

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
GRAND JUNCTION Field Office
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GRAND JUNCTION, CO 81506**

DOCUMENTATION OF LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE AND NEPA ADEQUACY

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-130-2014-0027-DNA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER : Forrest Towns Permit #0507158, Hittle Place Individual Allotment #06841

PROJECT NAME: Hittle Place Individual Allotment Grazing Permit Renewal

PLANNING UNIT: Grand Junction Field Office – Allotment located near Collbran, Colorado

APPLICANT: Forrest Towns

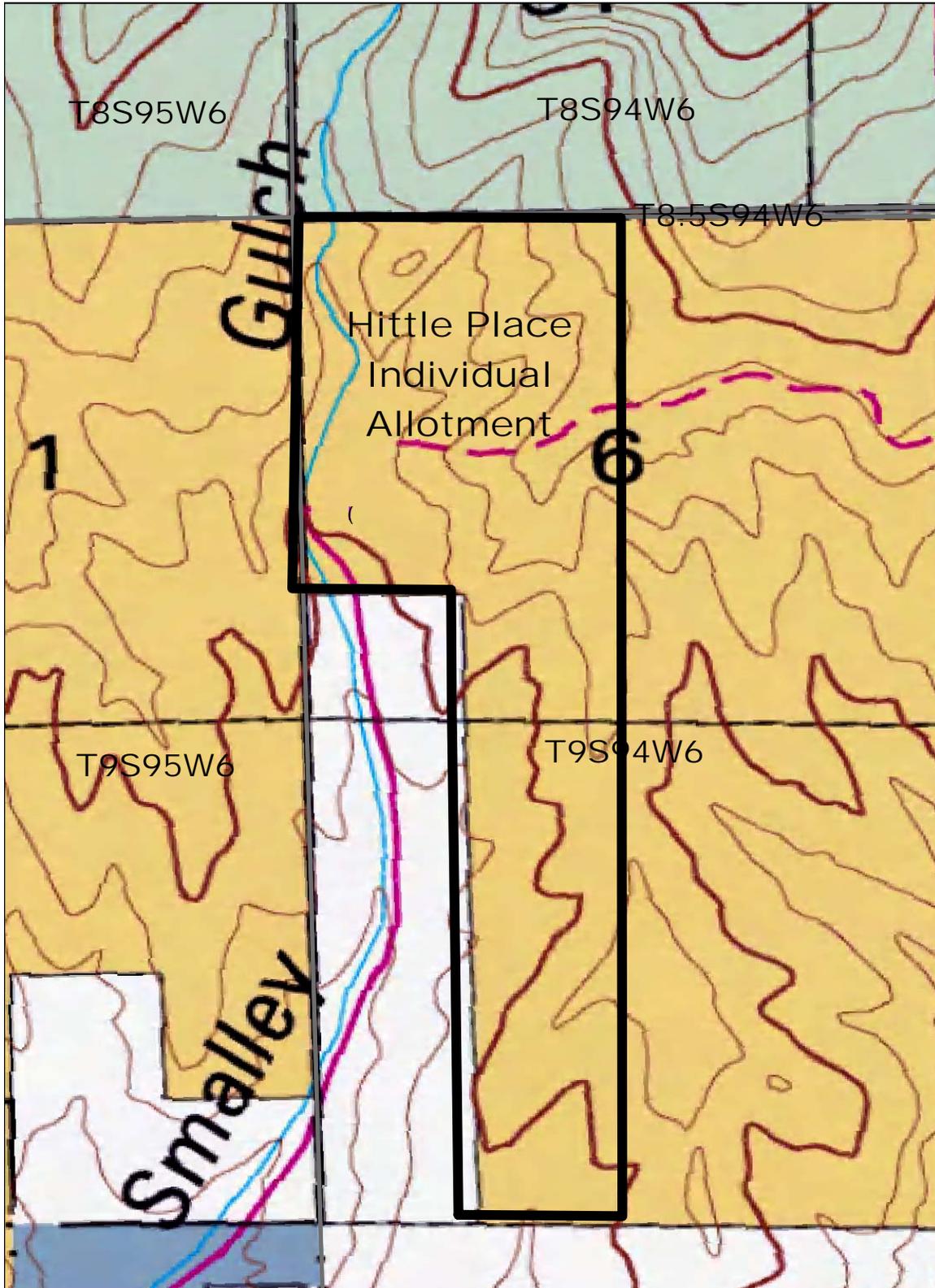
BACKGROUND: The Hittle Place Individual Allotment is located approximately 3.6 miles northeast of Collbran, Colorado in Mesa County. The allotment consists of 433 public acres with 75 permitted AUMs for cattle. Vegetation is mainly dense shrubs of Gambel oak, serviceberry, and snowberry with understory grasses that include stipa, poa, western wheat, and carex. Elevation on the allotment ranges from 7,200 to 8,040 feet and average annual precipitation is 15 to 17 inches. A Land Health Assessment was completed in 2010, and the allotment was determined to be meeting Standards 1, 3, and 4 (soils, biotic, and T&E species). Trend monitoring conducted in 2013 showed an upward trend.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS: No issues or concerns have been brought forth, the allotment contained in this permit is ranked in the Custodial “C” category based on its’ small size and no major issues.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:
6th PM, T. 9 S., R. 94 W., portions of sections 6 and 7

