conditions and meet the needs of the grazing permittee.

Cumulative Effects: The issuance of a 10 year grazing permit to this permittee as well as other permittees in the area would provide economic stability to the grazing permittees as well as the agricultural industry in the area.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Not issuing a grazing permit would cause a major impact to the grazing permittee by eliminating an area for livestock grazing. Removing this grazing area would force the permittee to pursue other options which would have greater economic impacts to their operation. These options include pursuing private lands for grazing, which are limited or feeding hay. Feeding hay can be very expensive and a major impact to livestock producers.

Cumulative Effects: The additional economic impact to the livestock operator by not issuing a grazing permit could result in the termination of the livestock operation. This termination would have economic impacts to the local and regional economy. In addition, the elimination of a grazing operation could force the permittee to seek other options for his private property such as subdividing for development which can be more of an economic return.

Environmental Justice

The requirements for environmental justice review were established by Executive Order 12898 (February 11, 1994). That order declared that each Federal agency is to identify “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environment effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low income populations.”

According to Census 2010, the only minority population of note in the impact area is the Hispanic community of Mesa County. Persons describing themselves as Hispanic or Latino represented 13.3 percent of the population, considerably less than the Colorado state figure for the same group, 20.7 percent. Blacks, American Indians, Asians and Pacific Islanders each accounted for around 1 percent of the population, below the comparable state figure in all cases. The census counted 11.8 percent of the Mesa County population as living in families with incomes below the poverty line, compared to 12.6 percent for the entire state. Both minority and low income populations are dispersed throughout the county.

Cumulative Effects: Both minority and low income populations are dispersed throughout the county. Therefore, no minority or low-income populations would suffer disproportionately high and adverse effects as a result of any of the alternatives, even when combined with the past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions.

3.4.4 Wastes, Hazardous or Solid

Current Conditions:

Hazardous and solid wastes are not a part of the natural environment.

No Action

The impacts would be the same as for the proposed action, which is continuation of current grazing permit.

Cumulative Effects: Same as for the proposed action.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: There should be little or no direct indirect impacts from the proposed action. Potential sources of hazardous wastes would be from the use of herbicides/pesticides, and fuels and lubricants used for machinery. Standard lease terms require adherence to applicable state and federal laws, which would include the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA.) Improper disposal of solid wastes is prohibited by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA.) Illegal disposal of hazardous or solid wastes has generally not been an issue with grazing permits, at least in the more recent past. The rare, isolated instance of spilled or abandoned wastes would be handled in accordance with the Grand Junction Field Office Oil and Hazardous Materials Incident Contingency Plan.

Cumulative Effects: Given the rarity of incidents involving spilled and abandoned hazardous wastes, cumulative effects would likely be essentially immeasurable.

Protective/Mitigation Measures: None required. Lease stipulations and hazmat response capabilities adequately provide adequate mitigation.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: There would be no direct or indirect effects.

Cumulative Effects: There would be no cumulative effects.

3.5 LAND RESOURCES

3.5.1 Recreation

Current Conditions:

Recreation in the area consists primarily of big game and mountain lion hunting in the fall and winter. Antler shed hunting occurs in the area during the early spring. A limited amount of OHV, equestrian and hiking use also occurs in the area. Public access to the area is limited by adjacent private property and the area's remoteness and rugged topography. The Snyder Flats Hunter Access Road traverses the allotments and is open during fall hunting seasons, providing the primary public access route into the area. The Thompson allotment is within Area 6 of the Bangs Canyon Special Recreation Management Area which is managed primarily for

undeveloped recreation opportunities. The GJFO currently administers one Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for big game hunting in the area to Biggerstaff Outfitters, and six SRPs for mountain lion hunting in the area to Alamo Outfitters, Backcountry Outfitters, Biggerstaff Outfitters, Cat Track Outfitters, Ladder Canyon Outfitters, Mark Davies Outfitting, Travis Kruckenburg Outfitting. The recreation activities noted above have coexisted with livestock grazing in the area with no reported conflicts.

No Action Alternative:

Impacts:

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under this alternative there would be no changes to the current grazing regimen, and effects on recreation would be similar to those identified for the proposed action except that the grazing period would not change due to adaptive management decisions.

Cumulative Effects: Recreation would continue to occur in the area, following general recreation trends and management strategies in the area. Recreation use in this area may increase or decrease depending on the management decisions made in the GJFO and D-E NCA Resource Management Plan revisions.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under this alternative livestock grazing and recreation would continue to coexist in the area as it has historically, with the potential for slight changes in the annual timeframes when livestock grazing activities would occur. The fall grazing period would overlap with big game hunting seasons, creating the potential for direct interactions between hunters and livestock, potentially diminishing desired hunting experiences and/or success rates if livestock alters game species behavior.

