

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Field Office
50629 US Highway 6 & 24
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-140-2008-036 EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: 0500265

PROJECT NAME: Grazing Permit Renewal

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T8S R86W sec 18 & 19; T8S R87W sec 13, 22, 23, 24, 26, and 35.

See Attached Maps, Fender Allotment (#08329) and Fender Ind Allotment (No. 08339).

APPLICANT: Crown Mountain Ranch LLC

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action is to renew a term grazing permit for the above applicant. The grazing schedule and grazing preference animal unit months (AUMS) will remain unchanged from the previous permit. The permit would be issued for a 10-year period, unless the base property is leased for less, but for purposes of the EA, we are assuming 10 years of grazing by this or another applicant (in case of transfer). The proposed action is in accordance with 43 CFR 4130.2. The tables below summarize the level of scheduled grazing use and grazing preference for the proposed permit renewal.

Scheduled Grazing Use:

Allotment Name/No.	Livestock No./Kind	Grazing Period	%PL	AUMS
Fender 08329	100 Cattle	05/01 – 05/20	100	66
Fender Ind 08339	54 Cattle	05/21 – 07/01	100	75

Grazing Preference (AUMS)

Allotment Name/No.	Total	Suspended	Active
Fender 08329	67	0	67
Fender Ind 08339	65	0	65

The following term and condition was included on the previous permit and will be included on the renewed permit:

- Maintenance of range improvements is required and shall be in accordance with all approved cooperative agreements and range improvement permits. Maintenance shall be completed prior to turnout.

The following allotment term and condition will be included on the renewed permit.

- If an assessment of rangeland health results in a determination that changes are necessary in order to comply with the standards for public land health and the guidelines for livestock grazing management in Colorado, this permit will be reissued subject to revised terms and conditions.
- The permittee and all persons specifically associated with grazing operations must be informed that any objects or sites of cultural, paleontological, or scientific values such as historic or prehistoric resources, graves or grave markers, human remains, ruins, cabins, rock art, fossils, or artifacts shall not be damaged, destroyed, removed, moved, or disturbed. If in connection with allotment operations under this authorization any of the above resources are encountered, the proponent shall immediately suspend all activities in the immediate vicinity and notify the BLM authorized officer of the findings. The discovery must be protected until notified in writing to proceed by the authorized officer (36CFR800.110 & 112, 43CFR 0.4).

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED:

The No Grazing alternative has been eliminated from further consideration. No unresolved conflicts involving alternative use of available resources have been identified. For this reason, discontinuance of grazing use (No Grazing) will not be considered or assessed.

The No Action alternative has also been eliminated from further consideration. The No Action alternative would involve reissuing the permit/lease with current terms and conditions and no additional stipulations would be added to the permit/lease. Reissuing the permit/lease without the new stipulations would be unrealistic due to current Washington Office and Colorado State Office policies.

NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION:

These permits/leases are subject to renewal or transfer at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior for a period of up to ten years. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has the authority to renew the livestock grazing permits/leases consistent with the provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and Glenwood Springs Field Office 's Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. This Plan/EIS has been amended by Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado.

The action is needed for the following reasons: (1) to meet the livestock grazing management objective of the Resource Management Plan of providing 56,885 animal unit months of livestock forage commensurate with meeting public land health standards, (2) to continue to allow livestock grazing on the specified allotment, (3) to meet the forage demands of local livestock operations, (4) to provide stability to these operations and help preserve their rural agricultural lands for open space and wildlife habitat, and (5) to allow use of native rangeland resource for conversion into protein suitable for human consumption.

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: Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan.

Date Approved: Jan. 1984, revised 1988, amended in November 1991 - Oil and Gas Leasing and Development - Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended Nov. 1996 - Colorado Standards and Guidelines; amended in August 1997 - Castle Peak Travel Management Plan; amended in March 1999 - Oil and Gas Leasing & Development Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended in November 1999 - Red Hill Plan Amendment; and amended in September 2002 – Fire Management Plan for Wildland Fire Management and Prescriptive Vegetation Treatment Guidance.

Decision Number/Page: The action is in conformance with Administrative Actions (pg. 5) and Livestock Grazing Management (pg. 20).

Decision Language: Administrative actions states, “Various types of actions will require special attention beyond the scope of this plan. Administrative actions are the day-to-day transactions required to serve the public and to provide optimal use of the resources. These actions are in conformance with the plan”. The livestock grazing management objective as amended states, “To provide 56,885 animal unit months of livestock forage commensurate with meeting public land health standards.”

Standards for Public Land Health:

In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. The five standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. The Glenwood Springs Field Office is in the ongoing process of completing Land Health Assessments on a landscape basis.