See map of the allotment on the next page.

Hittle Place Individual Allotment



DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to allow for continuation of livestock grazing on public land and to process a Grazing Permit Renewal Forrest Towns, Grazing Permit #0507158.

The proposed grazing schedule would be as follows:

Table 1 – Proposed Grazing Schedule

Allotment/#	Livestock Number	Livestock Kind	Grazing Period		%PL	Type Use	AUMs
			ON	OFF			
Hittle Place Individual #06841	15	Cattle	5/16	10/15	100	Active	75

%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 or its equivalent for a period of one month.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Terms and Conditions of the Grazing Permit would be:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. All new range improvement projects will be in accordance with BLM standards.
 - Example - wildlife escape ramps are required in water troughs under BLM standards.
5. 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.
6. 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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).
13. 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.
14. 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.

Table 2 – Allotment Summary:

Allotment	Federal Acres	Private Acres	Animal Unit Months (AUMs)		
			Active	Suspended	Total
Hittle Place Individual	433	20	75	0	75

LAND USE PLAN (LUP) CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The proposed action is subject to the following plan:

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

Name of Plan: Grand Junction Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: January 1987

Decision Number/Page: 2-17

Decision Language: Manage livestock grazing as described in the Grand Junction Grazing Management Environmental Statement using the new priorities and general management categories established through the allotment categorization process and this plan.

REVIEW OF EXISTING NEPA DOCUMENTS:

List by name and date all existing NEPA documents that cover the Proposed Action.

Name of Document CO-130-2004-062-EA Hight (6828), Clover Gulch (6827), Plateau Creek (6810), and Hittle Individual (6841) Permit Renewal.

Date Approved: September 8, 2004

NEPA ADEQUACY CRITERIA:

1. Is the Proposed Action substantially the same action and at the site specifically analyzed in an existing document?

The Permit to be issued has the same grazing schedule and is at the same specific site as analyzed in the existing document. There are however slightly altered terms and conditions to protect various resource needs.

2. Was a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Action analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s), and does that range and analysis appropriately consider current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Other than the proposed action alternative, there was only the No Action alternative which was eliminated from detailed analysis because it does not meet the purpose and need for the action to allow grazing on public lands in a responsible manner that is compatible with Standards for Public Land Health. Current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values are the same as analyzed in the 2004 NEPA document.

3. Does the information or circumstances upon which the existing NEPA document(s) are based remain valid and connected to the Proposed Action?

The information is valid and connected to the proposed action. This allotment was reviewed in 2004 prior to permit renewal.

4. Is the analysis still valid in light of new studies or resource assessment information?

Most recent monitoring information combined with the assessment of resource conditions found that the previous analysis in 2004 is still valid. No new information has been presented.

5. Does the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the Proposed Action?

The methodology and analytical approach used in the 2004 document was completely appropriate for development of the proposed action.

6. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Action unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document?

Though terms and conditions have been added to clarify the protection of various resource needs, direct and indirect impacts are unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document.

7. Are the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the Proposed Action unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

The cumulative impacts would remain unchanged.

8. Is the public involvement and interagency review associated with the existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the Proposed Action?

Public involvement was conducted along with interagency review. This review was adequate for the Proposed Action.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW: Identify those team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this work sheet (by name and title).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Review Completed</u>
Heidi Plank	Wildlife Biologist/Special Status Plant and Animal Species	7/26/14
Anna Lincoln	Ecologist/Special Status Species	7/17/14
Natalie Clark	Archaeologist	7/14/14
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	6/30/14
Chris Pipkin	Outdoor Recreation Planner	7/22/2014