Cumulative Effects: Recreation would continue to occur in the area, following general recreation trends and management strategies in the area. Recreation use in this area may increase or decrease depending on the management decisions made in the GJFO and D-E NCA Resource Management Plan revisions.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under this alternative livestock grazing would no longer occur in the area and recreation opportunities would generally be enhanced by the absence of livestock in the area. The absence of maintenance of stock ponds and access routes could negatively affect hunting opportunities if water sources for game are reduced and/or access for hunters becomes more difficult

Cumulative Effects: Recreation would continue to occur in the area, following general recreation trends and management strategies in the area. Recreation use in this area may increase or decrease depending on the management decisions made in the GJFO and D-E NCA Resource Management Plan revisions. The lack of maintenance of existing range developments and access routes, and the absence of seasonal livestock use would likely alter the character of the area over the long-term as those features, and the landscape in general returned to a more natural state.

3.5.2 Range Management

Current Conditions:

The grazing schedule outlined in the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives has been in place since 2003. Based on ongoing monitoring and a Land Health Assessment discussed in previous sections this grazing schedule is meeting land health standards, resulting in static to upward rangeland trends and meeting the needs of the permittee. Since 2003 the permittee has utilized all 132 active AUM's each year except for 2013 in which voluntarily non-use was taken due to drought conditions.

The current and proposed authorized grazing schedule is as follows:

Allotment/#	Category	Livestock #/Kind	Grazing Period	%PL	Type Use	AUMS
Thompson #06148	Maintain	85 Cattle 85 Cattle	05/20 - 06/20 10/20 - 11/21	30	Active	54
Woodring #26304	Maintain	86 Cattle 70 Cattle	05/05 – 06/01 10/15 – 11/15	50	Active	75

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the No Action Alternative, issuance of the new permit would be the same grazing schedule with the same terms and conditions as the current permit. The current permit expired 09/30/2013 and was renewed under the Appropriations Act. The term of the new permit would be from 10/01/2014 to 09/30/2024. Rangeland conditions would be expected to remain static or upward.

Rangeland monitoring would continue with the intent of measuring any impacts from the current livestock management to vegetative resources or changes in general. If deemed necessary a follow-up land health assessment may be completed if additional resource issues or concerns should arise.

Cumulative Effects: Grazing use in the Thompson and Woodring allotments would continue under the same management and terms and conditions as the expiring permit. Currently livestock grazing and wildlife use levels are compatible and resulting in satisfactory land health.

Proposed Action:

Direct and Indirect Effects: Under the proposed action the new permit would involve the same grazing schedule as the current permit but would have additional terms and conditions including provisions for Adaptive Management and Temporary Nonuse. Adaptive management would provide for more flexibility in grazing dates to accommodate seasonal temperature and precipitation variations, drought and resource concerns. Greater flexibility would also be provided to the permittee. Temporary Nonuse if approved by the Authorized Officer would provide additional AUM's on a temporary basis as long as there is no significant impact to other resources and utilization levels are not exceeded.

Cumulative Effects: The proposed action would continue to authorize a level of livestock grazing that has been authorized since 2003 and is not expected to create additional cumulative effects. Adaptive Management will provide flexibility in grazing dates to accommodate changes in resource conditions and uses. Rangelands within the two allotments are achieving Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado. Currently livestock grazing and wildlife use levels are compatible and resulting in satisfactory land health. Livestock grazing, wildlife use and recreation would continue as the main combined effects over the ten year term of the permit. Due to responsible management of grazing and recreation activities, negative cumulative effects are not expected and rangeland conditions are expected to maintain or improve.

No Livestock Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Cumulative Effects: Without livestock grazing, there might be an increase in available forage for wildlife. This alternative would also likely cause a financial hardship on the permittee as it would require finding other areas to graze and/or fencing of the private land within the allotment.

Range improvement projects would no longer be maintained by the permittee and would become non-functional unless the BLM performed the required maintenance. If the No Livestock Grazing Alternative is chosen, then there would be no action of livestock grazing for cumulative effects. Actions associated with recreation would continue.

