

BLM Trespass Livestock Impoundments Questions and Answers

Q. Why does BLM impound someone's livestock?

A. BLM removes livestock from public lands that are grazing there without an authorized permit. This unauthorized use is trespass grazing.

Q. Why is that a problem?

A. To use the public land for livestock grazing, a person must obtain a permit. BLM manages the condition of the public rangelands through the permit system. Willful trespass grazers allow their animals to repeatedly eat forage owned by the public for free over long periods of time. Willful trespass grazing is unfair to operators who pay fees for public forage and operate according to approved grazing plans. Additionally, trespass grazing often adversely impacts the public land resources and adjacent private property.

Q. How can BLM take someone's private property?

A. Impoundment Orders were issued by a federal magistrate allowing BLM to comply with State law regarding brand inspections while impounding and disposing of trespass livestock. The BLM is authorized by Federal law to manage the public land and through Federal regulations to remove trespass livestock.

Q. How long have the individuals whose livestock is being impounded been involved in trespass grazing?

A. Documented trespass grazing has occurred for nearly five years.

Q. Will trespass livestock be rounded up on private land in the impoundment area?

A. No. Only livestock found on public lands will be impounded.

Q. Where will the livestock be taken after they are impounded?

A. The livestock will be transported to holding facilities at the BLM Winnemucca Field Office.

Q. What will BLM do with the livestock?

A. The owners of the livestock have up to seven days and the first right to redeem them by paying all debts and fines plus the costs associated with the impoundment and boarding of their animals. After that time, if the fines and costs have not been paid, the livestock will be sold to the highest bidders through a sealed bid auction.