Table 3 – Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation necessary	Comments included in DNA text	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date
PHYSICAL RESOURCES						
Air and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ND 6/30/14
Geological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SG 7/28/14
Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SG 7/28/14
Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ND 6/30/14
Water (surface & subsurface, floodplains)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ND 6/30/14
Invasive, Non-native Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MT 6/16/14
Sensitive Species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ARL 7/17/14
Threatened or Endangered Species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ARL 7/17/14
Vegetation, Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 6/12/14
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ND 6/30/14
Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HLP 7/25/14
Cultural or Historical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 7/14/14
Paleontological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SG 7/28/14
Tribal & American Indian Religious Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 7/14/14
Visual Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 6/12/14
Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 6/12/14
Environmental Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 6/12/14
Transportation and Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AEK 8/4/14
Prime or Unique Farmlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 7/24/14
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Wild and Scenic Rivers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Wilderness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 7/22/14
Range Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 6/12/14
Wild Horse and Burros	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SC 7/24/14
Land Tenure, ROW, Other Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	RBL 7/28/14

NAME OF PREPARER: Scott Clarke - RMS

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Christina Stark

DATE: 8/6/14

CONCLUSION

DOI-BLM-CO-130-2014-0027-DNA

Grazing Permit Renewal for Forrest Towns (#0507158) on the Hittle Place Individual Allotment (#06841)

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

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that either the proposal does not conform with the land use plan, or that additional NEPA analysis is needed.

Note: The signed Conclusion on this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision.

REVIEW OF EXISTING NEPA DOCUMENTS:

Name of Document: CO-130-2004-062-EA Hight (6828), Clover Gulch (6827), Plateau Creek (6810), and Hittle Individual (6841) Permit Renewal.

Date Approved: September 8, 2004

SIGNATURE OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:



Grand Junction, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 9-8-2014

Attachment A: Resource Specialist Remarks

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Resource Specialist Remarks:

Cultural Resources: This allotment is in Physiographic Unit H located on the upland benches on the slopes of the Grand Mesa and Battlement Mesa, both north and south of Plateau Creek and east of the Colorado River. As of 2009, thirty five allotments had been previously evaluated and approximately 19,300 acres or 28.5 percent of the allotments within Unit H have had cultural resource inventory completed on BLM lands. This Unit has the highest level of inventory in the field office, almost double the average for the field office as a whole. Based on previous inventory the average site/acre ratio in this area is 1:68 and of the 35 allotments previously reviewed the site density ranged from Moderate to High (Conner and Darnell 2009:50).

None of the Hittle Place Individual allotment has been previously surveyed and no cultural resource sites have been documented within this allotment. The allotment contains steep slopes and has little potential for cultural resources to be located within the area.

No additional inventory was recommended in 2004 and no additional inventory is recommended for this renewal. No current mitigation is recommended in this allotment. If newly discovered historic properties are identified on BLM lands, the BLM will evaluate the sites. If the BLM determines that grazing activities will adversely impact any historic properties mitigation will be identified and implemented in consultation with the Colorado SHPO within the ten-year period of the permit.

Native American Religious Concerns: 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. Any sites that the Ute occupied are important to them as a tie to their ancestral home but none are recorded in this allotment to date. No consultation was conducted for this renewal. If any sites are identified by further survey then additional consultation would be conducted.

Special Status Species: No rare plants are known to occur within the Hittle Place Individual grazing allotment. A review of BLM and Colorado Natural Heritage Program records confirmed the absence of rare plants. The renewal of the grazing allotment is not anticipated to have any effect on protected plants, as none are known to occur in the area. A Lynx analysis unit occurs adjacent to this allotment on forest service lands. Grazing is not believed to be impacting habitat conditions for Lynx on the allotment therefore continuation of this activity would not be expected to impact Lynx habitat.

Weeds: There were no weed issues identified in 2013.

Water Quality/Riparian/Soils: Environmental Assessment CO-130-2004-062-EA adequately addresses potential impacts to water quality and soils. While CDPHE Regulation 93 has been updated several times since 2004, the affected stream segments continue to support all identified beneficial uses and are not listed as "Impaired" or identified on the monitoring and evaluation list.

A full land health assessment was conducted by BLM in 2010 and did not indicate any lotic or lentic riparian habitats within the Hittle Allotment. The 2010 assessment identified BLM portions of Smalley Gulch as “meeting with problems” for both soils and hydrologic function. However, vegetation monitoring in this area conducted by BLM in 2013 indicated vegetative health to be upward trending. Improved vegetative health provides benefits to both soils and hydrology/water quality. This recent monitoring indicates that the current livestock use is not negatively impacting soils, hydrology or water quality. Continued monitoring would document changes in land health and terms and conditions of the permit would modify the timing and intensity of use as appropriate. Implementation of the proposed grazing schedule with terms and conditions outlined above would not result in any measurable impact to soils, hydrology or water quality.