CHAPTER 4 - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

4.1 LIST OF PREPARERS AND PARTICIPANTS

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW

NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
Christina Stark	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	Riparian and Wetlands, Prime and Unique Farmlands, Environmental Justice
Julia Christiansen	Natural Resource Specialist	Surface Management and Permitting for Oil & Gas
Natalie Clark	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
Michelle Bailey Chris Pipkin	Outdoor Recreation Supervisor Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access, Transportation, VRM, Wilderness, ACECs
Andy Windsor	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness,
Scott Clarke	Range Management Specialist	Vegetation, Range
Jacob Martin	Range Management Specialist	Forestry
Jim Dollerschell	Range Management Specialist	Wild Horse & Burro Act
David Scott Gerwe	Geologist	Geology, Paleontology
Alan Kraus	Hazardous Materials Specialist	Hazardous Materials
Robin Lacy	Realty Specialist	Land Tenure/Status, Realty Authorizations
Heidi Plank	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Terrestrial & Aquatic Wildlife
Anna Lincoln	Ecologist	Land Health Assessment, Range Ecology, Special Status Plant Species
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Soils, Air Quality, Water Quality, Hydrology, Water Rights
Mark Taber	Range Management Specialist	Weed Coordinator, Invasive, Non-Native Species
Jeff Phillips	Fire Ecologist Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Ecology, Fuels Management

4.2 TRIBES, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

Ron Tipping – Grazing Permittee

A consultation letter dated April 14, 2014 was sent to the following tribes notifying them of this permit renewal.

Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservations

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Southern Ute Tribe

CHAPTER 5 - REFERENCES

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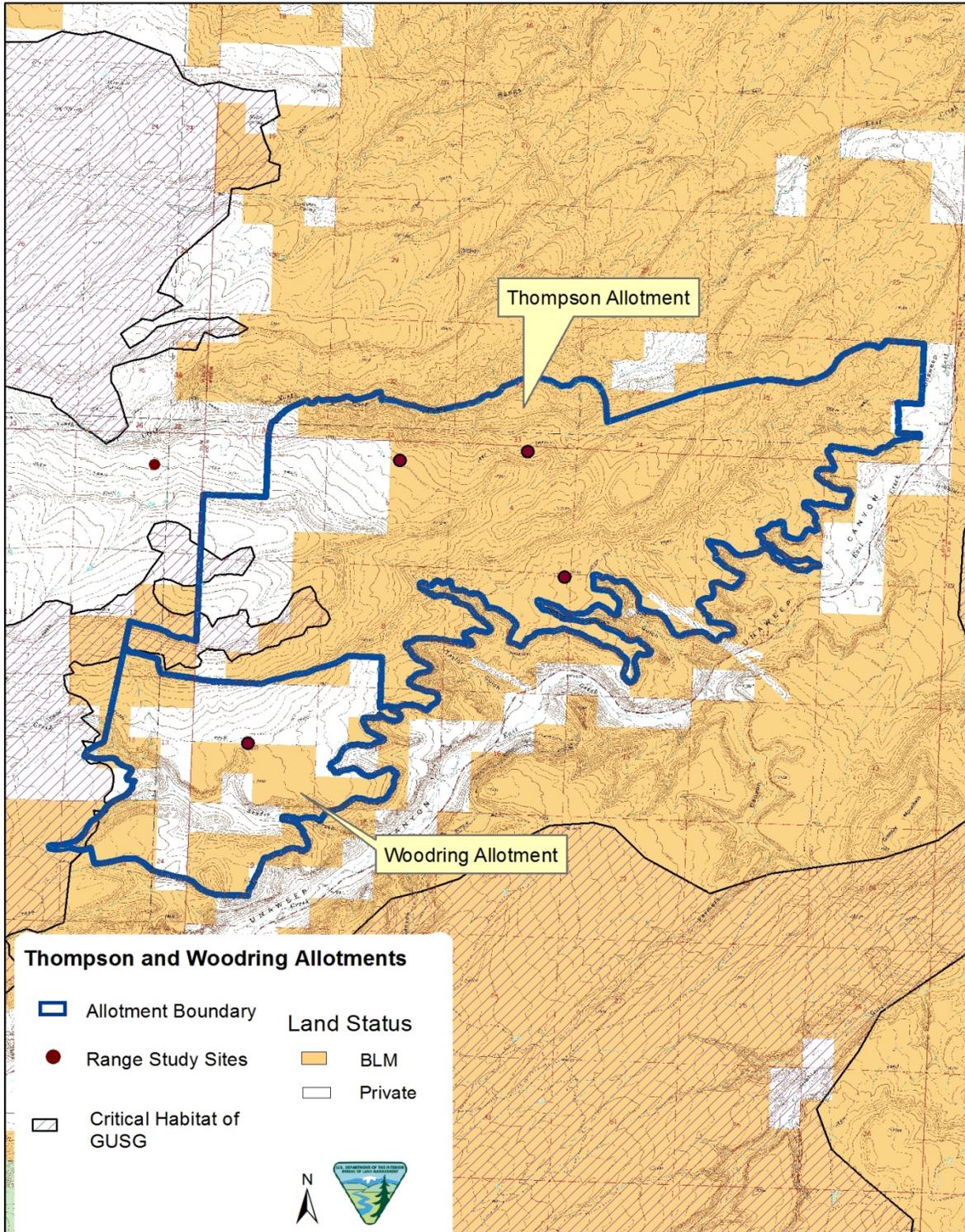
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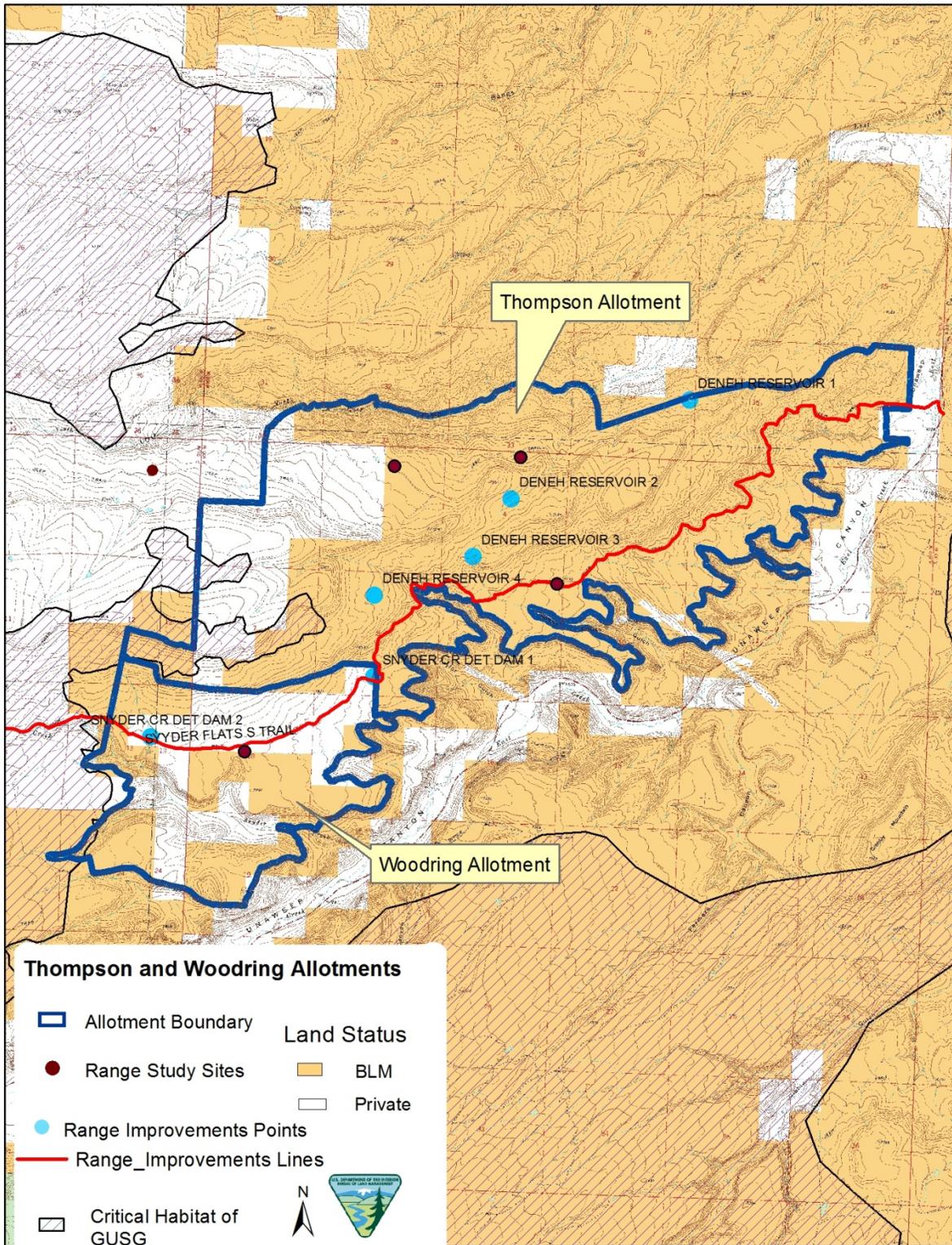
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Appendix 1 Maps

