

# Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Royal Gorge Field Office  
3028 E. Main  
Cañon City, CO 81212

OFFICE: RGFO

PROJECT NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-0030 DN

CASEFILE: (if applicable) Carroll, Waunita GR# 0501985,

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Range – Grazing Lease Transfer for North Spring Branch Allotment # 05804, and joining of said Allotment to the Little Sheep Allotment # 05769

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Huerfano County, Colorado, Sixth Principle Meridian,  
T. 27 S., R. 70 W., Sec. 3, 9, 10, 15 and 22.

## **A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

The proposed action is to join the North Spring Branch and Little Sheep Allotments and transfer the authorization to graze livestock on public lands to the preferred applicant for the North Spring Branch Allotment. The new lease will expire in ten years (2/28/2023). Grazing use on the allotments will remain as previously scheduled. There will be no changes in livestock numbers; authorized grazing dates and times; authorized levels of use; or terms and conditions.

The North Spring Branch and Little Sheep Allotments were subjected to an internal interdisciplinary team review through Public Land Health Assessments conducted in 2007. The allotments are currently meeting public land health standards. In addition, the allotments were analyzed for permit renewal under BLM-CO-200-2007-0114 EA, initiated 08/17/2007.

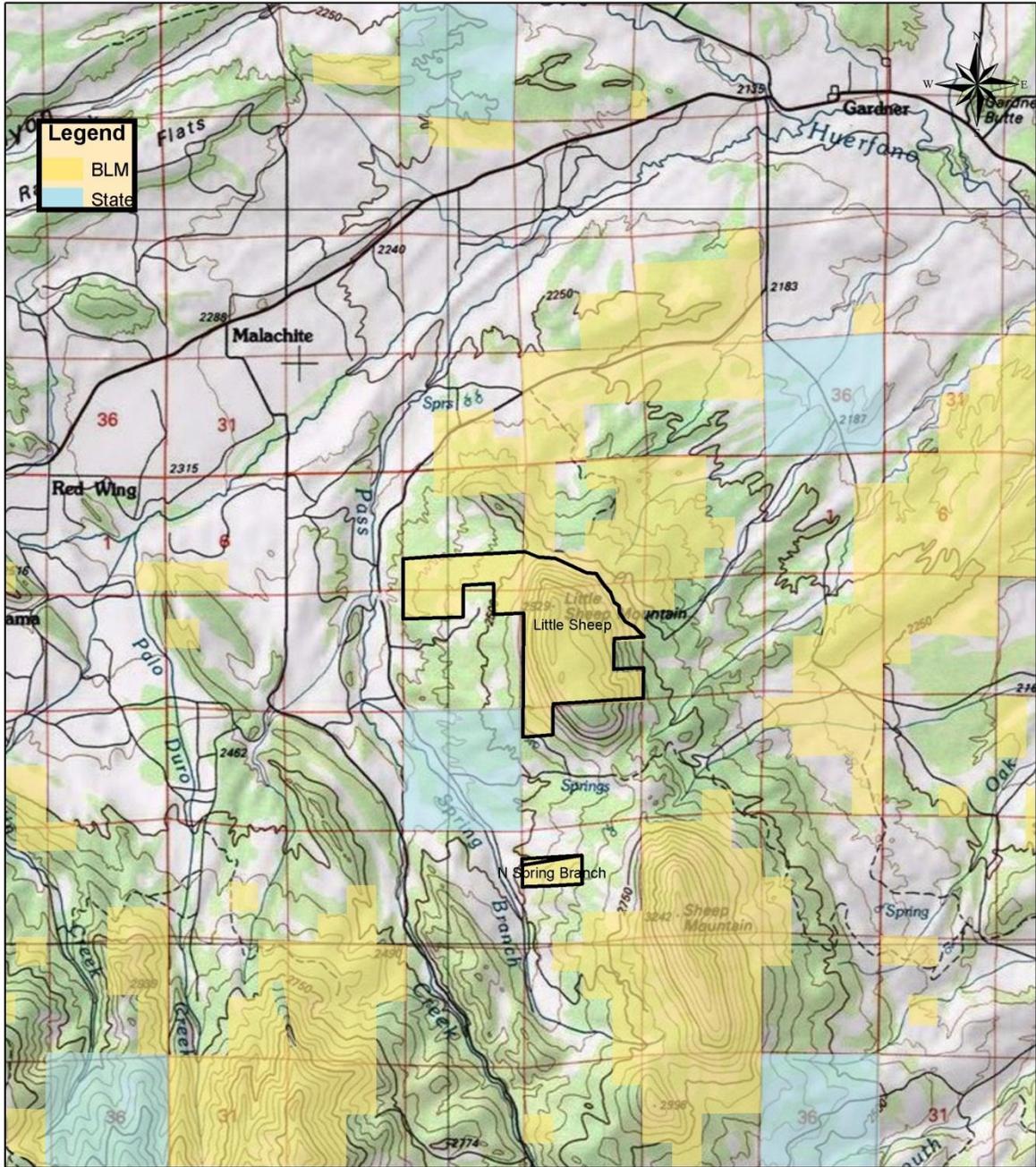
The previous and future management was and will be “custodial management”. Custodial management is generally used on allotments that consist of relatively small or scattered parcels of public lands that are unfenced from large amounts of private land, are difficult to manage separately, and have limited resource issues. In order to be included in a “Custodial” classification, resources on an allotment are generally considered to be in acceptable condition and are generally producing at or near their potential. Under custodial management, the permit includes a specific number of livestock and the specific amount of grazing use (AUMs) authorized on the public land. However, the lessee is not restricted to that specific number of livestock, nor restricted to specific grazing dates, as long as the authorized amount of grazing use on public land within the pasture is not exceeded.

