

**Worksheet**  
**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**  
 U.S. Department of the Interior  
 Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

**BLM Office:** Buffalo Field Office

**DNA #:** WY-070-DNA11-248

**Casefile Number:** 4913819

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Lower Red Fork Allotment Grazing Lease Transfer and Issuance

**Location of Proposed Action:**

*Lower Red Fork Allotment (15927):* T. 43 N., R. 83 W. Section 15: Lots 4, 5; Sec. 22: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, W½E½; Sec. 26: Lots 6, 7; Sec. 27: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4; Sec. 35: Lot 2. (See attached map)

**Applicant:** Red Canyon Ranch, Inc.

**A. Description of the Proposed Action:** The proposed action is for the BLM to transfer grazing privileges from Thomas Hirdes to Red Canyon Ranch, Inc., and to issue a new 10-year term grazing lease to Red Canyon Ranch, Inc. for the Lower Red Fork Allotment (15927). There are no modifications to the current terms and conditions outlined in the existing lease held by Thomas Hirdes. Red Canyon Ranch leases the base property from Thomas Hirdes. The 10-year term of the proposed lease coincides with the terms of the lease agreement between the landowner and lessee, which is valid for a minimum of three years, and remains valid until withdrawal by either party. The BLM lease will terminate in 10 years, or upon termination of the base lease. The terms of the proposed lease are as follows:

Allotment	Livestock		Season of Use	% PL	AUMs	Type Use
	Number	Kind				
Lower Red Fork (15927)	5	Cattle	3/1 – 2/28	100	60	Active

**B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Related Implementation Plans**

LUP Name	<u>Buffalo Resource Management Plan</u>	Date Approved: <u>Oct 1985</u>
Other document	<u>Buffalo RMP Amendments</u>	Date Approved: <u>2001, 2003, 2011</u>
	<u>DOI Secretarial Order No.3310</u>	Date Approved: <u>Dec 2010</u>

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

1985 RMP: *GM-4: Manage “C” Category allotments as described below. Continue current authorized livestock use. Livestock kinds and numbers and the period of use will be authorized as at present for each individual lease.*

2001 Amendment: Pg. 18: *Livestock grazing is allowed on all public lands in the resource area except on about 6,000 acres where it has been determined to be incompatible with other resource uses or values.*

2003 Amendment: Pg. 8 and Appendix E provide for: *supporting measures to protect BLM recognized sensitive species (here sage-grouse). Areas, such as those seeded, will receive an intensive cultural inventory prior to disturbance. Vegetation herbicide treatments of invasive species, cheatgrass, requires a PUP (pesticide use proposal) approved by the BLM WY state office.*

DOI Order No.3310: *The public lands in these allotments are lacking in wilderness characteristics due to their small size (under 5,000 acres).*

**C. Identify the applicable NEPA document(s) and other related documents that cover the proposed action.**

WY-070-EA11-160, Bar C Draw, Lower Red Fork, and Nelly Carr Allotments Grazing Lease Transfer. FONSI/DR signed May 27, 2011.

*Note: This EA tiers to the 1985 Buffalo RMP and Amendments of 2001 & 2003.*

**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 this existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

Yes. The Bar C Draw, Lower Red Fork, and Nelly Carr EA, WY-070-EA11-160 analyzed authorizing livestock grazing on the Lower Red Fork Allotment at the following rate:

Allotment	Livestock		Season of Use	% PL	AUMs	Type Use
	Number	Kind				
Lower Red Fork (15927)	5	Cattle	3/1 – 2/28	100	60	Active

The proposed action would authorize the same number and kind of livestock and season of use analyzed in the EA. This is the same grazing that presently occurs. The area of the proposed action is identical to the analysis area.

**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 EA analyzed a proposed action grazing alternative and a No Action alternative which would end livestock grazing on this “C” category allotment. These alternatives are consistent with those used currently. No new environmental concerns, interests, resource values, or circumstances have been revealed since the EA was published in 2011 that would indicate a need for additional alternatives. There has been no new oil and gas development, range improvement construction, or other surface disturbing activity on the public lands since the previous EA was published.

**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. With respect to DOI Secretarial Order No.3310, the public lands in the Lower Red Fork allotment are lacking in wilderness characteristics due to their small size (less than 5,000 acres). The rangeland health assessment standard is consistent and unchanged. The existing analysis includes threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. The existing EA analyzes the impacts of grazing in the Lower Red Fork allotment on threatened & endangered and BLM sensitive species, including greater sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, black-tailed prairie dogs, black-footed ferrets, bald eagles and mountain plover. Greater sage-grouse nesting and wintering habitat is present in the allotment; ongoing livestock grazing is not expected to affect use of the area by sage-grouse. The EA also analyzes impacts to big game, additional mammals, migratory birds, and raptors. Grazing has occurred historically in this allotment and these species have continued to thrive. No BLM sensitive species have been designated since the publication of the Lower Red Fork EA.

**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(s)?**

Yes. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action are similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA documents to which this proposal tiers. The EA describes and analyzes impacts to cultural resources, invasive species, threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, soils, vegetation, wildlife, and range management under both the proposed action and no action alternatives. Multiple resource specialists were consulted in development of the analysis. This is consistent with NEPA and current environmental assessment procedures.

The direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of livestock grazing in the Lower Red Fork Allotment are adequately addressed in the EA. There should be no additional effects on vegetation, wildlife, cultural, and other resources, as livestock grazing has occurred historically on this allotment. The EA identified no significant impacts to the site.

There is no mineral development in the Lower Red Fork Allotment, nor is any development proposed. Any impacts from future federal mineral development will be addressed in an EA specific to the proposed project. The existing EA also addresses noxious weed infestation and impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse in its cumulative impact statement.

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

Yes. Livestock grazing throughout the Buffalo Field Office was addressed in both the 1985 RMP and the 2001 RMP Amendment. Development of each of these documents was accompanied by substantial opportunities for public comment and involvement. During preparation of the 2011 EA, interested parties were notified of the NEPA process and had opportunity to participate and comment on the document. A Protest and Appeal period was available for the EA; none were received.

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resource Represented</u>
Charlotte Darling	Biological Science Technician	Range/Preparer
Allison Barnes	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness
Kay Medders	Rangeland Mgmt Specialist	Range, Vegetation
Seth Lambert	Cultural Resource Specialist	Cultural Resources
Jennifer Morton	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife
Chris Durham	Asst. Field Manager	Resources
John Kelley	Planning & Env. Coordinator	NEPA Planning

Refer to the EA and EIS for a complete list of the original environmental analysis team members.

**CONCLUSION**

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

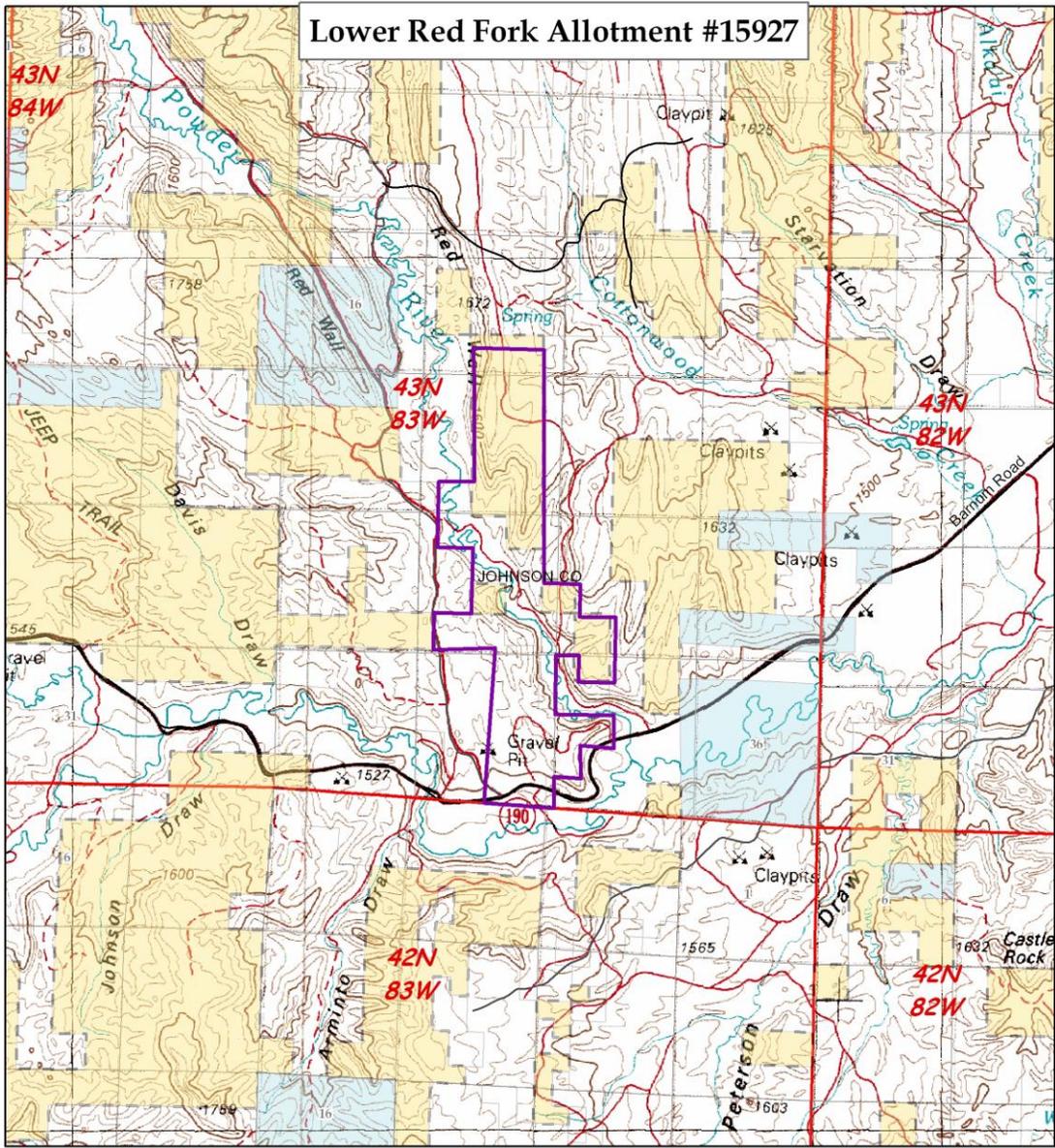
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Signature of Project Lead

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Signature of NEPA Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Responsible Official  
Duane Spencer, Field Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**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.



6/8/2011 cdarling



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