The landscape incorporated in the boundaries of the Fender Allotment and Fender Ind Allotment is scheduled to be assessed in 2010. As such, we are deferring determination on conformance with the Standards on these allotments until the formal Land Health Assessment is completed. If the authorized officer determines that existing livestock grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on public lands are significant factors in failing to achieve the standards and conform to the guidelines, the authorized officer shall take appropriate action as soon as practical (according to 43 CFR 4180.2) to achieve progress toward meeting the standards.

Because a standard exists for the five categories mentioned above, the impact analysis must address whether the proposed action or any alternatives being analyzed would result in impacts that would maintain, improve, or deteriorate land health conditions for that specific parameter. These analyses are located in specific elements listed below:

COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 302 OF FLPMA RELATIVE TO THE COMB WASH DECISION

A review of applicable planning documents and a thoughtful consideration of new issues and new demands for the use of the public lands involved in this allotment have been made. This analysis concludes that the current land and resource uses are appropriate.

Reasons for the conclusion are: No new issues or new demands for the use of public lands involved in this grazing allotment have been identified since approval of the land use plan and amendments.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL COSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Affected Environment: There are no Areas of Critical Environmental Concern within the proposed action area.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: **N/A**

CULTURAL RESOURCES and NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CONCERNS

Affected Environment: Range permit renewals are undertakings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additional range improvements (e.g., fences, spring improvements) are subject to compliance requirements under Section 106 and will undergo standard cultural resources inventory and evaluation procedures. During Section 106 review, a cultural resource assessment (GSFO #1008-4) was completed for the Fender and Fender Independent Allotments (#08329 and 08339) on February 28, 2008 following the procedures and guidance outlined in the 1980 National Programmatic Agreement Regarding the Livestock Grazing and Range Improvement Program, IM-WO-99-039, IM-CO-99-007, IM-CO-99-019, CO-2001-026, and CO-2002-029. The results of the assessment are summarized in the table below. A copy of the cultural resource assessment is available at the GSFO office.

Allotment Number	Acres Inventoried at a Class III level	Acres NOT Inventoried at a Class III Level	Percent (%) Allotment Inventory data Class III level	Number of Cultural Resources known in allotment	High Potential of Historic Properties (yes/no)	Management Recommendations (Additional inventory required and historic properties to be visited)
Fender 08329	56	847	7	2	No	No additional acres need to be inventoried. 68% of the allotment has 30%+ slopes.
Fender Independent	4	562	<1	0	No	40 additional acres needs to be

Allotment Number	Acres Inventoried at a Class III level	Acres NOT Inventoried at a Class III Level	Percent (%) Allotment Inventory data Class III level	Number of Cultural Resources known in allotment	High Potential of Historic Properties (yes/no)	Management Recommendations (Additional inventory required and historic properties to be visited)
08339						inventoried. 30% of the allotment has 30%+ slopes.
Total	60	1409	7	2		

Three Class III cultural resource inventories (GSFO #'s 926, 5407-17, and 15607-4) have been conducted within this allotment. No historic properties eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places have been identified. Unidentified historic era sites within this allotment could represent a time frame from the late 1800's through the 1950's; prehistoric sites could represent a time range from 5,000 to 10,000 years before present.

Based on available data, there is a low potential for historic properties within these allotments. Subsequent site field visits, inventory, and periodic monitoring may have to be done to identify adverse grazing impacts if historic properties are identified within the term of the permit and as funds are made available. If the BLM determines that grazing activities will adversely impact the properties, mitigation will be identified and implemented in consultation with the Colorado SHPO.

At present, there are no known areas of Native American concern within these Allotments. On November 15, 2007 the Glenwood Springs Field Office mailed an informational letter and maps to the Ute Tribe (Northern Ute Tribe), Southern Ute Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribes, identifying the proposed 2008 grazing permit renewals. No response has been received. In the past the Tribes have not had any concerns with grazing permit renewals. If new data is disclosed, new terms and conditions may have to be added to the permit to accommodate their concerns. The BLM will take no action that would adversely affect these areas or location without consultation with the appropriate Native Americans.

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

If additional historic properties are located during the subsequent range developments field inventory, these properties will also be assessed for livestock grazing impacts within the term of the permit.

Mitigation: Maintenance of range improvements not previously inventoried or new improvements may require cultural resource inventories. These allotments may be found to contain historic properties and/or resources protected under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, E.O. 13007, or other statutes and executive orders. The BLM may require modification to development proposals to protect such properties, or disapprove any activity that is likely to result in damage to historic properties or areas of Native American concern.

Education/Discovery stipulation needs to be added to the lease renewal. The permittee and all persons specifically associated with grazing operations must be informed that any objects or sites of cultural, paleontological, or scientific value such as historic or prehistoric resources, graves or grave markers, human remains, ruins, cabins, rock art, fossils, or artifacts shall not be damaged, destroyed, removed, moved, or disturbed. If in connection with allotment operations under this authorization any of the above resources are encountered, the proponent shall immediately suspend all activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery that might further disturb such materials and notify the BLM authorized officer of the findings. The discovery must be protected until notified in writing to proceed by the authorized officer (36CFR800.110 & 112, 43CFR 0.4).