Map #1 Thompson and Woodring Allotments

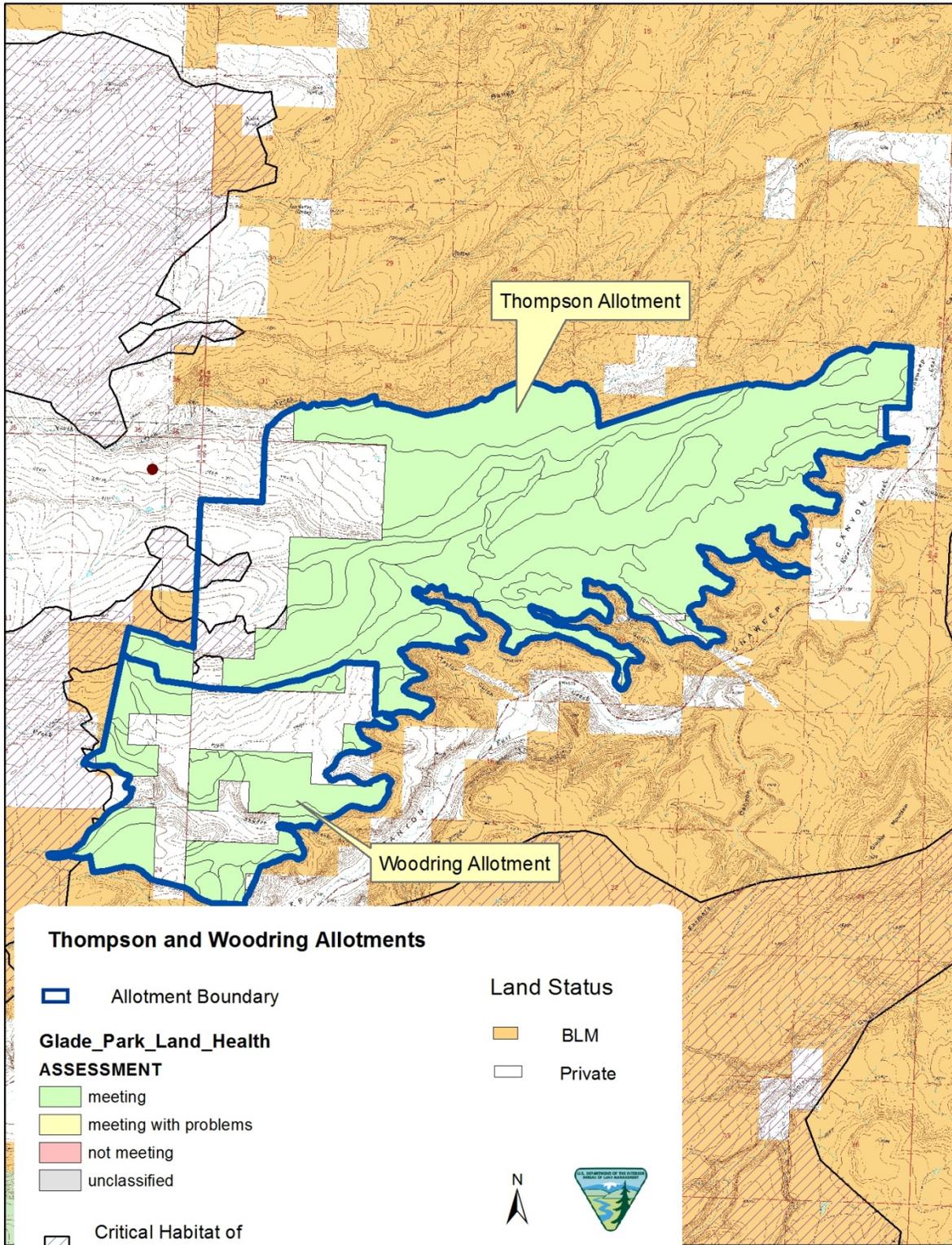


Map #2 Range Improvements



Grand Junction Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506

Map #3 Land Health Assessment



Grand Junction Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

10 Year Permit Renewal for Thompson and Woodring Allotments DOI-BLM-CO-130-2013-0033-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR §1508.27, I have determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Land Management prepared an Environmental Assessment which analyzed the effects of re-authorization of Grazing Permit #0507042 for Chris and David Long on the Crow Bottom Allotment to determine impacts and mitigation required to continue to allow grazing on public lands in a responsible manner that is compatible with Standards for Public Land Health, other resource uses and objectives, and in compliance with grazing regulations under 43 CFR 4110.1(a) (1). In order to graze livestock on public land, the livestock permittee must hold a valid grazing permit

The EA identified a proposed action which proposes to modify the grazing schedule from 56 cattle 01/16 – 04/30 = 193 AUMs to 81 cattle 02/01 – 04/01 = 160 AUMs. This change would have the cattle off the allotment one month earlier than the current permit and reduce AUMs from 193 to 160 AUMs. An additional 14 days to April 15 may be approved by the Authorized Officer in years when forage and water are plentiful and the 160 AUMs not exceeded.

