

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Finding of No Significant Impact for
James Ryegrass Grazing Association, LLC**

DOI-BLM-WY-100-2014-06-EA

Wyoming High Desert District
Pinedale Field Office
1625 West Pine Street
Pinedale, WY 82941-0768

BLM



Introduction:

The Bureau of Land Management, Pinedale Field Office conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA)-(DOI-BLM-WY-100-2014-06-EA) to determine if livestock grazing should be authorized in the James Ryegrass and Webb Draw Pasture Allotments, if livestock grazing is to be authorized, the appropriate terms and conditions necessary to achieve land use objectives, including Standards of Rangeland Health. The James Ryegrass Allotment is located approximately 18 miles west of Pinedale, Wyoming in Township 34 North, Range 112 West, Sections 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30. The Webb Draw Pasture Allotment is located approximately 21 miles northwest of Pinedale, Wyoming in Township 35 North, Range 112 West, Sections 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 and 34. The project would renew the applicants' livestock grazing permits for a term of ten years.

NEED AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:

NEED: The need for the action is to move towards achievement of fundamentals of Rangeland Health; to act on BLM's responsibility under FLPMA and the Taylor Grazing Act to provide orderly use of the rangeland resources, where appropriate; to correct deficiencies in the current terms and conditions of the permit; and work towards achievement of the following objectives.

Objectives

James Ryegrass

- 1) The James Ryegrass Allotment is in the Sagebrush/Rhizomatous grass-Bluegrass vegetation state. We want to increase the composition of native perennial bunchgrasses.
- 2) Maintain or enhance sage grouse habitat suitability based on criteria outlined in the habitat assessment framework.
- 3) Maintain integrity of big game migration corridors.

Webb Draw Pasture

- 1) The Webb Pasture is in the Sagebrush/Bunchgrass vegetation state. We want to maintain or enhance the relative composition of native perennial bunchgrasses.
- 2) Maintain or enhance sage grouse habitat suitability based on criteria outlined in the habitat assessment framework.
- 3) Maintain integrity of big game migration corridors

PURPOSE: BLMs purpose is to provide the opportunity for continued livestock grazing in James Ryegrass and Webb Draw Pasture Allotments.

DECISION TO BE MADE: The BLM will decide whether or not to renew the grazing permit for James Ryegrass Grazing Association, LLC in the James Ryegrass and Webb Draw Pasture Allotments, and if so, under what terms and conditions.

Plan Conformance:

The action is in conformance with multiple management objectives and decisions of the Pinedale Field Office Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, approved on November 26, 2008. The plan has been reviewed (see page 2-17 and 2-19) and the proposed action as mitigated, conforms to the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5.

Finding of No Significant Impact Determination:

On the basis of the information contained in the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that (1) the implementation of Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the "Pinedale Field Office Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," (November 2008) and (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Pinedale Field Office Record of

Decision and Resource Management Plan; and (3) The Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council of Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA and as described below.

Context:

The Action would occur within both the James Ryegrass and Webb Draw Pasture Allotments and would have local impacts on the resources similar to and within the scope of those described and considered within the Pinedale Resource Management Plan and EIS/Record of Decision. The project is a site-specific action directly involving approximately 5,295 acres of BLM administered land that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

Intensity:

The following discussion is organized around the 10 Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into BLM's Critical Elements of the Human Environment list (H-1790-1), and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders. The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

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

The Proposed Action/Alternatives would affect resources as described in the EA. Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to the various resources were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Pinedale Resource Management Plan/EIS Record of Decision.

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

No aspect of the Action/Alternatives would have an effect on public health and safety.

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

There are no unique characteristics present within the allotments.

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

No anticipated project specific effects are likely to be considered highly controversial.

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

The Action/Alternatives are not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

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.

This project neither establishes a precedent nor represents a decision in principle about future actions. The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. An analysis of the direct and indirect, and cumulative effects of the alternatives is described in

Chapter 4 of the EA.

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

The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the anticipated effects of the project is contained in Chapter 4 of the EA.

The environmental analysis did not reveal any cumulative effect beyond those already analyzed in the EIS, which accompanied the Pinedale RMP.

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 historical resources.

The Action/Alternatives will not adversely affect any eligible sites for listing in NRHP or cause the loss of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

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.

The Action/Alternatives will not adversely affect and endangered or threatened species or its habitat. Water depletion is below the "de minimus" threshold of 0.1 acre-feet. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact the Colorado River fish species or the recovery actions. Greater sage-grouse would not be significantly impacted because greater seasonal restrictions would be followed, disturbance of sagebrush habitat would be minimized as practicable, and new fences would be constructed using marked reflectors to make the wires more visible. The project area is not known to contain habitat for Black-footed Ferret, Grizzly Bear, Canada Lynx, Kendall Warm Springs Dace, Least tern, Pallid Sturgeon, Piping Plover, Western Prairie Fringed Orchid, Whooping Crane, Ute Ladies'-tresses, North American Wolverine, Whitebark Pine and the Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

10.) Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The action is in conformance with the Pinedale RMP, which provides the direction and guidance for public land management for the area where the James Ryegrass and Webb Pasture Allotments is located.

For 
Shane DeForest
Field Manager
Pinedale Field Office

4-15-14
Date