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Affected Environment: The table below reflects 2004 estimated median annual household income data,^a and minority population data from July, 2005^b for the proposed action and “no action” area.

2004 Estimated Median Household Income & 2005 Minority Data			
County	Estimate	90% Confidence Interval	Minority %
Pitkin	\$60,662	\$56,388 to \$65,259	9.5

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Pitkin County is not considered to be impoverished, but is thought to be a wealthy county. The proposed action is not likely to create a disproportionately high and adverse human health impact or environmental effect on minority or low-income populations in the area.

^a Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Data Integration Division, Small Area Estimates for Garfield and Pitkin Counties
Release Date: December 2006

^b Source: U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits, Consolidated Federal Funds Report
Last Revised: January 12, 2007

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: No noxious weeds or invasive, non-native species have been officially documented on the Fender and Fender Ind. Allotments. However, given the widespread nature of noxious weed infestations throughout the resource area, it is assumed that some level of infestation does exist on this allotment.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Wind, water, vehicles, animals, and people transport weeds. Weeds generally germinate and become established in areas of surface disturbing activities such as road construction and maintenance, vehicular traffic, big game and livestock grazing. Livestock grazing can contribute to the establishment and expansion of noxious weeds through various mechanisms. Improperly managed grazing, (over-grazing), can cause a decline in desirable native plant species and ground cover which provides a niche for noxious weed invasion. In addition, noxious weed seed can be transported and introduced to new areas by fecal deposition or by seed that clings to the animal's coat. Conversely, properly managed livestock grazing which does not create areas of bare ground and which maintains the vigor and health of native plant species, particularly herbaceous species, is not expected to cause a substantial increase in noxious weeds.

MIGRATORY BIRDS:

Affected Environment: Vegetation in the allotments consists primarily of mountain shrub and sagebrush. These habitat types provide nesting and foraging habitat for a variety of migratory bird species. Two species on the USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern List, Virginia's warbler and sage sparrow, may nest in the area. There are no documented raptor nests within either allotment, however it is likely the allotments provide foraging habitat for golden eagles and red-tailed hawks.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Although the proposed grazing schedules for the allotments coincide with the breeding season, it is unlikely that livestock grazing would reduce the extent or quality of habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions. The Fender allotment would be grazed for approximately three weeks in May and the Fender Ind allotment would be grazed for five weeks in May and June. This grazing schedule would allow for ample growing season rest and adequate plant recovery periods. Monitoring data show the allotments to be in good condition, providing healthy and productive habitat for migratory bird species. The continuation of grazing under the proposed action would not be expected to degrade migratory bird habitat.

No intentional take of native bird species is anticipated under the proposed action. Grazing by cattle could result in the accidental destruction of ground nests through trampling. This impact is expected to be minimal and isolated and would not influence populations of migratory birds on a landscape level.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES (includes an analysis on Standard 4)

Affected Environment:

According to the latest species list from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (<http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/endspp/CountyLists/COLORADO.pdf>), the following Federally listed, proposed, or candidate plant and animal species may occur within or be impacted by actions occurring in Pitkin County: Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*), yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly (*Boloria acrocnema*), Ute ladies'-tresses orchid (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*), Colorado pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*), bonytail chub (*Gila elegans*), and humpback chub (*Gila cypha*).

The allotments do not provide habitat for any federally listed or BLM sensitive wildlife species. The BLM Sensitive plant, Harrington's penstemon (*Penstemon harringtonii*), is known to occur within 0.25 miles of the Fender allotment and within 1.0 mile of the Fender Ind allotment. Both allotments contain potential habitat for this species and for the purposes of this analysis it is assumed that this Sensitive species does exist on both allotments.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Harrington's penstemon

The flowering stalks of *P. harringtonii* are highly palatable to livestock and wildlife. The grazing period on the Fender allotment is from 5/01 to 5/20, which is generally before Harrington's penstemon produces flower stalks, so grazing during this time frame should have little or no impact to the species. The grazing period on the Fender Ind allotment is from 5/21 to 7/01 which is during the peak flowering season for Harrington's penstemon. Impacts to the Sensitive plant populations could result if excessive grazing removes a high percentage of the flower stalks annually thereby inhibiting seed dissemination and reproduction. Recent monitoring on these allotments indicates grazing utilization levels have been slight to moderate with fairly even grazing distribution. The continuation of grazing at these levels is expected to have little impact on the reproductive capability of Harrington's penstemon.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened, Endangered and Special Status Species: A formal land health assessment has not been conducted on the two allotments in this grazing permit renewal. However, the proposed action should not result in a failure to achieve or maintain the standard for threatened, endangered and special status species.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes an analysis on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: The Fender Allotment is located in Pitkin County southwest of the Town of Basalt within the 326 acre Mouth of Sopris Creek, 8,989 acre Lower East Sopris Creek, 18,934 acre Roaring Fork above Carbondale, and the 5,261 acre Roaring Fork above Basalt 6th field watersheds. Within the Fender Allotment are several unnamed ephemeral drainages that flow north and are intercepted by drainage ditches used for agricultural purposes. The Fender IND Allotment is also located in Pitkin

County southwest of the Town of Basalt and occurs primarily within the 11,006 acre West Sopris Creek 6th field watershed. Within this allotment is the perennial West Sopris Creek that joins East Sopris Creek approximately 1.1 miles to the northeast to form Sopris Creek.