RATIONALE:

The analysis demonstrates that the proposed action would have negligible impacts to the natural resources. The proposed grazing program is at carrying capacity with a grazing plan that would have the cattle off the allotment in early spring to allow for growth and reproduction of key forage species, and continues a rangeland monitoring program which has the capability of measuring the impacts of grazing. The proposed action is in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4130.2.

Intensity

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the continuation of grazing on the Crow Bottom Allotment relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The grazing program is expected to benefit the soil and vegetation resource and the resources on which health of these resources is based.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action is not expected to impact public health and safety.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The proposed action would not significantly impact the unique characteristics of the historical or cultural resources on the allotments. There are no significant impacts to parklands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or wild and scenic rivers within the project area. Riparian vegetation is expected to be maintained or improve under this decision. There are no municipal water supplies in the project area.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The proposed action is expected to improve the quality of the human environment by improving the resources. The effects are relatively well understood by the academic and practicing communities.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

Livestock grazing has a long history in the region and poses no unique or unknown risks.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

This decision is like one of many that have previously been made and will continue to be made by BLM responsible officials regarding livestock grazing on public lands. The decision is within the scope of the Resource Management Plan and is not expected to establish a precedent for future actions. The decision does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

There are no significant cumulative effects on the environment, either when combined with the effects created by past and concurrent projects, or when combined with the effects from natural changes taking place in the environment or from reasonably foreseeable future projects.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

Cultural inventories have been conducted to establish potential impacts from livestock grazing. Potential impacts are mitigated when identified. No adverse impacts have been identified for the proposed action at this time.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

No impacts were brought forward that would indicate any adverse impacts to endangered or threatened species or its habitats. A No Effect determination was made.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

This decision complies with other Federal, State, or local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: 1) the implementation of the Proposed Action would not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the "Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," for the Grand Junction Resource Area (January 1987); (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plans; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR '1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

NAME OF PREPARER: Jim Dollerschell

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Christina Stark

DATE: 7-29-14

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL



Field Manager
Grand Junction Field Office

7-29-14

Date

4160 Sec. 3 (LLCON03400)
Allotment #16604

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DECISION

CERTIFIED MAIL NO.
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

David and Chris Long
57609 OE Road
Collbran, CO 81624

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Long,

Your current Grazing Permit for the Crow Bottom Allotment expires 9/30/13. The proposed action would renew Grazing Permit #0507042 for David and Chris Long on the allotment for a period of 10 years. The term of the new Grazing Permit will be October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2023. We have completed the environmental review of your allotment and prepared a new grazing permit. The grazing period for the Crow Bottom Allotment was changed from January 16 – April 30 to February 1 - April 1 and AUMs reduced from 198 to 160 AUMs.

Enclosed is your new grazing permit which will be effective for the period October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2023. Please sign, date and return **both copies** to this office. I will return a copy for your records following approval.

On the basis of the information contained in the EA (DOI-BLM-CO-134-2013-0004-EA), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: 1) the implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the “Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan,” for the Grand Junction Resource Area (*January 1987*) and the “Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision,” for the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness (*September 2004*); (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plans; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Therefore in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.2, it is my proposed decision to issue Grazing Permit #0507042 for the period of October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2023, with the following schedule, Permitted Use and Terms and Conditions.

New Grazing Schedule:

Allotment/#	Livestock #/Kind	Grazing Period	%PL	Type Use	AUMS
Crow Bottom 16604	81 C	02/01 – 04/01	100	A	160

%PL is the percentage of BLM lands used for grazing within the allotment.

AUM-The amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow/calf pair or its equivalent for a period of one month.

