



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:
4130 (NVL0100)

JAN 06 2010

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Egan Field Office has completed the Preliminary Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Paris Livestock (2704538) Term Grazing Permit Renewal for the Cold Creek (00603), Corta (10033), Duckwater (00701), Newark (00608), Railroad Pass (00601), Sand Springs (00086), South Pancake (00615), and Warm Springs Trail (00622) Allotments. This EA is being sent to you for solicitation of your comments and input. The EA is enclosed for a 30 day public review and comment period. You are receiving this letter because you expressed interest in grazing management actions on one or more of these allotments in your reply to the Ely BLM District 2009 Annual Consultation, Cooperation, and Coordination letter.

The proposed action of the EA is to fully process and renew the grazing permit for Paris Livestock on the Cold Creek, Corta, Duckwater, Newark, Railroad Pass, Sand Springs, South Pancake, and Warm Springs Trail Allotments and authorize livestock grazing on these allotments. No changes to livestock grazing management are being proposed.

The issuance of a new permit could be for a period up to ten years. Together these allotments encompass approximately 1,377,000 public land acres, however grazing is limited to particular portions of most of these allotments under this permit. The grazing permit area occurs in eastern Eureka, northeastern Nye, and western White Pine Counties, Nevada.

Please review the EA and provide written comments **by February 10, 2010**. Please address all comments to:

Amanda Anderson, Rangeland Management Specialist
Bureau of Land Management
HC 33, Box 33500
Ely, Nevada 89301

Please note, before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment including your personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions about this project, please contact Amanda Anderson, Rangeland Management Specialist at (775) 289-1855.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeffrey A. Weeks

Jeffrey A. Weeks
Field Manager
Egan Field Office

Enclosure

cc: Interested Publics Mailing List (Name Only)

Paris Livestock
Steve Foree, NDOW
Eureka County Department of Natural Resources
Western Watersheds Project
Steven Carter
Sustainable Grazing Coalition
Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition
Carl Slatowski
Joe McGloin
Thomas Gardner
Craig C. Downer
Robert Dickenson
Michele McDaniel, Mount Lewis Field Office, BLM
Marc Pointel, Tonopah Field Office, BLM
Refuge Manager, Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Karen Rajala
Nevada State Clearinghouse (electronic copy only)

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

**Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2009-0008-EA
January, 2010**

**Paris Livestock Term Grazing Permit Renewal on the
Railroad Pass, Newark, Duckwater, Cold Creek, Warm
Springs Trail, Corta, South Pancake, and Sand Springs
Allotments**

Location: Eureka, Nye, and White Pine Counties, NV

U.S. Department of the Interior
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1.0 Introduction: Need for Action

This document identifies issues, analyzes alternatives, and discloses the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed term grazing permit for Paris Livestock (2704538) on the Railroad Pass (00601), Newark (00608), Duckwater (00701), Cold Creek (00603), Warm Springs Trail (00622), Corta (10033), South Pancake (00615), and Sand Springs (00086) Allotments. These allotments are found in eastern Eureka, northeastern Nye, and western White Pine Counties (see Figure 1, Appendix I).

1.0.1 Background

Current management practices have been implemented since the Final Multiple Use Decisions were issued:

- Railroad Pass Allotment on November 9, 1995
- Newark Allotment on April 13, 1992
- Duckwater Allotment on June 9, 1995
- Cold Creek Allotment on January 23, 1992
- Corta Allotment on December 6, 1999
- South Pancake Allotment on April, 1991

This grazing permit is used to trail sheep south in the fall, over winter in the Duckwater and Sand Springs Allotments, and trail back north in the spring. Around November 1, they start south by trailing through the Railroad Pass and Cold Creek Allotments. After that they follow the Warm Springs Sheep Trail into the Newark Allotment. They graze sheep along the eastern edge of the Newark Allotment. From there, they move into the Six Mile Allotment (under a separate grazing permit) and the South Pancake Allotment. They winter some sheep in the Duckwater Allotment while others trail through the Duckwater Allotment into the Sand Springs Allotment. In the spring, they reverse through these allotments back to Railroad Pass. They get back to the Railroad Pass Allotment around April 15. They lamb in the Railroad Pass Allotment and hold a group of yearling lambs in the Cold Creek Allotment in the spring. The Corta Allotment is used in conjunction with the Railroad Pass Allotment in the spring.

1.1 Introduction of the Proposed Action.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Egan Field Office proposes to issue and fully process a term grazing permit for Paris Livestock (2704538) and authorize grazing on the Railroad Pass, Newark, Duckwater, Cold Creek, Warm Springs Trail, Corta, South Pancake, and Sand Springs Allotments.

Monitoring data were reviewed and assessments of the rangeland health of each allotment were completed in 2008-2009 through Standards Determination Documents (SDDs). Table 1 is a summary of the SDDs by allotment for achievement of the standards. These complete documents are available to review at the Ely BLM District Office and have previously been individually provided to the public for review and comment.

Table 1—Summary of Standards Achievement by Allotment

ALLOTMENT	STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3
NORTHEASTERN GREAT BASIN STANDARDS			
Allotment	Upland Sites	Riparian and Wetland Sites	Habitat
Railroad Pass (00601)	Standard achieved	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, but making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Newark (00608)	Standard achieved	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, but making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Cold Creek (00603)	Standard achieved	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, but making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Warm Springs Trail (00622)	Standard achieved	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, but making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Corta (10033)	Standard achieved	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor	Standard achieved
South Pancake (00615)	Standard achieved	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Duckwater (00701) Allotment was assessed by Use Area:			
Bull Corner Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor
Little Smoky Valley Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not

Table 1—Summary of Standards Achievement by Allotment

ALLOTMENT	STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3
NORTHEASTERN GREAT BASIN STANDARDS			
Allotment	Upland Sites	Riparian and Wetland Sites	Habitat
	contributing factor		a contributing factor
North Sand Springs Valley Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor
Pancake East Bench Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
Pogues Station Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor	Not applicable	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Sheep grazing is not a contributing factor
South Sand Springs Valley Use Area	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor	Not achieving the Standard, not making significant progress; Livestock are not a contributing factor
MOJAVE-SOUTHERN GREAT BASIN STANDARDS			
Allotment	Soils	Ecosystem Components	Habitat and Biota
Sand Springs (00086)	Standard achieved	Standard achieved	Not achieving the Standard, but making significant progress; Livestock grazing is not a contributing factor

1.2 Need for the Proposed Action.

The need for the proposal is to provide for legitimate multiple uses of the public lands by renewing the term grazing permit for Paris Livestock with updated terms and conditions for grazing use that conform to guidelines and achieve standards for Nevada’s Northeastern Great Basin Area and Nevada’s Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies and in accordance with Title 43 CFR 4130.2(a) which states, –Grazing permits or leases authorize use on the public lands and other BLM-administered lands that are designated in land use plans as available for livestock grazing.”

1.3 Objectives for the Proposed Action.

1.3.1. To renew the term grazing permit for Paris Livestock and authorize grazing in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and land use plans (LUP) across approximately 1,377,000 acres of public land.

1.3.2. To improve vegetative health and growth conditions on the allotments and continue to meet or make progress towards achieving the Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health as approved and published by Nevada's Northeastern Great Basin RAC and Nevada's Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC.