The perennial West Sopris Creek and the other unnamed ephemeral drainages mentioned above are not currently on the State of Colorado’s *Stream Classifications and Water Quality Standards* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 37) list, the *303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments Requiring TMDLS* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 93), or the *Monitoring and Evaluation List* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 94). In addition, no current water quality data are available for these drainages.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Grazing activities would result in soil compaction and displacement that increase the likelihood of erosional processes, especially on steep slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. Due to the close proximity of the proposed activities to area drainages, there is a high potential that additional sediment associated with grazing practices could reach the perennial West Sopris Creek and possibly the unnamed ephemeral drainages found within the Fender Allotment. With the implementation of grazing standards and guidelines, it is expected that the potential negative impacts described above would be short-term and localized. Consequently, no additional site specific mitigation is recommended at this time.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for Water Quality: At this time there is a land health assessment planned that will include the Fender and Fender IND Allotments. Based on existing information, it can be assumed that the proposed activities would not likely prevent Standard 5 for Water Quality from being met.

WETLANDS and RIPARIAN ZONES (includes an analysis on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: The table below lists known riparian areas and their Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessment for each allotment:

Allotment	Riparian Area Name	Approx. Miles	Year Assessed	Condition Rating
Fender	No known riparian resources			
Fender Ind.	West Sopris Creek	0.6	1993	Proper Functioning Condition

The Proper Functioning Condition assessment above did not raise or identify any issues with livestock grazing. Current monitoring, inventory or documented field observations is lacking for affected riparian area other than the proper functioning condition assessments listed above.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The Fender Ind. Allotment would be grazed by cattle for a 42 day period in the spring/early summer. The period of use would allow for ample grazing rest and recovery time for riparian plant species. In consideration of this and the condition of riparian zone described in the Affected Environment, renewal of the grazing permit is not expected to cause adverse impacts to riparian zones.

There are no known riparian resources on the Fender. Allotment; therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources from the Proposed Action.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: The proposed action would not result in failure to achieve this standard and should maintain and/or improve land health conditions for riparian systems.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Affected Environment: There are no un-studied rivers, rivers found to eligible or designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within the proposed project area.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: N/A

WILDERNESS

Affected Environment: There are no designated Wilderness areas, Wilderness Study Areas or citizens proposed wilderness areas within the proposed project area.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: N/A

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

SOILS (includes an analysis on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: According to the *Soil Survey of Aspen-Gypsum Area, Colorado: Parts of Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin Counties* (USDA 1992) the Fender Allotment contains 11 different soil map units (12, 25, 33, 40, 41, 54, 56, 63, 64, 67, 104) and the Fender IND Allotment contains eight different soil map units (30, 46, 47, 53, 64, 68, 72, 104). These soil map units are identified by the numerical code assigned by the soil survey mentioned above. These soil map units are scattered throughout the allotments and most of them have been identified as having moderate to severe erosion hazards. Following is a brief description of the soil map units found within the Fender and Fender IND Allotments.

- Arle-Ansari-Rock outcrop complex (12) – This soil map unit is found on mountain and valley sides at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 8,200 feet and on slopes of 12 to 50 percent. Approximately 40 percent of this unit is Arle very stony loam, 30 percent Ansari loam, 20 percent Rock outcrop, and the other 10 percent a mixture of soil types. The Arle soil is moderately deep, well drained and is derived from redbed sandstone and shale. Surface runoff is medium and the water erosion hazard is slight

