

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

**Categorical Exclusion
DOI-BLM-CO-SO50-2015-0027 CX**

March 2015

**McLaughlin Land & Cattle Company LLLP to
Harris & Sons Stirrup Bar Ranch LLC
Grazing Preference Transfer**

*Location: Northeast Montrose County
Near Maher Colorado*

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Uncompahgre Field Office
2465 South Townsend Avenue
Montrose, CO 81401
Phone: (970) 240-5300**



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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-S050-2015-0027 CX

PROJECT NAME: Grazing Preference Transfer for McLaughlin Land & Cattle Company LLLP to Harris & Sons Stirrup Bar Ranch LLC

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T51S, R7W, Sec., 25, 35, 36 N.M.P.M.

APPLICANT: Bureau of Land Management, Uncompahgre Field Office

BACKGROUND: The transfer of grazing preference is considered administrative in nature and serves to transfer livestock privileges, with the same class of livestock and forage allocation, from one preference holder to another. Approval of grazing preference transfers are outlined in 43 CFR 4110.2-1(d) and 4110.2-3.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action is to transfer preference from McLaughlin Land & Cattle LLLP to Harris & Sons Stirrup Bar Ranch LLC. This grazing preference transfer is the result of a change in the ownership of the base property associated with the allotment. Harris & Sons Stirrup Bar Ranch LLC is a qualified applicant.

The grazing allotments involved and the associated grazing preference and season of use are summarized in the table below. The proposed action is compliant with 43 CFR 4110.2-1(d) and 4110.2-3.

Allotment Name & Number	Percent Public Land	Active AUMs	Suspended AUMs	Permitted AUMs	Permitted Season of Use
East Gould Res. #05041	20	20	0	20	5/16-6/15
Collins # 05043	10	10	0	10	5/16-6/15
Big Pasture # 05044	5	15	0	5	5/16-6/15

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

Name of Plan: Uncompahgre Basin Resource Management Plan Record of Decision

Date Approved: July, 1989

Decision Number/Page: 36

Decision Language: Management Units 3, 8, 11,12,13, and 16 will maintain current forage allocations for livestock grazing until studies determine adjustments are needed.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, Number D.1, which allows "approval of transfers of grazing preference". This is the administrative approval of grazing preference transfer applications.

None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Exclusion	YES	NO
1. Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety.	___	<u>X</u>
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands, floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	___	<u>X</u>
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.	___	<u>X</u>
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	___	<u>X</u>
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	___	<u>X</u>
6. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	___	<u>X</u>
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places.	___	<u>X</u>
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	___	<u>X</u>
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	___	<u>X</u>
10. Have disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.	___	<u>X</u>
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian	___	<u>X</u>

religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

___ X

12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.

___ X

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
Melissa Siders	Wildlife Biologist	TES Species
Glade Hadden	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: There are no known Cultural Resource concerns for this project. Inventory is not required under the provision of BLM Manual 8110.23B4 and the 2014 BLM/Colorado State Protocol.

Native American Religious Concerns: There are none known or anticipated for this undertaking.

Threatened and Endangered Species:

Transfer of grazing preference will have no direct or indirect impact. This action is an administrative action to transfer base property on the permit. The East Gould Reservoir, Collins and Big Pasture allotments contain designated critical habitat (Potential) for the threatened Gunnison sage grouse, and may have occasional occupation by grouse from the Crawford population (based on GPS telemetry locations). While the action of transferring the permit will have **no effect** on Gunnison sage-grouse or its critical habitat, the action of livestock grazing may have affects. To date consultation with USFWS and conservation measures have not been implemented because the permits are currently issued under the appropriations rider which prohibits changes to the permit after issuance under the rider. Renewal of these permits is underway as part of the East Gunnison Gorge Permit Renewal process. Consultation with USFWS will be conducted and appropriate conservation measures will be added to the term permit upon full processing of the permit.

NAME OF PREPARER: Lynae Rogers, RMS

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Jedd Sondergard

DATE: 3/6/15

DECISION AND RATIONALE:

I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion and have decided to approve the administrative transfer of grazing preference from McLaughlin Land & Cattle Company LLLP to Harris & Sons Stirrup Bar Ranch LLC.

There are no impacts to public land since the transfer action only results in a transfer of grazing preference. The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, Section: D, Range Management, Number 1, which allows "approval of transfers of grazing preference". I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____

Barbara Sharrow

Barbara Sharrow,
Uncompahgre Field Office, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 3-31-15