1.4 Relationship to Planning

Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: August 20, 2008

Grazing Allotments Included: Railroad Pass, Newark, Duckwater, Cold Creek, Warm Springs Trail, and South Pancake

The proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan signed August 20, 2008, which states, ~~“Manage livestock grazing on public lands to provide for a level of livestock grazing consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and watershed function and health.”~~ In addition, ~~“Do not allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health (p 85-86).”~~

This land use plan specifically provided for the following Management Decisions:

- LG-1—Make approximately 11,246,900 acres and 545,267 animal unit months available for livestock grazing on a long-term basis.
- LG-5—Maintain the current preference, season-of-use, and kind of livestock until the allotments that have not been evaluated for meeting or making progress toward meeting the standards or are in conformance with the policies are evaluated. Depending on the results of the standards assessment, maintain or modify grazing preference, seasons-of-use, kind of livestock, and grazing management practices to achieve the standards for rangeland health. Changes, such as improved livestock management, new range improvement projects, and changes in the amount and kinds of forage permanently available for livestock use, can lead to changes in preference, authorized season-of-use, or kind of livestock. Ensure changes continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including the standards for rangeland health.

Land Use Plan Name: Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision

Date Approved: October 6, 1997

Grazing Allotments Included: Sand Springs

The proposed action is in conformance with this land use plan because the Tonopah RMP specifically provided for the following Management Decision:

- 1.b. Manage livestock at initial stocking levels of 134,355 animal unit months for the Tonopah East area... Adjustments in use for each allotment will be based on short-term and/or long-term monitoring data methods as outlined in the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and other BLM technical references. Monitoring will be in consultation with the grazing permittee and other publics. If the desired

trend does not occur, the responsible class of animal (where it can be determined) will be reduced or excluded. In allotments where monitoring data do not distinguish use between livestock and wild horses and/or burros, the stocking level for livestock will be based on a proportion derived from previous planning documents.

Land Use Plan Name: Shoshone-Eureka Resource Management Plan Amendment and Record of Decision

Date Approved: November 6, 1987

Grazing Allotments Included: Corta

The proposed action is in conformance with this land use plan because the Shoshone-Eureka RMP Amendment specifically provided for in the following Resource Decisions:

- 1.b.(1) Livestock use may be licensed up to active preference (300,572 AUMs). However initial licensed use by livestock is anticipated to continue at the 5-year (1977-1981) average licensed use levels (239,717 AUMs), which is 20 percent below active preference.
- 1.b.(2) Continue existing rangeland monitoring studies and establish new studies as necessary to determine what adjustments in livestock use and wild horse numbers are needed to meet the objectives of this amendment. Actions could include, but will not be limited to, change in seasons-of-use, implementation of deferment and rest rotation grazing systems, change in livestock numbers, correction of livestock distribution problems, alteration of the number of wild horses, and development of range improvements...

Furthermore, the Shoshone-Eureka Rangeland Program Summary (December 1988) identifies that ~~implementation~~ of the Rangeland Management Program for allotments located within the Shoshone-Eureka Resource Area boundary, but administered by other BLM resource areas or districts, will be based on the administering district's established priorities." The Agreement for Administration of Resources between Ely and Battle Mountain Districts (1976) identifies the Corta Allotment as one of the ~~grazing~~ allotments located within the Battle Mountain District having intradistrict use, will be administered by the Ely District."

1.4.1 Relationship to Other Plans

The proposed action is consistent with the following Federal, State, and local plans to the maximum extent possible.

- White Pine County Portion (Lincoln/White Pine Planning Area) Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (2004)
- State Protocol Agreement between the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada and the Nevada Historic Preservation Office (1999)
- White Pine County Land Use Plan (2007)
- White Pine County Elk Management Plan (2007 revision)
- Nye County Comprehensive Plan (April 5, 1994)

1.4.2 Tiering

This document is tiered to the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).

1.5 Scoping and Public Involvement and Issues

The Paris Livestock term permit renewal proposal was internally scoped by the Egan Field Office ID Team/Resource Specialists on November 17, 2008 to identify any relevant issues.

A letter notifying Paris Livestock of the term permit renewal was sent on October 20, 2008.

The Paris Livestock proposal was posted on the Ely District Grazing Permit Renewal website on December 8, 2008. A letter notifying interested public of this term permit renewal was sent on November 20, 2008. Public scoping comments were received from Katie Fite, Western Watersheds Project. These comments were reviewed and considered.

On December 2, 2008, a Notice of Proposed Action on Lands in Wilderness was mailed to individuals and organizations that have expressed an interest in wilderness related actions requesting comments by January 23, 2009. No comments received from the Wilderness mailing list.

The Railroad Pass Allotment Standards Determination Document (SDD) was posted to the Ely District Grazing Permit Renewal website for a two week external review/public comment period, December 8, 2008 through December 28, 2008. Comments were received on December 15, 2008 from Katie Fite and Kenneth Cole, Western Watersheds Project. These comments were reviewed and considered.

The Newark Allotment SDD was posted to the Ely District Grazing Permit Renewal website for a two week external review/public comment period, March 12, 2009 through April 1, 2009. Hard copies were also sent to interested publics. Comments were received on March 23, 2009 from Kenneth Cole, Western Watershed Project and on March 31, 2009 from Richard Orr, Sustainable Grazing Coalition. These comments were reviewed and considered.

The Duckwater Allotment SDD was mailed to interest publics for an external review/public comment period, August 11, 2009 through September 4, 2009. Comments were received from Alan Forsgren of Duckwater Cattle Company and Thomas Gardener. These comments were reviewed and considered.

The Cold Creek Allotment and Warm Springs Trail SDD was posted to the Ely District Grazing Permit Renewal website for a two week external review/public comment period, September 3, 2008 through September 17, 2008. Letters notifying interested publics of this web posting and comment period were also sent. No comments were received.

The Corta and South Pancake Allotments SDD was posted to the Ely District Grazing Permit Renewal website for a two week external review/public comment period, March 12, 2009 through April 1, 2009. Letters notifying interested publics of this web posting and comment period were also sent. Comments were received on March 31, 2009 from Richard Orr, Sustainable Grazing Coalition. These comments were reviewed and considered.

The Sand Springs Allotment SDD was mailed to interest publics for a two week external review/public comment period, August 7, 2009 through August 21, 2009. No comments were received.

Pete Paris, Jr. of Paris Livestock also provided comments throughout these evaluations.

Potential issues identified with this proposal were sage-grouse (sensitive species), Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mule deer crucial summer and winter habitat, desert bighorn sheep (sensitive species), noxious and invasive weeds, special status plant species, cultural resources, wilderness, pygmy rabbit (sensitive species), and Newark Valley tui chub (sensitive species).

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Proposed Action

The BLM proposes to issue and fully process a new **term grazing permit for Paris Livestock** (2704538) and authorize grazing on the Railroad Pass, Newark, Duckwater, Cold Creek, Warm Springs Trail, Corta, South Pancake, and Sand Springs Allotments (Appendix I). This permit (Section 2.1.1) further defines grazing use areas within most allotments. The project area will be defined by these use areas. In the absence of designated use areas, the entire allotment will be considered for analysis.

2.1.1 Proposed term permit

The issuance of the term grazing permit will be for a period of up to 10 years. If this grazing preference is transferred during the ten year period with no changes to the terms and conditions the new term permit would be issued for the remaining term of this term permit.

The allotments are meeting or progressing towards the Standards and Guidelines for their respective area and sheep grazing was not identified as a significant contributing factor in not meeting the Standards. Due to an administrative/clerical error the season of use on the Corta Allotment will be corrected from the current permit to match that of the Final Multiple Use Decision which has been and will continue to be followed on the ground. Allowable use levels will be established and other terms and conditions will be further clarified from the current permit. No other changes to this permit are being proposed.