- to severe. The Ansari soil is shallow, well drained and is derived from redbed sandstone and shale. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is slight to severe. The Rock outcrop component of this unit consists of exposed sandstone. Primary uses for this soil map unit include rangeland, wildlife habitat, and homesite development.
- Cushool-Rentsac complex (25) – This soil map unit is found on mountains and mesa side slopes at elevations ranging from 6,200 to 7,600 feet and on slopes of 15 to 65 percent. Approximately 45 percent of this soil map unit is Cushool soil and 40 percent Rentsac soil. The Cushool soil is moderately deep, well drained, derived from sandstone and shale, and is found on slopes of 15 to 50 percent. Surface runoff for this soil is rapid and the erosion hazard is classified as severe. The Rentsac soil is shallow, well drained, derived from sandstone, and is found on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. Surface runoff for this soil is rapid and the erosion hazard is classified as severe. Primary uses for this soil map unit include rangeland, wildlife habitat, Christmas trees, firewood, and fence posts.
 - Dollard-Rock outcrop, shale complex (30) – This map unit is found on ridges, mountainsides, and valley sides at elevations ranging from 6,800 to 8,500 feet and on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. Approximately 45 percent of this unit is Dollard soil, 45 percent shale Rock outcrop, and the other 10 percent being a mixture of soil types. The Dollard soil is moderately deep, well drained and is derived from Mancos shale. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is severe. The Rock outcrop portion of this unit is slightly weathered exposures of Mancos shale. Primary uses for this unit include rangeland and wildlife habitat.
 - Earsman-Rock outcrop complex (33) – This soil map unit is found on mountainsides and ridges at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 8,500 feet and on slopes of 12 to 65 percent. Approximately 45 percent of this unit is Earsman very stony sandy loam and 35 percent Rock outcrop. The Earsman soil is shallow, excessively drained, and derived from calcareous redbed sandstone. Surface runoff for this soil map unit is rapid and the water erosion hazard is classified as slight to severe depending on slope. Primary uses for this soil map unit include rangeland, wildlife habitat, fence posts, and firewood.
 - Evanston loam (40, 41) - This deep, well drained soil formed in mixed alluvium and is found on alluvial fans, terraces, and valley sides at elevations ranging from 6,500 to 8,000 feet and on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. Surface runoff for this soil is rapid and the erosion hazard is classified as moderate to severe. Primary uses for this soil include rangeland and wildlife habitat.
 - Forsey cobbly loam (46, 47)– This deep, well drained soil is found on alluvial fans, mountainsides, and ridges at elevations ranging from 7,500 to 9,500 feet and on slopes of 12 to 65 percent. This soil is derived from alluvium and colluvium of mixed mineralogy. Surface runoff for this soil is medium and the water erosion hazard is moderate. This soil is used primarily for rangeland purposes and wildlife habitat.

- Grotte loam (53) – This deep, well drained soil is found on valley side slopes and alluvial fans at elevations ranging from 8,200 to 9,500 feet and on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. This soil is derived from alluvium composed primarily of glacial till. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is moderate to severe. This unit is used primarily for rangeland purposes.
- Grotte gravelly loam (54) – This deep, well drained soil is found on mountainsides at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 8,000 feet and on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. It is derived from alluvium and colluvium composed of sandstone. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is moderate to severe. Primary uses for this soil include rangeland and wildlife habitat.
- Ipson cobbly loam (56) – This deep, well drained soil is derived from sandstone and basalt rocks and formed in alluvium and outwash. It is found on terraces, terrace side slopes, and fans at elevations ranging from 6,700 to 8,300 feet and on slopes of 3 to 25 percent. Surface runoff for this soil is medium and the erosion hazard is classified as moderate. Primary uses for this soil include rangeland and homesite development.
- Jerry loam (63, 64) – This deep, well drained soil is found on alluvial fans and hills at elevations ranging from 7,500 to 9,500 and on slopes of 12 to 65 percent. This soil is derived from sandstone and shale alluvium. Surface runoff is rapid to very rapid and the water erosion hazard is moderate. This soil is used primarily for rangeland purposes.
- Jerry-Millerlake loams (67) – This soil map unit is found on alluvial fans and valley sides at elevations ranging from 7,500 to 9,500 feet and on slopes of 25 to 45 percent. Approximately 50 percent of this unit is Jerry soil and 40 percent Millerlake soil, with the other 10 percent being a mix of soil types. The Jerry soil is deep, well drained and is derived from sandstone and shale alluvium. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is severe. The Millerlake soil is deep, well drained and is derived from sedimentary rock alluvium. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is severe. Primary uses for this soil map unit include rangeland, and wildlife habitat.
- Jodero loam (68) – This deep, well drained soil is found on alluvial valley floors at elevations ranging from 5,700 to 7,500 feet and on slopes of 1 to 12 percent. It is derived from alluvium composed of andesite, sandstone, and shale. Surface runoff for this soil is slow to medium and the water erosion hazard is slight to severe. Primary uses for this soil include hayland and pasture.
- Kobar silty clay loam (72) – This deep, well drained soil is found on alluvial fans and terraces at elevations ranging from 6,800 to 8,200 feet and on slopes of 12 to 25 percent. It is derived from alluvium composed of Mancos shale. Surface runoff for this soil is rapid and the water erosion hazard is moderate. This soil is used primarily for rangeland purposes.
- Torriorthents-Camborthids-Rock outcrop complex (104) – This soil map unit occurs on south-facing mountainsides, hills, and ridges with slopes ranging from 6 to 65 percent. Approximately 45 percent of this unit is Torriorthents, 20 percent Camborthids, and 15 percent Rock outcrop. The Torriorthents are shallow to

moderately deep, well drained, and are derived from sedimentary rock. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is severe. The Camborthids are shallow to deep, well drained, and are derived from sandstone, shale, and basalt. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is severe. The Rock outcrop component of this unit consists of exposed sandstone, shale, and basalt. This soil map unit is used primarily for wildlife habitat.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Grazing activities within the Fender and Fender IND Allotments would result in soil compaction and displacement, especially in areas where livestock would be concentrated such as watering areas and stock trails. Soil compaction and displacement would increase the likelihood of erosional processes such as soil detachment and sediment transport on steep slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. These processes could result in rilling, rutting, and sediment deposition.

