



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Elko District Office

3900 Idaho Street

Elko, Nevada 89801-4211

http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko_field_office.html

In Reply Refer To:
4130 (NVE0300)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

RUBY #8 ALLOTMENT AND BENNETT FIELD ALLOTMENT GRAZING PERMIT RENEWAL DOI-BLM-NV-N030-2011-0022-EA

Based on the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments Grazing Permit Renewal (DOI-BLM-NV-N030-2011-0022-EA) and supporting documents, I have determined that the Proposed Action, as described and analyzed in the EA, will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

Context:

The Proposed Action focuses on livestock grazing management on 30,156 acres within the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments located approximately 52 miles southwest of Wells, Nevada. The allotments do not have intrinsic international, national, regional, or state-wide importance. The Proposed Action would modify the terms and conditions on livestock grazing permits for the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments by changing the season of use. The proposed action also includes installing and equipping a new livestock watering well.

Intensity:

1) *Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.*

The analysis identifies both beneficial and adverse impacts on soils, wetlands, riparian areas, invasive species, wildlife, and cultural resources that may result from the proposed grazing permit renewal and water well installation and operation. Measures are incorporated to reduce adverse impacts. BLM issued Northeastern Great Basin Standards and Guidelines Assessments in 2006 for the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments. An addendum is being issued with the attached EA. Assessments conclude that all standards and guidelines have been met by the existing and proposed grazing permit terms and conditions.

2) *The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.*

The Proposed Action will have no effect on public health or safety.

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

The proposed action incorporates procedures for the protection and management of unique characteristics of the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments including cultural resources, riparian/wetlands, and wildlife habitat. There are no park lands, recreation management areas, prime or unique farmlands, wild and scenic rivers or wilderness study areas in the allotment or that would possibly be affected by the Proposed Action.

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

A project scoping letter was sent to interested parties in July 2010. Based on the small number and contents of comments received from the public, the effects on the quality of the human environment are not considered highly controversial.

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

No highly uncertain or unknown risks to the human environment were identified during analysis of the Proposed Action.

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.*

The Proposed Action neither establishes a precedent for future BLM actions with significant effects nor represents a decision in principle about future consideration.

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

No individually or cumulatively significant impacts were identified for the Proposed Action. Any adverse impacts identified, in conjunction with any adverse impacts of other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions will result in negligible to moderate impacts to natural and cultural resources.

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

The Proposed Action incorporates design features, stipulations, and monitoring to protect cultural resources from adverse impacts.

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 ESA of 1973.*

No listed species are known to occur within the Ruby #8 and Bennett Field Allotments, and no critical habitat for any species has been designated in the area. As discussed in "Section 3.2.6 Special Status Species, Migratory Birds and Other Wildlife" of the EA, the allotments do provide habitat for one Federal candidate species (Greater sage-grouse) and several BLM Sensitive Species. The Proposed Action includes measures to prevent adverse impacts to these species and conserve their habitats and is not expected to result in the listing of any species of concern.

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