The **proposed term permit for Paris Livestock** and terms and conditions are as follows:

Table 2. Proposed Grazing Permit for Paris Livestock (2704538)

Allotment Name and Number	Livestock Number/Kind	Grazing Period Begin End	% Public Land*	Type Use	AUMs**
Sand Springs 00086	2132 Sheep	11/01 to 03/31	100	Active	2117
Railroad Pass 00601	467 Sheep	04/05 to 11/15	100	Active	691
Cold Creek 00603	1182 Sheep	04/15 to 04/30	100	Active	124
Cold Creek 00603	1200 Sheep	11/01 to 11/15	100	Active	118
Newark 00608	1642 Sheep	04/01 to 04/30	100	Active	324
Newark 00608	1642 Sheep	11/01 to 11/30	100	Active	324
South Pancake 00615	2268 Sheep	03/15 to 04/30	100	Active	701
South Pancake 00615	1114 Sheep	11/15 to 01/15	100	Active	454
Warm Springs Trail 00622	2750 Sheep	04/15 to 05/01	100	Active	307
Warm Springs Trail 00622	2754 Sheep	11/15 to 12/01	100	Active	308
Duckwater 00701	1572 Sheep	12/15 to 03/31	100	Active	1106
Duckwater 00701	1122 Sheep	01/01 to 03/31	100	Active	664
Corta 10033	640 Sheep	05/01 to 05/31	100	Active	128
Railroad Pass 00601 Corta Seeding	365 Sheep OR 73 Cattle	04/05 to 11/15	100	Active	540
*% Public Land is the percent of public land for billing purposes.					
**AUMs may differ from Active Permitted Use due to a rounding difference with the number of livestock and the period of use.					
Allotment AUMs Summary					
Allotment Name	ACTIVE AUMS	SUSPENDED AUMS	GRAZING PERMITTED USE		
Sand Spring	2116	0	2116		
Railroad Pass	1231	0	1231		
Cold Creek	242	0	242		
Newark	648	0	648		
South Pancake	1155	0	1155		
Warm Springs Trail	615	0	615		
Duckwater	1770	1768	3538		
Corta	128	72	200		

Terms and Conditions

1. To improve livestock distribution, the placement of mineral or salt supplements will be a minimum distance of ½ mile from water sources, riparian areas, winterfat bottoms, sensitive sites, populations of special status species, and cultural resource sites. Use of nutritional supplements (not forage) is encouraged to improve the ability of livestock to utilize forage and to improve livestock distribution across the allotment.

2. Sheep will not be trailed or bedded in winterfat bottoms. Sheep camps will be a minimum of ½ mile from winterfat bottoms. Sheep camps will be moved at least every seven days. No two sheep camps will locate in the same area in a grazing season. Sheep camps and bedding grounds will be located a minimum of ½ mile from springs. If sheep must water at springs, they must move to and from the area in a timely manner.
3. Grazing will be in accordance with the Final Decision associated with this EA.

Railroad Pass Allotment (00601):

1. Grazing in the Railroad Pass Allotment will be in accordance with the Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.
2. Livestock grazing capacity for the Corta Seeding within the Railroad Pass Allotment is established at 540 AUMs to be used exclusively within the seeding and may be either 365 sheep or 73 cattle use from 04/05 to 11/15
3. There will be no sheep grazing in native range identified in Figure 2, Appendix I from 06/01 to 10/31.
4. Maximum allowable use levels will be established as follows:
 - a. Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth
 - b. Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production.
 - c. Perennial non-native seedings: 65% current year's growth
 - d. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

Newark Allotment (00608):

1. Use is authorized from Beck Pass, west to Barrel Springs, south along the Barrel Springs Road to Highway 50, and east to the Newark Allotment boundary. The east face of the Pancake Range, east of Sulfur Springs, is also authorized (also see Figure 3, Appendix I).
2. Maximum utilization levels on the Newark Allotment will be established as follows:
 - Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth by weight
 - Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production by weight
 - Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.
3. Sheep will not be held in the winterfat bottom south of Carter (Smith) Well.
4. Use in the Newark Allotment will be in accordance with the Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.

Duckwater Allotment (00701):

1. 1,106 AUMs of authorized sheep use with a season of use from 12/15 – 03/31 will be used in the following use areas:
 - a. Bull Creek Corner/Poison Patch
 - b. Sand Springs North
 - c. Pancake East Bench
 - d. Sand Springs South
2. 664 AUMs of authorized sheep use with a season of use from 01/01 – 03/31 will be used in the following use areas:
 - a. Bull Creek Corner/Poison Patch

- b. Pogues Station
 - c. Little Smoky Valley
 - d. Pancake East Bench
3. In the Bull Corner/Poison Patch Use Area, sheep will be grazed along the main Poison Wash (Road 4106) and west of the wash.
 4. In the Pancake East Bench Use Area, sheep grazing will not be concentrated east of the Big Louie Road, so as not to conflict with cattle grazing.
 5. In the Sand Springs South Use Area, sheep use will not be concentrated in the winterfat flats or stringer meadows on the valley bottom and lower benches but will be distributed to the west slopes of the Pancake Mountains on the east side of the valley or the Dry Lake Hills on the west side of the valley.
 6. No motorized access is permitted within the designated wilderness and wilderness study areas without approval of the District Manager. Motorized access may be permitted for emergency situations, or where practical alternatives for reasonable grazing management needs are not available and such motorized use would not have an adverse impact on the natural environment.
 7. Maximum allowable use levels will be established as follows:
 - a. An allowable use level will be established as 40% of the current year's growth by weight for any spring use (3/1 – 5/31) of the key native cool season perennial bunchgrass species Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bluebunch wheatgrass, or bottlebrush squirreltail (or other cool season native perennial bunchgrass determined to be a key species for livestock, wild horses, or wildlife) in any native pasture evaluated by this SD in the Duckwater Allotment. An allowable use level will be established as 50% of the current year's growth by weight for yearlong use of these species. Utilization will be measured at established key grazing areas or other sites representative of the dominant vegetation in the allotment.
 - b. An allowable use level will be established as 35% of the current year's growth by weight for any spring use (3/1 – 5/31) of the key shrub winterfat. An allowable use level will be established as 50% of the current year's growth by weight for any spring use (3/1 – 5/31) of the key shrubs sickle saltbush, black sagebrush, four wing saltbush, (or other shrub determined to be a key species for livestock, wild horses, or wildlife) in any native pasture evaluated by this SD in the Duckwater Allotment.
 - c. An allowable use level will be established as 60% of the current year's growth by weight for winterfat, black sagebrush, sickle saltbush, four wing saltbush, (or other appropriate shrub) for fall/winter grazing in any pasture evaluated by this SD in the Duckwater Allotment. Utilization will be measured at established key grazing areas or other sites representative of the dominant vegetation in the allotment.
 - d. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

Cold Creek Allotment (00603):

1. Grazing in the Cold Creek Allotment will be in accordance with the Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.
2. Use is authorized only in the Diamond #3 and Diamond #4 Pastures.