Due to the close proximity of the proposed activities to area drainages, there is a potential that sediment associated with grazing practices could be transported to the numerous drainages mentioned in the water section. With the implementation of grazing standards and guidelines, it is expected that the potential negative impacts described above would be short-term and localized. Consequently, no additional site specific mitigation is recommended at this time.

Analysis on Public Land Health Standard 1 for Upland Soils: At this time no land health assessment has been completed in the proposed action area, however, one is planned to occur in the future. Based on existing information, it can be assumed that the proposed activities would not likely prevent Standard 1 for Upland Soils from being met.

VEGETATION (includes an analysis on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Vegetation on the Fender allotment consists of pinyon-juniper woodlands on the south and west-facing slopes and oakbrush/mixed mountain shrublands on the north and east-facing aspects. Small sagebrush benches occur just east of the private land along Sopris Creek. The Fender Ind allotment consists primarily of oakbrush/mixed mountain shrublands on the north-facing slopes and pinyon-juniper woodlands on south-facing slopes. Sagebrush shrublands occupy the drainages and the flatter slopes. The Fender Ind allotment also contains riparian vegetation (such as willows and river birch) along West Sopris Creek.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Other than the sagebrush benches adjacent to private land, the majority of the Fender allotment receives only light grazing use due to the steep slopes and lack of water sources. The period of grazing use on the Fender allotment is from 5/01-5/20 and on the Fender Ind allotment, grazing occurs from 5/21-7/01. Provided that livestock grazing use is relatively evenly distributed, the period of grazing should allow for adequate recovery and regrowth periods, and should not encourage the establishment or spread of noxious weeds on the allotments.

Recent monitoring data for both allotments indicates the vegetation on the allotments is in good condition with light to moderate grazing use.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): A formal land health assessment has not been completed on the two allotments in the proposed action area. Based on existing information, the proposed action would not likely prevent Standard 3 for healthy plant communities from being met.

WILDLIFE AQUATIC (includes an analysis on Standard 3)

Affected Environment:

The Fender allotment contains no perennial streams and is drained via small ephemeral washes that run primarily in response to spring snowmelt and summer thunderstorm events. The allotment is in within .2 miles of East Sopris Creek and Sopris Creek to the west, and .3 miles of the Roaring Fork River to the north and east. East Sopris and Sopris Creek contain brown and rainbow trout, and aquatic insects. The Roaring Fork River contains, brown, brook, and rainbow trout, mountain whitefish, mottled sculpin, and suckers, in addition to numerous aquatic insects.

The Fender Ind. Allotment contains 0.6 miles of West Sopris Creek a larger perennial system. West Sopris Creek contains rainbow and brown trout and aquatic insects.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Continued grazing activity within the Fender and Fender Ind Allotments would result in some site-specific soil compaction and displacement, especially in areas where livestock would be concentrated such as waters, salt block sites, and along stock trails. Soil compaction and displacement would increase the likelihood of erosional processes such as soil detachment and sediment transport on steep slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms.

Due to the close proximity of the proposed activities to area drainages, there is a potential that sediment associated with grazing practices could be transported to the perennial fish bearing streams identified. Sediment can impact trout species by silting in spawning substrates and limited pool habitats. It can impede aquatic insect productivity which can reduce food sources for resident fishes. Given the timing of grazing and the minimal amount of anticipated erosion associated with grazing activities, it is unlikely that sediment concerns would present a problem. Upland habitats are in good condition and would help to filter and minimize offsite sediment concerns. In addition, grazing on these allotments coincides with spring peak flow periods which should be sufficient to flush sediments through the systems and minimize deposition.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): A formal Land Health Assessment has not been completed for the area. Based on current/proposed grazing management, the proposed action should have little bearing on the watersheds ability to meet Standard 3 for aquatic wildlife.