Allotment Summary:

Allotment	Federal Acres	AUMs		
		Active	Suspended	Total
Crow Bottom	3,736	160	0	160

Terms and Conditions:

1. Livestock grazing utilization levels on key forage species (Indian ricegrass, blue grasses, squirreltail grass, perennial wheat grasses, ryegrasses, sand dropseed grass, needle and thread grass, galleta grass, winter fat, sedges, shadscale, serviceberry and snowberry) shall not exceed 50%. If utilization levels are approaching allowable use, livestock will be required to be moved to areas within the allotment that are not approaching allowable use levels. When such areas are not available, livestock will be removed from the allotment when allowable use rates are met. Management adjustments will be made the following year to avoid recurring instances of over utilization. On years when livestock are allowed to graze an additional two weeks to April 15, utilization levels will not exceed 40%.
2. Livestock use shall not exceed an average of 30% on native woody vegetation (willows, cottonwoods and aspen) in riparian areas.
3. Use supervision checks by BLM staff will be conducted to assure grazing compliance. The Grand Junction Field Office will use utilization checks, collect trend data, and evaluate allotments whenever necessary. Evaluation of monitoring will be used to make appropriate changes to grazing management in order to protect land health.
4. This permit is subject to change if results from a land health or riparian proper functioning condition assessment conclude that the Standards for Rangeland Health or Riparian Health are not being met and livestock grazing is determined to be the cause.
5. To allow for variations in climate, plant growth conditions, and flexibility in permittee livestock operations, the BLM may adjust the authorized grazing period by up to two

weeks at the end of the permitted grazing period if rangeland conditions are determined by the Authorized Officer to be satisfactory for livestock use and AUMs are not exceeded.

6. Salting and mineral blocks will be placed at least one quarter (1/4) mile or further from water sources and riparian areas. Less than one quarter mile may be allowed if terrain does not allow for one quarter mile distance and approved by the BLM AO.
7. All new range improvement projects will be in accordance with BLM standards.
 - Example - wildlife escape ramps are required in water troughs under BLM standards.
8. Water source areas will be monitored by the permittee and BLM for infestation of noxious weeds. The permittee and BLM will coordinate to treat and eradicate any weed infestations should they occur.
9. Upon approval by the Authorized Officer (AO), the permittee will have the option to apply for more cattle over a shorter time period as long as AUMs are not exceeded in a grazing season and use is within the season of use.
10. Temporary Non-renewable (TNR) or Adaptive Use may be approved by the authorized BLM officer if additional forage, such as annuals are deemed available within the authorized grazing period and the vast majority of the grazing area is meeting Land Health Standards.
11. Maintenance of all structural rangeland improvements (RI) and other projects are the responsibility of the permittee to which they have been assigned. Maintenance would be in accordance with cooperative agreements and/or range improvement permits (43 CFR 4120.3-1). Failure to maintain assigned projects in a satisfactory/functional condition may result in withholding authorization to graze livestock until maintenance is completed. Construction of new RI on BLM administered lands is prohibited without approval from the authorized officer.
 - a. The BLM authorized officer will be contacted prior to any range project maintenance activity involving soil surface disturbance. An example includes but not limited to cleaning of ponds with heavy equipment, which would involve soil surface disturbance. All heavy equipment will be washed and free of debris before entering BLM lands.
12. Permittees or lessees shall provide reasonable access across private and leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands related to grazing administration.
13. Grazing will be deferred on new vegetation treatments and rehabilitated burned areas to allow two growing seasons of rest unless otherwise authorized. Coordination and cooperation will occur with the permittee prior to any treatment.

14. The permittee shall submit an Actual Use form within 15 days after completing their annual grazing use as outlined in 43 CFR 4130.3-2(d).
15. It is the responsibility of the Permittee to inform all persons associated with work on federal lands subject to the permit that they would be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts.
16. Surface disturbing range improvements associated with the allotment (e.g., fences, ponds) are subject to compliance requirements under Section 106 and will undergo standard cultural resources inventory and evaluation procedures.
17. If newly discovered cultural resources are identified during project implementation, work in that area should stop and the BLM Authorized Officer should be notified immediately (36 CFR 800.13).
18. Notify the Authorized Officer (AO) by telephone and with written confirmation, immediately upon discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Activities would stop in the immediate area of the find, and the discovery would be protected for 30 days or until notified to proceed in writing by the AO.
19. During dry and drought conditions adjustments will be made that involve reduction of AUMs or non-use as stated under Code of Federal Regulations 4110.3-2 “Decreasing permitted use” (a) Permitted use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, And 4110.3-3 “Implementing reductions in permitted use” (a) After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected permittee or lessee,...., reductions of permitted use shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision of the authorized officer. (b) When the authorized officer determines that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on the public lands require immediate protection because of conditions such as drought, fire,, the authorized officer shall close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or modify authorized grazing use notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section.

Additional Standard Terms and Conditions can be found on the signature page of the Grazing Permit.