3. Flexibility in sheep numbers will be allowed up to a maximum of 6,600 head, not to exceed the maximum preference. Flexibility in period of use will be allowed from 3/1 to 11/31.
4. Maximum allowable use levels will be established as follows:
 - a. Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth
 - b. Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production.
 - c. Perennial non-native seedings: 65% current year's growth
 - d. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

Warm Springs Trail (00622):

1. Sheep will be moved five miles per day unless otherwise approved by the authorized officer.

Corta Allotment (10033):

1. Grazing in the Corta Allotment will be in accordance with the Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.
2. Maximum allowable use levels will be established as follows:
 - a. Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth
 - b. Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production.
 - c. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

South Pancake Allotment (00615):

1. Grazing in the South Pancake Allotment will be in accordance with the Northeastern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.
2. On the South Pancake Allotment, 438 AUMs will be used east of Barrel Springs Road, by one band at a time, to be licensed separately as the "East Pasture." The remaining 716 sheep AUMs will be used and licensed west of Barrel Springs Road as the "West Pasture." Use on each half includes a ½ mile buffer strip on either side of the road and will serve as sheering sites for both bands. The overall period of use identified above will apply to both pastures.
3. On the South Pancake Allotment, four water haul sites will be located at the following location and will be at least ½ mile away from riparian areas, cultural sites, and special status species locations:
 - T18N R56E Section 34 SW1/4
 - T17N R56E Section 22 NE1/4
 - T16N R56E Section 10 NE1/4 (for winter use only)
 - T16N R56E Section 8 SW1/4
4. Full use in the West Pasture will be dependent on the use of water haul sites and the availability of snow.
5. Maximum allowable use levels will be established as follows:
 - a. Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth
 - b. Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production.

- c. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.

Sand Springs Allotment (00086):

1. Maximum utilization levels on the Sand Springs Allotment will be established as follows:
 - Perennial native grasses: 50% current year's growth
 - Perennial shrubs and half-shrubs: 50% use on current annual production.
 - Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture or removed from the allotment before utilization objectives are met or no later than 5 days after meeting the utilization objectives. Any deviation in livestock movement will require authorization from the authorized officer.
2. Livestock grazing will be in accordance with the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards and Guidelines.

Additional Stipulations Common to All Grazing Allotments:

1. Livestock numbers identified in the Term Grazing Permit are a function of seasons of use and permitted use. Deviations from those livestock numbers and seasons of use may be authorized on an annual basis where such deviations would not prevent attainment of the multiple-use objectives for the allotment.
2. Deviations from specified grazing use dates will be allowed when consistent with multiple-use objectives. Such deviations will require an application and written authorization from the authorized officer prior to grazing use.
3. The authorized officer is requiring that an actual use report (form 4130-5) be submitted within 15 days after completing your annual grazing use.
4. The payment of your grazing fees is due on or before the date specified in the grazing bill. This date is generally the opening date of your allotment. If payment is not received within 15 days of the due date, you will be charged a late fee assessment of \$25 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, not to exceed \$250. Payment with Visa, MasterCard or American Express is accepted. Failure to make payment within 30 days of the due date may result in trespass action.
5. Grazing use will be in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. The Standards and Guidelines have been developed by the respective Resource Advisory Council and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February 12, 1997. Grazing use will also be in accordance with 43 CFR Subpart 4180 - Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration.
6. If future monitoring data indicates that Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration are not being met, the permit will be reissued subject to revised terms and conditions.
7. The permittee must notify the authorized officer by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon discovery of any hazardous or solid wastes as defined in 40 CFR Part 261.
8. The permittee is responsible for all maintenance of assigned range improvements including wildlife escape ramps for both permanent and temporary water troughs.

9. When necessary, control or restrict the timing of livestock movement to minimize the transport of livestock-borne noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes between weed-infested and weed-free areas.

2.1.2 Invasive, Non-Native Species and Noxious Weeds

Weed Risk Assessments (Appendix II and III) for this project were completed on November 6, 2008 on the Ely District and on February 13, 2009 for the Corta Allotment. The measures listed in the Weed Risk Assessments will be followed when grazing occurs under this grazing permit to minimize the effects on weeds, as appropriate.

2.1.3 Monitoring

The Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan (August 2008) identifies monitoring to include, “Monitoring to assess rangeland health standards will include records of actual livestock use, measurements of forage utilization, ecological site inventory data, cover data, soil mapping, and allotment evaluations or rangeland health assessments. Conditions and trends of resources affected by livestock grazing will be monitored to support periodic analysis/evaluation, site-specific adjustments of livestock management actions, and term permit renewals. Monitoring will determine when grazing will be authorized in burned areas, and will contribute to the selection of prescribed burn treatments or other types of treatments based on attainment of resource objectives” (pg. 88).

Future range monitoring will consider all users (sheep, cattle, mule deer, sage-grouse, wild horses, etc.) and will set up new monitoring sites. New monitoring sites will focus on sheep grazing areas, particularly areas that overlap with crucial summer mule deer habitat and sage-grouse brood rearing areas.

2.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative represents the status quo – the permit would be issued without establishment of allowable use levels or modifications to the permit terms and conditions.

2.2.1 Current permit

Table 3. Current Grazing Permit for Paris Livestock (2704538)

Allotment Name and Number	Livestock Number/Kind	Grazing Period Begin End	% Public Land*	Type Use	AUMs**
Sand Springs 00086	934 Sheep	11/01 to 03/31	100	Active	927
Sand Springs 00086	1198 Sheep	11/01 to 03/31	100	Active	1190
Railroad Pass 00601	467 Sheep	04/05 to 11/15	100	Active	691
Cold Creek 00603	1182 Sheep	04/15 to 04/30	100	Active	124
Cold Creek 00603	1200 Sheep	11/01 to 11/15	100	Active	118
Newark 00608	1642 Sheep	04/01 to 04/30	100	Active	324
Newark 00608	1642 Sheep	11/01 to 11/30	100	Active	324
South Pancake 00615	2268 Sheep	03/15 to 04/30	100	Active	701
South Pancake 00615	1114 Sheep	11/15 to 01/15	100	Active	454
Warm Springs Trail 00622	2750 Sheep	04/15 to 05/01	100	Active	307
Warm Springs Trail 00622	2754 Sheep	11/15 to 12/01	100	Active	308
Duckwater 00701	1572 Sheep	12/15 to 03/31	100	Active	1106
Duckwater 00701	1122 Sheep	01/01 to 03/31	100	Active	664
Corta 10033	4850 Sheep	05/01 to 05/04	100	Active	128
Railroad Pass 00601 Corta Seeding	365 Sheep	04/05 to 11/15	100	Active	540
*% Public Land is the percent of public land for billing purposes. **AUMs may differ from Active Permitted Use due to a rounding difference with the number of livestock and the period of use.					
Allotment AUMs Summary					
Allotment Name	ACTIVE AUMS	SUSPENDED AUMS	GRAZING PERMITTED USE		
Sand Spring	2116	0	2116		
Railroad Pass	1231	0	1231		
Cold Creek	242	0	242		
Newark	648	0	648		
South Pancake	1155	0	1155		
Warm Springs Trail	615	0	615		
Duckwater	1770	1768	3538		
Corta	128	72	200		

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

The Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November, 2007) analyzes five alternatives of livestock grazing (p.4.16-1 to 4.16-15.), including a no-grazing alternative (D). No further analysis is necessary in this document.

- The Proposed RMP
- Alternative A, The Continuation of Current Existing (No Action alternative)
- Alternative B, the maintenance and restoration of healthy ecological systems
- Alternative C, commodity production
- Alternative D, conservation alternative (no-grazing alternative)

3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Effects

3.1 Allotment Information

The Railroad Pass Allotment encompasses approximately 27,025 public land acres (Figure 2, Appendix I). The grazing allotment occurs entirely within White Pine County, and is situated approximately 75 miles northwest of Ely, Nevada. The western portion of this allotment borders the Battle Mountain BLM District and the northern portion borders the Elko BLM District. The majority of the Railroad Pass Allotment is within the Diamond Hills South Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), and pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) habitat. No wilderness occurs within or adjacent to the Railroad Pass Allotment.