WILDLIFE TERRESTRIAL (includes an analysis on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Vegetation in the allotments consists primarily of mountain shrub and sagebrush. These communities typically provide habitat for big game species as well as small mammals, reptiles and birds. Portions of the allotment are mapped as important big game winter range.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Livestock grazing under the proposed action would have minimal impacts to terrestrial wildlife species. The Fender allotment would be grazed for approximately three weeks in May and the Fender Ind allotment would be grazed for five weeks in May and June. This grazing schedule would allow for ample growing season rest and adequate plant recovery periods. Monitoring data show the allotments to be in good condition, providing healthy and productive habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The continuation of grazing under the proposed action would not be expected to degrade wildlife habitat.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): A formal Land Health Assessment has not been completed for the two allotments. The proposed action would allow for ample growing season rest and current grazing would not prevent the allotments from meeting this standard.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, those brought forward for analysis will be formatted as shown above.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Travel/Access		X	
Cadastral Survey		X	
Fire/Fuels Management		X	
Forest Management		X	
Geology and Minerals	X		
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Paleontology	X		
Noise	X		
Range Management		X	
Realty Authorizations	X		
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Soils			X
Transportation		X	
Visual Resources		X	

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY:

Continued grazing may cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to historic properties. No other cumulative impacts were identified.

PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED:

Notices of public scoping were issued through the Colorado BLM’s Internet web page providing the public an opportunity to obtain information or offer concerns on grazing permits

or allotments scheduled for renewal. There have been no responses received specific to the permit renewal or allotment addressed in this NEPA document. The Glenwood Springs Field Office Internet NEPA Register also lists grazing permit renewal NEPA documents that have been initiated. They are generally posted approximately one month prior to the estimated completion date.

Southern Ute Tribe
 Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Bands
 Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
Dereck Wilson	Rangeland Management Specialist	Range, Weeds, NEPA Lead
Mike Kinser	Rangeland Management Specialist	Riparian Zones
Jeff O'Connell	Hydrologist	Soil, Air, Water, Geology
Kay Hopkins	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness, ACECs, WSR, VRM
Carla DeYoung	Ecologist	T/E/S Plants, Standards, Vegetation
Cheryl Harrison	Archaeologist	Cultural & Native American Concerns
Tom Fresques	Fisheries Biologist	Wildlife Aquatic, T&E (Fish)
Desa Ausmus	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial, T&E (Terrestrial Wildlife)

FONSI

CO-140-2008-036 EA

The environmental assessment, analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action, has been reviewed. The proposed action with mitigation measures result in a finding of no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

Rationale: The analysis of the proposed action with mitigation measures did not identify any impacts that would be significant in nature either in context or intensity. The grazing authorization proposed allows for adequate plant growth recovery and promotes healthy rangelands as it relates to rangeland standards. In addition, there is nothing to indicate the action is highly controversial or that it is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant actions.

SIGNATURE OF PREPARER: David C. [Signature]

DATE SIGNED: 4/1/08

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: [Signature]