Rationale

Under the proposed grazing program, cattle will use the allotment during the winter and early spring. The cattle will be moved off the allotment by April 1 or 15 allowing key perennial plants sufficient time for growth and reproduction.

The Grand Junction Field Office will continue to monitor rangeland conditions on the allotment and as stated in the Terms and Conditions of the permit: use supervision checks by BLM staff will be conducted to assure grazing compliance. The Grand Junction Field Office will use

utilization checks, collect trend data, and evaluate the allotment whenever necessary. Evaluation of monitoring will be used to make appropriate changes to grazing management in order to protect land health. This permit is subject to change if results from a land health or riparian proper functioning condition assessment conclude that the Standards for Rangeland Health or Riparian Health are not being met and livestock grazing is determined to be the cause. Under the Grand Junction Field Office rangeland monitoring program and terms and conditions of the proposed grazing permit, rangeland conditions are expected to maintain or improve.

Issuance of the permit is necessary for the continuance of the livestock operation of the grazing permittee. Analysis of the proposed action has concluded impacts to the human environment are not significant. The proposed action is in conformance with the Colorado Standards for Rangeland Health as discussed in the environmental assessment. Monitoring of the rangeland will continue. Based on these results, the livestock management identified in the proposed action is appropriate.

Authority

The authority for this proposed decision is contained in Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §4130, §4160, and §4180 which in part state:

§4130.2(a) "Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans. Permits or leases shall specify the types and levels of use authorized, including livestock grazing, suspended use, and conservation use. These grazing permits or leases shall also specify terms and conditions pursuant to §§ 4130.3, 4130.3-1, and 4130.3-2."

§4130.2(d) "The term of grazing permit or leases authorizing livestock grazing on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management shall be 10 years unless....." (Unless circumstances require the permit to be less than 10 years).

§4130.3 "Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve the management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part."

§4160.1 (b) "Proposed decisions shall state the reasons for the action and shall reference the pertinent terms, conditions and the provisions of applicable regulations."

§4180.1(a) "Watersheds are in, or are making significant progress toward, properly functioning physical condition, including their upland, riparian-wetland, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance with climate and landform and maintain or improve water quality, water quantity, and timing and duration of flow."

Protest and/or Appeal

Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other interested public may protest a proposed decision under Sec. 43 CFR 4160.1 and 4160.2, in person or in writing to Grand Junction Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506, within 15 days after receipt of such decision. The protest, if filed, should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) why the proposed decision is in error.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.3 (a), in the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.3 (b) upon a timely filing of a protest, after a review of protests received and other information pertinent to the case, the authorized officer shall issue a final decision.

Any applicant, permittee, lessee or other person whose interest is adversely affected by the final decision may file an appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4.470 and 43 CFR 4160.3 and 4160.4. The appeal must be filed within 30 days following receipt of the final decision, or within 30 days after the date the proposed decision becomes final. The appeal may be accompanied by a petition for a stay of the decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.471 and 4.479, pending final determination on appeal. The appeal and petition for a stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer, as noted above. The appellant must serve a copy of the appeal by certified mail on the Office of the Field Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, 755 Parfet Street Suite 151, Lakewood, Colorado, 80215 and person(s) named (43 CFR 4.421(h)) in the Copies sent to: section of this decision.

The appeal shall clearly and concisely state the reasons why the appellant thinks the final decision is in error, and otherwise complies with the provisions of 43 CFR 4.470.

Should you wish to file a petition for a stay, see 43 CFR 4.471 (a) and (b). In accordance with 43 CFR 4.471(c), a petition for a stay must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

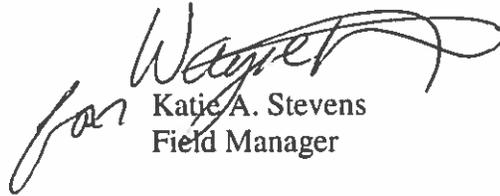
- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
- (2) The likelihood of the appellants success on the merits.
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.1(a) a copy of this proposed decision shall be served on any affected applicant, permittee or lessee, and any agent and lien holder of record, who is affected by the proposed actions, by certified mail or personal delivery. Copies of this proposed decision shall also be sent to any interested public who has requested involvement in a specific allotment.

If you have any questions concerning the above matter please contact Scott Clarke of this office at (970) 244-3017.

If you have any questions concerning the above matter please contact Jim Dollerschell of this office at (970) 244-3016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie A. Stevens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Katie A. Stevens
Field Manager

Enclosure
Grazing Permit (Two Copies)

Cc: Western Watersheds Project
Wyoming Office
P.O. Box 1160
Pinedale, WY 82941