The Newark Allotment encompasses approximately 218,105 public land acres (Figure 3, Appendix I). The grazing allotment occurs entirely within White Pine County, and is situated approximately 45 miles west of Ely, Nevada. The western portion of this allotment borders the Battle Mountain BLM District. The permit area occurs within Newark Valley. The northeastern portion of the Newark Allotment is within the Triple B Wild Horse Herd Management Area and the southern portion of the allotment is within the Pancake Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment provides habitat for sage-grouse, elk, deer, and pronghorn. No wilderness occurs within the Newark Allotment. The nearest wilderness is the Shellback Wilderness, which is approximately ten miles away.

The Duckwater Allotment encompasses approximately 807,662 public land acres (Figure 4, Appendix I). The allotment occurs within White Pine County and Nye County. It surrounds Duckwater, Nevada. The western portion of this allotment borders the Battle Mountain BLM District and the eastern portion of this allotment borders Forest Service lands. The Duckwater Indian Reservation is within the Duckwater Allotment. Majority of the Duckwater Allotment is within the Pancake Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within sage-grouse, deer, elk, and pronghorn habitat. Portions of the allotment are within the Park Range Wilderness Study Area, the Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area, and the Riordian's Well Wilderness Study Area. The eastern portion of the Duckwater Allotment borders the White Pine Wilderness Area and the Currant Mountain Wilderness Area.

The Cold Creek Allotment encompasses approximately 62,103 public land acres (Figure 5, Appendix I). The grazing allotment occurs entirely within White Pine County, and is situated

approximately 65 miles northwest of Ely, Nevada. The northeast portion of this allotment borders Forest Service lands and the western portion borders the Battle Mountain BLM District. The Cold Creek Allotment is adjacent to the Diamond Hills South Wild Horse Herd Management Area and the Triple B Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within the sage-grouse, mule deer, pronghorn, and elk habitat. No wilderness occurs within or adjacent to the Cold Creek Allotment.

The Warm Springs Trail Allotment encompasses approximately 16,385 public land acres (Figure 6, Appendix I). The grazing permit area occurs entirely within White Pine County, and is situated along the western edge of White Pine County. A portion of the Warm Springs Trail is within the Triple B Wild Horse Herd Management Area and Pancake Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This trail is located within the sage-grouse, mule deer, elk, and pronghorn habitat. No wilderness occurs within the trail area. The nearest wilderness is the Shellback Wilderness, which is approximately 10 miles away.

The Corta Allotment encompasses approximately 1,130 public land acres (Figure 7, Appendix I). The grazing allotment occurs entirely within Eureka County, and is situated approximately 45 miles north of Eureka, Nevada. This grazing allotment is within the Battle Mountain BLM District and borders the Elko and Ely BLM Districts. The Corta Allotment is within the Diamond Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within sage-grouse, deer, elk, and pronghorn habitat. No wilderness occurs within or adjacent to the Corta Allotment.

The South Pancake Allotment encompasses approximately 31,088 public land acres (Figure 8, Appendix I). The grazing permit area occurs entirely within White Pine County, and is situated approximately 45 miles west of Ely, Nevada. The South Pancake Allotment is within the Pancake Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within sage-grouse, deer, elk, and pronghorn habitat. No wilderness occurs within the South Pancake Allotment. The nearest wilderness areas are the White Pine Range Wilderness and Shellback Wilderness, which are approximately 15 miles away.

The Sand Springs Allotment encompasses approximately 213,040 public land acres (Figure 9, Appendix I). The grazing allotment occurs entirely within Nye County, and is situated approximately 75 miles southwest of Ely, Nevada. This grazing allotment is within the Battle Mountain BLM District and borders the Ely BLM District. The majority of the Sand Springs Allotment is within the Sand Springs West Wild Horse Herd Management Area. This allotment is located within elk, deer, and pronghorn habitat. No wilderness occurs within the Sand Springs Allotment. The Park Range, Palisade Mesa, Antelope Range, Morey Peak, Fandango, and The Wall Wilderness Study Areas occur near the Sand Springs Allotment.

3.2 Resources/Concerns Considered for Analysis—Proposed Action

The following items have been evaluated for the potential for significant impacts to occur, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively, due to implementation of the proposed action.

Consideration of some of these items is to ensure compliance with laws, statutes or Executive Orders that impose certain requirements upon all Federal actions. Other items are relevant to the management of public lands in general and to the Ely BLM in particular.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Air Quality	No	Air quality in the affected area is generally good except for occasional dust storms. The proposed action would contribute to ambient dust in the air due to trailing, but the impact would be temporary and would not approach a level that would exceed any air quality standards. Detailed analysis is not required.
Cultural Resources	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Cultural Resources were analyzed on page 4.9-5 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Presently, all allotments have had portions inventoried to Class III standards with recordings of cultural resources. However, none of the allotments have been completely inventoried and unknown cultural resources may still be present. All eligible historic resources will be monitored for impacts. Mitigation and treatment will be applied as concerns are identified.
Forest Health	No	Unique or sensitive forests existing in the Diamond Mountains are inaccessible to livestock.
Rangeland Standards and Health	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Rangeland Standards and Health were analyzed on pages 4.16-3 through 4.16-4 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Beneficial impacts to rangeland standards and health are consistent with the need and objectives for the proposed action. An assessment and evaluation of livestock grazing managements achievement of the standards and conformance to the guidelines was completed in conjunction with this project (SDD). No further analysis is needed.
Migratory Birds	No	Insofar as the proposed action continues progress towards the RAC standards, it will aid in achieving the future desired condition of habitat for most migratory bird species.
Native American Religious Concerns	No	Tribal Coordination Letters were sent out November 19, 2008 for the Paris Livestock term permit renewal notifying the tribes of a 30-day comment period. No concerns were identified. Direct impacts and cumulative impacts would not occur because there were no identified concerns through coordination.
FWS Listed or proposed for listing Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat.*	No	Threatened, Endangered, or Proposed species are not known to be present in the project area.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	No	No hazardous or solid wastes exist on the project area, nor would any be introduced by the proposed action.
Water Quality, Drinking/Ground	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Water Resources were analyzed on page 4.3-5 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). The proposed action does not pose any impact to ground water in the project area. No surface water in the project area is used as human drinking water sources and no impaired waters of the State of Nevada are present in the project area.
Wilderness	No	The Park Range Wilderness Study Area (WSA), the Blue Eagle WSA, and the Riordian's Well WSA occur within the Duckwater Allotment, however the Blue Eagle and Riordian's Well WSAs are not grazed under this permit. No wilderness occurs within the Sand Springs Allotment, however the Park Range, Palisade Mesa, Antelope Range, Morey Peak, Fandango, and The Wall WSAs occur near the Sand Springs Allotment. Grazing is an allowable action within a WSA and will not have an impact on wilderness character.
Environmental Justice	No	No environmental justice issues are present at or near the project area. No minority or low income populations would be unduly affected by the proposed action.
Floodplains	No	No floodplains have been identified by HUD or FEMA within the project area. Floodplains, as defined in Executive Order 11988, may exist in the area, but would not be affected by the proposed action.
Watershed Management	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Watershed Management were analyzed on page 4.19-5 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Further changes to livestock management may be recommended during the watershed analysis process.
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Water Resources were analyzed on page 4.3-5 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Riparian areas were considered in the SDDs for these allotments. Under this grazing permit, sheep use snow and hauled water as their main water sources and rarely utilize riparian areas. If sheep do use riparian areas, it is for a very short duration only to allow the animals to drink water and move on.
Noxious and Invasive Weed Management	Yes	Livestock grazing has the potential to spread noxious and non-native, invasive weeds. Analyzed in Section 3.2.1.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
<p>Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the FWS as Threatened or Endangered</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Impacts from livestock grazing on selected Special Status animal Species were analyzed on page 4.7-28 through page 4.7-30 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).</p> <p>Newark Valley tui chub (<i>Gila bicolor newarkensis</i>) is found in three public springs and five private springs in the project area. Effects of the proposed action on the Newark Valley tui chub will be negligible, as the number of populations and relatively large population sizes ensure that the species is secure within its native range (NDOW 2005). Under this grazing permit, sheep use snow as their main water source and rarely utilize surface water. If sheep do use surface water, it is for a very short duration.</p> <p>The project area contains breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse. The key areas within all allotments are generally not meeting the herbaceous understory recommendations within the sage-grouse guidelines produced by Connelly et al. (2000). Potential effects are analyzed in Section 3.2.2.</p> <p>There are two documented occurrences of pygmy rabbit (<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>) within the Railroad Pass Allotment and one within the Cold Creek Allotment. There are likely additional populations throughout suitable habitat within the project area. The grazing management practices outlined in the proposed action are designed to maintain or move the vegetative conditions toward the cover and habitat standards outlined by the Standards and Guidelines for Nevada's Northeastern Great Basin Area (1997). These changes will likely have no effect upon or may benefit any currently extant populations of pygmy rabbit within the project area.</p> <p>Occupied desert bighorn sheep (<i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i>) habitat occurs in the Duckwater Allotment, Duckwater Hills Use Area and Broom Canyon Use Area. These use areas are not grazed under this domestic sheep permit. Desert bighorn sheep have also moved into the Sand Springs Allotment (Pancake Range) (M. Podborny, NDOW, personal comm., 2/2009). This allotment has a history of domestic sheep grazing. Domestic sheep will be closely managed to prevent interactions with desert bighorn sheep. Nevada Department of Wildlife is aware of this situation and is monitoring this desert bighorn sheep herd.</p>