DATE SIGNED: 4/1/2008

APPENDDICES: None

ATTACHMENTS: Allotment Maps

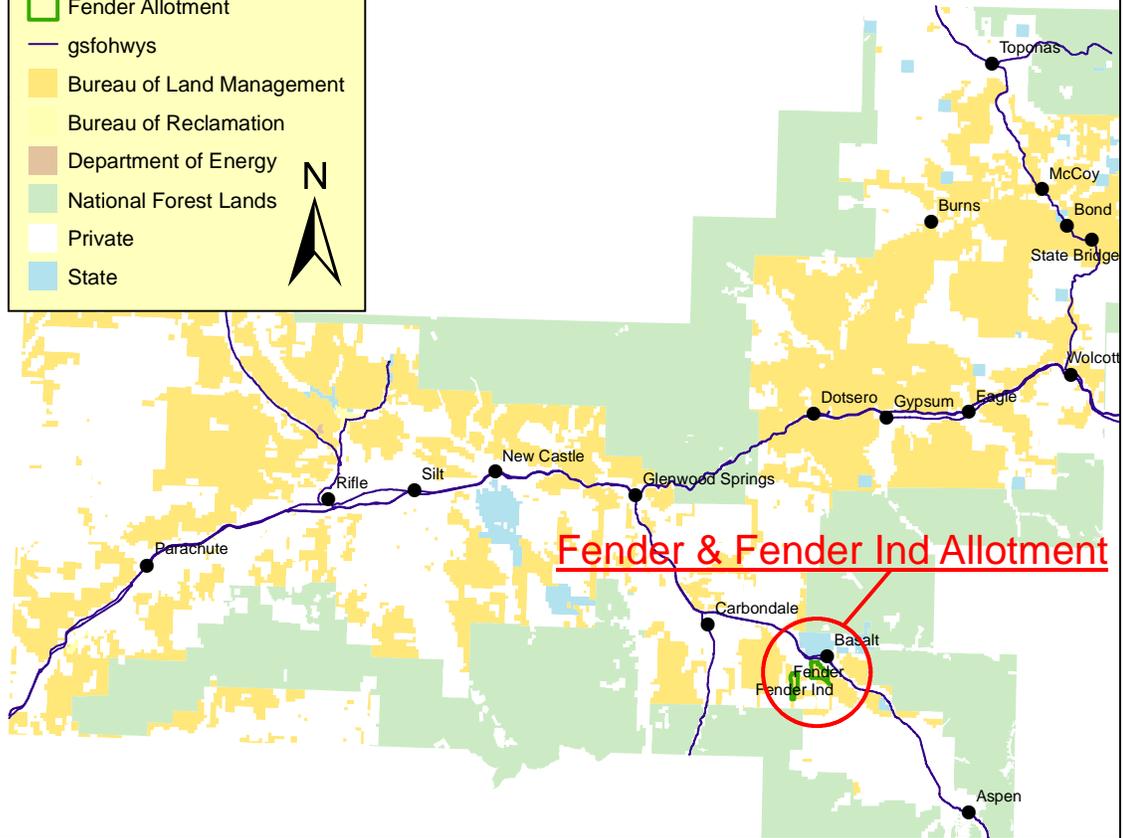
Fender & Fender Ind Allotments

Legend

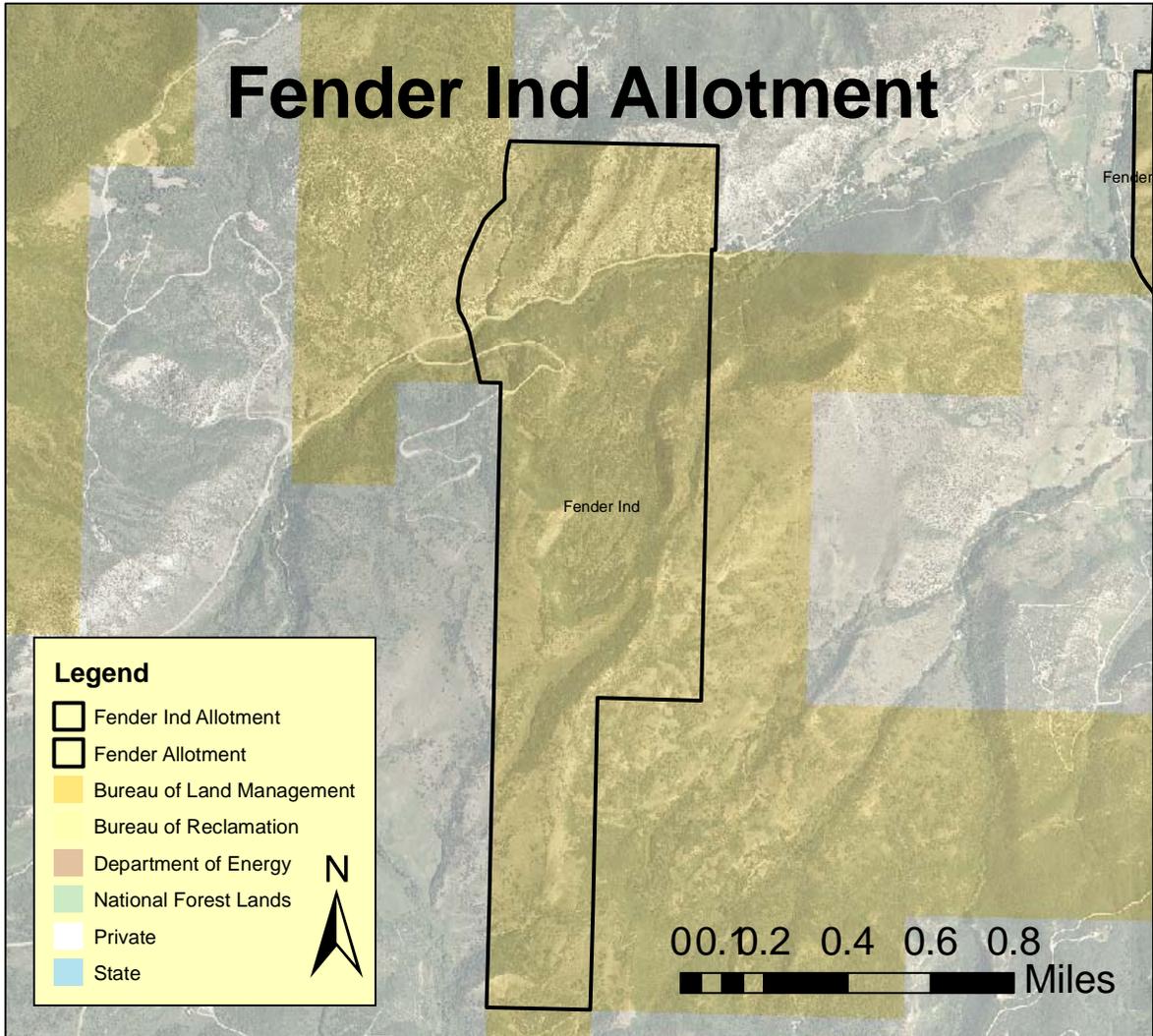
- Fender Ind Allotment
- Fender Allotment
- gsfohwys
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Department of Energy
- National Forest Lands
- Private
- State



0 3.57 14 21 28 Miles



Fender Ind Allotment



Fender Allotment