Grazing use on the North Spring Branch and Little Sheep Allotments was scheduled as follows:

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Grazing Period</u>		<u>% Public Land</u>	<u>Public AUMs</u>	<u>Suspended AUMs</u>
			<u>Begin</u>	<u>End</u>			
North Spring Branch	1	Cattle	03/01	02/28	100%	4	3
Little Sheep	1	Cattle	03/01	02/28	100%	10	35

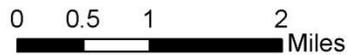
Grazing use on the Little Sheep allotment after being joined with the North Spring Branch Allotment will be as follows:

<u>Allotment</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Grazing Period</u>		<u>% Public Land</u>	<u>Public AUMs</u>	<u>Suspended AUMs</u>
			<u>Begin</u>	<u>End</u>			
Little Sheep	1	Cattle	03/01	02/28	100%	14	38

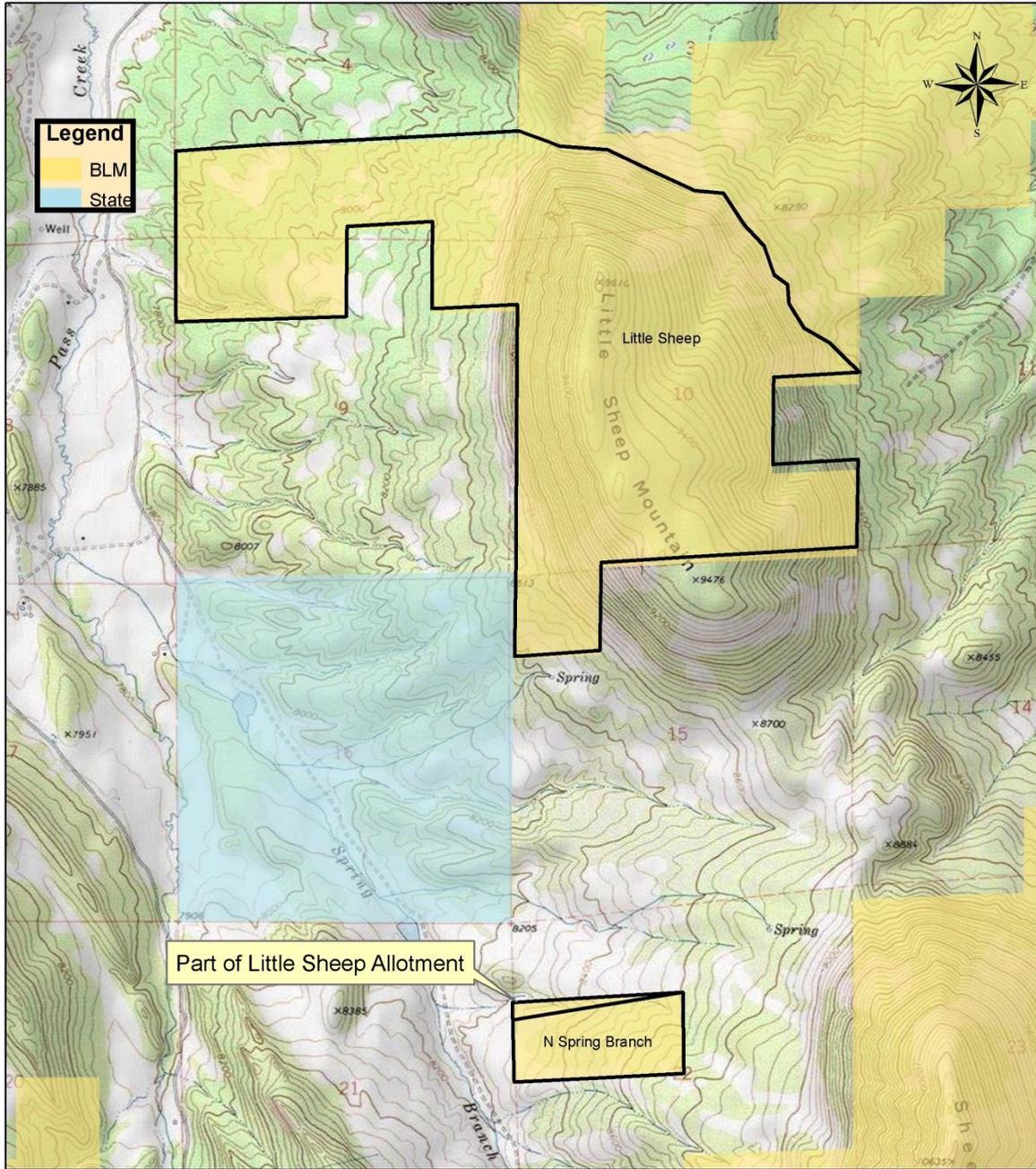


**OVERVIEW MAP**  
**North Spring Branch and**  
**Little Sheep Allotments**

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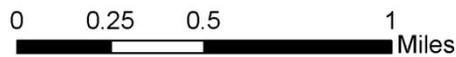


**NOTE TO MAP USERS**  
 No warrantee is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data layers shown on this map. The official land records of the data providers should be checked or current status on any specific tract of land.



**PROJECT MAP**  
**North Spring Branch and**  
**Little Sheep Allotments**

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## B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan	Date Approved 05/13/1996
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The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions: 8-2, 8-4

Decision Language:

8-2: Season of use and stocking rates will continue based on the Grazing EIS and vegetation monitoring.

8-4: Grazing is authorized on 61 allotments.

## C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

BLM-CO-200-2009-0114 EA Term Grazing Lease Renewals  
Date Approved: September 24, 2007.

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

Public Land Health Assessment 2007  
Date Approved: October, 2007

## D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

The Proposed Action is substantially the same action and at the site specifically analyzed in the existing NEPA documents. Grazing use on the allotments will remain as previously scheduled. There will be no changes in livestock numbers; authorized grazing dates and times; authorized levels of use; or terms and conditions.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

Yes. The RMP/EIS and EA considered a range of alternatives. The existing EA for permit renewal was conducted in 2007 and continues to be appropriate for current conditions. The EA included a proposed action alternative, a no action alternative, and a no grazing alternative that were analyzed in the document. The proposed action is described in Section A of this document. The no action alternative was analyzed as the “current management” of the allotments in the previous EA with no changes in terms and conditions. The no grazing alternative was analyzed as removal of livestock grazing from the allotment. No new environmental conditions or change in resource values have arisen that would invalidate those alternatives analyzed.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

Yes. The previous information and circumstances and analysis are still valid in light of the 2007 Health Assessment, and no new issues concerning grazing have arisen on this allotment.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes. The impacts remain unchanged. Those impacts, including cumulative impacts, normally associated with livestock grazing are mitigated through monitoring of land health standards.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