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the FWS as Threatened or Endangered (continued)		The Railroad Valley skipper (<i>Hesperia uncas fulvapalla</i>) has been documented within the Sand Springs Allotment. Little is known of the life history, habitat needs, or distribution of the species (NatureServe 2009), and how or if the proposed action may affect the species. However, practices outlined in the proposed action are designed to maintain or move the vegetative conditions toward the cover and habitat standards outlined by the Standards and Guidelines for Nevada's Northeastern Great Basin Area (1997). Insofar as these practices are successful they should not be detrimental to any extant populations of Railroad Valley skipper within the project area.
Special Status Plant Species, other than those listed or proposed by the FWS as Threatened or Endangered	No	Special status plant species that are known to occur within the Sand Springs Allotment include Currant milkvetch (<i>Astragalus uncialis</i>), Eastwood milkweed (<i>Asclepias eastwoodiana</i>), Railroad Valley globemallow (<i>Sphaeralcea caespitosa</i> var. <i>williamsiae</i>), rayless tansy aster (<i>Machaeranthera grindelioides</i> var. <i>depressa</i>), and Shockley rockcress (<i>Arabis shockleyi</i>). Eastwood milkweed and Needle Mountains milkvetch (<i>Astragalus eurylobus</i>) are known to occur on the Duckwater Allotment. Due to the allowable use levels included as part of the proposed action, it is not anticipated that the proposed action would affect these species at a species or local population level.
Fish and Wildlife	Yes	Impacts from livestock grazing on Fish and Wildlife were analyzed on pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-12 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). The Buck and Bald area receives intermittent use by Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and is considered a corridor rather than occupied habitat. It is understood that domestic sheep grazing occurs in the vicinity and there is no issue with domestic sheep grazing in this area (T. Wasley, NDOW, personal comm., 3/2009). The proposed action is not anticipated to adversely affect Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Interactions between domestic and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep may occur but are unlikely due to the nature of domestic sheep grazing and rare occurrence of bighorn sheep. Within the Railroad Pass, Cold Creek, and Newark Allotments, the eastern slope of the Diamond Mountains has been identified by Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) as crucial summer mule deer habitat. Two areas of the eastern portion of the Duckwater Allotment and two areas within the Newark Allotment have been identified by NDOW as crucial mule deer winter range. These portions of the Newark and Duckwater Allotments are not grazed under this grazing permit. Potential conflict between sheep grazing and crucial summer mule deer habitat is analyzed in Section 3.2.3.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Wild Horses	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Wild Horses were analyzed on page 4.8-6 of the Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). The project area is within portions of the Diamond Hills South Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA), the Triple B HMA, the Pancake HMA, the Diamond HMA, and the Sand Springs West HMA. Site specific examination of the allotments did not reveal any concerns above those addressed in the EIS.
Soil Resources	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Soil Resources were analyzed on page 4.4-4 in the Ely Proposed resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Soils were analyzed in accordance with RAC Standards and Guidelines in the SDDs. This analysis did not reveal any soil resource concerns.
Prime and Unique Farmlands	No	This resource was dismissed from further consideration in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) on page 4.1-3. There are approximately 53,925 acres of prime farmland in the Ely District portion of the project area. There are approximately 7,914 acres of prime farmland in the Sand Springs Allotment. The Corta Allotment is within the Diamond Valley Soil Survey Area which did not identify prime farmlands. Livestock grazing will not impact prime farmlands because it will not change soil characteristics that affect farmland status.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	No	Not present in the project area.
Visual Resource Management (VRM)	No	The proposed action is consistent with the VRM classification 1, 2, 3, and 4 for the area therefore no direct or cumulative impacts to visual resources would occur.
Grazing Uses	No	The proposed action will continue to meet the RMP goals and objectives, including progressing toward meeting the standards for rangeland health. The proposed action is consistent with the need for the action, no further analysis is necessary.
Land Uses	No	There would be no modifications to land use authorizations through the proposed action, therefore no impacts would occur. No direct or cumulative impacts would occur to access and land use.
Recreation Uses	No	Design features identified in the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to recreational activities
Paleontological Resources	No	No currently identified paleontological resources are present in the project area.
Mineral Resources	No	There would be no modifications to mineral resources through the proposed action, therefore no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts would occur to minerals.

Resource/Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
Vegetative Resources	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Vegetation (including Riparian) Resources were analyzed on page 4.5-9 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Beneficial impacts to vegetative resources are consistent with the need and objectives for the proposed action. No further analysis is needed.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	No	No Wild and Scenic Rivers occur within or adjacent to the project area.

*Consultation required unless a "not present" or "no effect" finding is made

The resources that have been identified as affected by the proposed action will be analyzed. These resources are invasive non-native species including noxious weeds, sage-grouse (special status animal species), and crucial mule deer habitat (wildlife).

3.2.1 Noxious and Non-native, Invasive Weeds Affected Environment

No field weed surveys were completed for this project. Instead the Ely District and Battle Mountain District weed inventory data was consulted. These areas were last inventoried for noxious weeds in 2002, 2003 and 2005.

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Cold Creek Allotment: musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), hoary cress (*Lepidium draba*), tall whitetop (*Lepidium latifolium*), Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*), and black henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*).

The following species are found within the boundaries of the use areas for this permit in the Duckwater Allotment: Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), musk thistle, bull thistle, hoary cress, tall whitetop, Scotch thistle, and salt cedar (*Tamarix spp*).

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Newark Allotment: Russian knapweed, musk thistle, bull thistle, hoary cress, tall whitetop, Scotch thistle, and salt cedar, spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), and poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*).

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Railroad Pass Allotment: Russian knapweed, musk thistle, bull thistle, hoary cress, Scotch thistle, salt cedar, spotted knapweed, water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*).

The following species is found within the boundaries of the South Pancake Allotment: hoary cress.

The following species are found along the Warm Springs Trail Allotment: Russian knapweed, musk thistle, bull thistle, hoary cress, black henbane, spotted knapweed, and Canada thistle.

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Corta Allotment: Russian knapweed, musk thistle, Scotch thistle, hoary cress, and black henbane. In 1989, leafy spurge was documented on the Corta Allotment however it has not been documented since that time.

No weed inventory data for the Sand Springs Allotment is currently available however similar weed species are likely to occur throughout this allotment. Most of these species are also found along roads and drainages leading to these allotments

It should be noted that these allotments border the BLM Battle Mountain, Elko, and/or Ely Districts. While not officially documented the following non-native invasive weeds probably occur in or around all allotments: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*).

Environmental Effects

Proposed Action

Noxious and Invasive Weed Risk Assessments were completed for this project and can be found in Appendix II and III. The Risk Rating is Moderate (32) for this project. Since there are currently many weed infestations within these allotments the proposed action could increase the populations of the noxious and invasive weeds already within the allotments and could aid in the introduction of weeds from surrounding areas. If new weed infestations establish within the allotments, this could have an adverse impact on those native plant communities. Also, increases of cheatgrass could alter the fire regime in the area.

These impacts would be less than the No-Action Alternative due to establishing utilization levels for native vegetation. This will allow for more vigorous native plant communities that could better compete against non-native invasive plant invasion. Also, by following the measures listed in the Weed Risk Assessments effects from weeds should be minimized.

No Action

Under the no action alternative, effects to noxious and invasive weeds would continue without the stipulations of the proposed action and without the established utilization levels for more vigorous native plant communities.

3.2.2 Special Status Animal Species

Greater Sage-grouse

Affected Environment

There are 44 sage-grouse leks within a three mile buffer of the project area (Figure 10, Appendix I). Table 4 summarizes lek numbers as well as sage-grouse habitat type by allotment.

Table 4—Summary of sage-grouse habitat by allotment.

Allotment	Number of known leks					Sage-grouse habitat present		
	Active	Inactive	Historic	Unknown/ Uncertain	Total	winter	nesting	summer, brood- rearing
Railroad Pass				3	3	X	X	X
Newark (Paris use area)			1	1	2	X	X	X
Duckwater	2	1		5	8	X	X	X
Cold Creek	1			4	5	X	X	X
Warm Springs Trail	4			10	14	X	X	X
South Pancake	6			6	12	X	X	X
Sand Springs					0	X		X
Corta					0	X	X	X

Sage-grouse often nest in suitable habitat within three miles of a lek site. The sage-grouse breeding and nesting period is generally considered to be approximately March 15 through May 31. The brood-rearing period is generally considered to be June 1 through October 31. The wintering period is generally considered to be November 1 through March 14. The project area is located within the Butte/Buck/White Pine, Diamond, Monitor, and Quinn sage-grouse Population Management Units (PMU).

**Environmental Effects
Proposed Action**

The Greater Sage-Grouse is a high-profile Sensitive Species currently undergoing review for Threatened or Endangered Status (USDI 2008). It has been identified as an “umbrella” species by the Ely District BLM, and chosen to represent the habitat needs of the sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.) obligate or sagebrush/woodland dependent guild (BLM 2007; p. 4.7-10). The White Pine County sage-grouse conservation plan (hereafter termed the Plan; 2004) identified approximately 49 percent (950,773 ac.) of potential (1,870,317 ac.) sage-grouse habitat within the Butte/Buck/White Pine PMU as not meeting the sage-grouse habitat guideline standards (Connelly et al. 2000). In the sagebrush habitat rating system used in the Plan, one category, termed “R2”, is defined as “Areas with inadequate grass/forb understory composition, adequate sagebrush cover”. The Plan estimated approximately 708,146 acres of sagebrush habitat in this category throughout the PMU, which includes the allotments associated with this grazing permit. Based on the cover data collected for these allotments, the sagebrush habitat communities at most of the key areas measured within the project area fall under this category.

Key areas are sited in areas representative of livestock grazing on the major vegetation types throughout an allotment. In the Railroad Pass Allotment, two of the key areas are in big sagebrush, needlegrass, and bluebunch wheatgrass vegetative communities and one study site is in a Wyoming big sagebrush, Indian ricegrass, and needleandthread grass vegetative community. These areas are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. Under the sage-grouse guidelines (Connelly et al. 2000), the herbaceous grass and forb component combined should comprise at least 15 percent of the vegetative community by cover, and sagebrush should comprise at least 15-25 percent of vegetative cover. These sites are not meeting the herbaceous understory

requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprised only 4percent at RR-4, 4percent at RR-6, and 5percent at SS-1. In addition, the percent cover of sagebrush was 10 percent at RR-4, 19 percent at RR-6, and 18 percent at SS-1 which is within that recommended in the sage-grouse guidelines for RR-6 and SS-1 but not RR-4. The total vegetative cover, according to the ecological site descriptions (ESDs), for RR-4 and RR-6 is 20-30 percent and 10-20 percent for SS-1.

In the Newark Allotment, two of the key areas are in black sagebrush/Indian ricegrass vegetative community. These areas are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These sites are not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprised less than 1% at N-2 and N-6. In addition, the percent cover of black sagebrush was 16 percent at N-2 and 17 percent at N-6 which is within that recommended in the sage-grouse guidelines. The total vegetative cover, according to the ESD for these sites, is 15-20 percent for both key areas.

On the Pogues Station, South Sand Springs, and Pancake East Bench Use Areas of the Duckwater Allotment, none of the key areas or study sites are located in potential sage-grouse habitat. However, professional observation and quantitative measurements from surrounding areas indicate that sagebrush communities in these areas are also heavily skewed in favor of shrubs, and thus they likely do not meet the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines by Connelly et al. (2000).

On the Bull Corner/Poison Patch Use Area of the Duckwater Allotment, one of the key areas (DW-40) is within a black sagebrush ecological site making it current or potential sage-grouse habitat. This site is not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprise only 1 percent cover. Black sagebrush cover is 6 percent. The total vegetative cover, according to the ecological site description (ESD) for this site, is 15-20 percent.

On the Little Smoky Valley Use Area of the Duckwater Allotment, two of the study sites (SS-2 and SS-3) are within black sagebrush ecological sites making them current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These sites are not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth in the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprise only 1 percent cover at each study site. Black sagebrush cover is 14 percent at SS-2 and 17 percent at SS-3. The total vegetative cover, according to the ESD for these sites, is 15-20 percent at SS-2 and 20-30 percent at SS-3.

On the North Sand Springs Use Area of the Duckwater Allotment, two of the key areas (DW-21 and DW-58) are within Wyoming big sagebrush ecological sites making them current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These sites are not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth in the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprise only 1 percent cover at each key area. Wyoming big sagebrush cover was 7 percent at DW-21 and 4 percent at DW-58. The total vegetative cover, according the ESD for these sites, is 10-20 percent at both key areas.

In the Cold Creek Allotment, three of the key areas are located in Wyoming big sagebrush/Indian ricegrass/needleandthread, big sagebrush/Thurber's needlegrass/blue bunch wheatgrass or Wyoming big sagebrush/bottlebrush squirreltail/Sandberg's bluegrass ecological sites, and are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. One of these sites (Diamond #3) was meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprised 15 percent cover. Huntington #1 and Huntington #3 had 9 percent and 2 percent grasses and forbs combined respectively. Only one of the sites was meeting the requirement for sagebrush cover for sage-grouse. Diamond #3 had 15 percent sagebrush while Huntington #1 had 13 percent and Huntington #3 had 10 percent. The total vegetative cover, according to the ESDs for these sites, is 20-30 percent for Diamond #3, 5-10 percent for Huntington #1, and 10-20 percent for Huntington #3.