Yes. Extensive scoping and public involvement occurred in the RMP/EIS. Also, scoping occurred during the permit renewal.

**E. Persons/Agencies /BLM Staff Consulted**

<b>INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>Initials/date</b>
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	MR, 2/11/13
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
Chris Cloninger	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland, Weeds	JL, 02/07/2013
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG,02/11/2013
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	SSC, 2/12/2013

Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	-----
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 2/11/13
Ty Webb	Prescribed Fire Specialist	Air Quality	TW, 2/8/13
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 2/7/13
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	KL, 2/11/2013
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	-----
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	KR, 2/11/13
Martin Weimer	NEPA Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Noise, SocioEconomics	mw, 2/7/13
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	-----
Erin Watkins	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	EW, 3/18/2013
Vera Matthews	Realty Specialist	Realty	vm, 2/14/2013
Steven Craddock	Realty Specialist	Realty	-----
Bob Hurley	Fire Management Officer	Fire Management	BH, 2/8/2013
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	

**REMARKS:**

**Cultural Resources:** Pursuant to BLM Instruction Memorandum Number CO-2002-029, RGFO cultural resources staff conducted a literature review of previous inventories and sites recorded on the public land in the allotment area [see Report CR-RG-12-146(RR)]. Based on the information collected during the literature review, it was determined that no historic properties would be impacted by the proposed undertaking.

**Native American Religious Concerns:** The literature review indicated that no traditional cultural properties have been recorded within the allotment boundaries. Native American Tribal consultation has been completed for these allotments [see Report CR-RG-12-146(RR)]. There is no other known evidence that suggests the project area holds special significance for Native Americans. Therefore, it is unlikely that any traditional cultural properties or other sites of concern to the tribes will be affected by grazing.

**Threatened and Endangered Species:** There are no records of any federally listed or BLM sensitive species within or near the project area. The Proposed Action will not result in impacts to TES species.

**MITIGATION:** None

## CONCLUSION

### DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-0030 DN

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

SIGNATURE OF PROJECT LEAD: /s/ John Lamman

SIGNATURE OF NEPA COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

SIGNATURE OF NEPA SUPERVISOR: Melissa K.S. Garcia

SIGNATURE OF THE RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:                    /s/ Keith E. Berger  
Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE: 4/4/13

**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. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.