The Warm Springs Trail had two key areas in sagebrush vegetation communities which are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These key areas are not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines. Huntington #1 (Cold Creek Allotment) was discussed in the previous paragraph. WS-25 had an herbaceous understory comprised of 3 percent cover and black sagebrush cover of 1 percent. The total vegetative cover, according to the ESD for this site, is 15 to 20 percent.

On the Corta Allotment, two key areas were in big sagebrush vegetative communities which are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These key areas do not have cover data to compare to the sage-grouse guidelines. However, site photos show a good herbaceous understory component which likely meets these guidelines.

In the South Pancake Allotment, two of the key areas were in black sage/Indian ricegrass ecological sites, and are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These sites were not meeting the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, as all grasses and forbs combined comprised only 4% and 2% cover at SP-02 and SP-04, respectively. In addition, at SP-02 and SP-04, sagebrush cover was lower (15% and 10%, respectively) than recommended in the sage-grouse guidelines. The total vegetative cover, according to the ESD for this site, is 15 to 20 percent for both key areas.

On the Sand Springs Allotment, two key areas in the Pancake Range are in big sagebrush or black sagebrush vegetative communities which are current or potential sage-grouse habitat. These key areas do not have cover data to compare to the sage-grouse guidelines.

Site specific evaluation of sage-grouse habitat guidelines should be tempered with consideration of site potentials described in the rangeland ecological site descriptions. According to Connelly, et al. (2000):

—There is much variability among sagebrush-dominated habitats (Tisdale and Hironaka 1981, Hironaka et al. 1983), and some Wyoming sagebrush and low sagebrush breeding habitats may not support 25% herbaceous cover. In these areas, total herbaceous cover should be >15%. Further, the herbaceous height requirement may not be possible in habitats dominated by grasses that are relatively short when mature. In all of these cases, local biologists and range

ecologists should develop height and cover requirements that are reasonable and ecologically defensible.”

The Ely District Approved Resource Management Plan, developed by local specialists, states, “Sagebrush in the mid-late phase of the herbaceous state is desired for wildlife habitat.”

Although the key areas do not meet the herbaceous understory requirements set forth within the sage-grouse guidelines, Key areas for the Railroad Pass, Newark, South Pancake, and Duckwater Allotments are in the mid to late phase of the herbaceous state (seral stages). The vegetative grass cover is less than 15 percent at these key areas and the plant species composition component for grasses is below the site potentials based on the ecological site descriptions for these key areas. There is a diverse composition of grasses, but shrubs are above and grasses/forbs generally below the potential vegetative composition for the ecological site at all key areas. No seral stage data has been collected on the Corta, Cold Creek, Warm Springs Trail, and Sand Springs Allotments.

Sheep grazing has not been identified as a significant contributing factor to these vegetative conditions. Because the total herbaceous cover is already generally lacking throughout the project area, the prevention of further sage-grouse habitat loss is essential. Maximum allowable use levels have been established that allow grazing up to a maximum of 50 percent of the perennial herbaceous biomass throughout the project area for all herbivores. This level of utilization was determined from generalized guidelines as well as local knowledge of the area. Generally, utilization should not exceed the moderate level (41-60%). Proper use will maintain or improve the long term productivity of the plant community (Nevada Range Studies Task Group, 1984).

No Action

Under this alternative, there would be no difference in potential effect upon sage-grouse, when compared to the proposed action.

3.2.3 Fish and Wildlife

Mule Deer crucial habitat

Affected Environment

The eastern slope of the Diamond Mountains has been identified by Nevada Department of Wildlife as crucial summer range for mule deer. The vegetation community of this area is typified by stands of mountain big sagebrush with scattered aspen stands particularly in drainages. The western portions of the Cold Creek and Railroad Pass Allotments are located within this crucial summer habitat.

Environmental Effects

Proposed Action

The proposed action includes continuing sheep grazing within the Cold Creek Allotment from 4/15-4/30 and within the Railroad Pass Allotment from 4/05-11/15. The grazing management system under the proposed action has some potential to conflict with mule deer populations summering in the higher elevations of the Railroad Pass Allotment.

Little information exists regarding dietary overlap between domestic sheep and mule deer, but MacCracken and Hansen (1981) reported dietary overlap during late spring/summer between

domestic sheep and mule deer in south-central Colorado to be 15 percent, a relatively low amount. Currently, we have no monitoring data available related to this potential conflict. However, it is believed that by following good grazing management practices this potential conflict will be minimized. Terms and conditions of the proposed action serve to improve grazing management. Furthermore, additional monitoring has been included in the proposed action to collect data related to this potential conflict.

No Action

Under this alternative, there would be no difference in potential effect upon crucial summer mule deer range on the eastern slope of the Diamond Mountains on two allotments, when compared to the proposed action.

4.0 Cumulative Effects

According to the 1994 BLM publication (attached to WO-IB-94-310) –“Guidelines for Assessing and Documenting Cumulative Impacts,” the cumulative analysis can be focused on those issues and resource values identified by management, the public and others during scoping that are of major importance.”

Additionally, the guidance provided in The National BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1 (2008), for analyzing cumulative effects issues states, —determine which of the issues identified for analysis may involve a cumulative effect with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions. If the proposed action and alternatives would have no direct or indirect effects on a resource, you do not need a cumulative effects analysis on that resource” (p.57). Also, a comprehensive cumulative impacts analysis can be found on pages 4.28-1 through 4.36-1 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007).

The Cumulative Effects Study Area (CESA) on non-native, invasive species and special status species including sage-grouse is defined as the Huntington, Newark, Duckwater, Railroad Valley, North Little Smoky Valley, Central Little Smoky Valley, South Little Smoky Valley, and Big Sand Springs Valley Watersheds. Privately owned land, Forest Service lands, and the Duckwater Indian Reservation occur within this CESA.

4.1 Past Activities

Livestock grazing has a long history in the region dating back to the late 1800’s. Throughout its history, livestock grazing has been characterized by localized areas of intense use. Hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and other activities occur on all allotments year round. OHV use may occur on the roads and two-tracks on the allotments. Range improvements have occurred on all allotments to improve grazing management and include fencing, stockwater developments, and vegetation treatments. Nevada has been prone to extended periods of drought. Under these conditions, wildfires can be frequent. Mining activity has taken place within the watersheds. Oil and gas exploration has occurred through the CESA and oil was discovered in Railroad Valley.

4.2 Present Activities

Allotments are currently being grazed by livestock. Hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and other activities occur on all allotments year round. OHV use may occur on the roads and two-tracks on the allotments. Maintenance of range improvements is ongoing. Oil and gas exploration is continuing throughout the CESA. An annual re-enactment of the Pony Express Trail ride offers a recreational opportunity to experience the historical open space aspects of the area. Concurrently with this grazing permit, other grazing permits on these allotments are also being analyzed for renewal.

4.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFA)

Wildfires are likely within the CESA. Hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and other activities will probably occur on all allotments year round. OHV use could occur on the roads and two-tracks on the allotments. Maintenance of range improvements is ongoing. New range improvement projects are considered on an annual basis and analyzed on a site specific basis. A gravel pit expansion is planned near Duckwater, Nevada.

4.4 Cumulative Effects Summary

Noxious and Non-Native, Invasive Weeds

Transportation activities, including existing road maintenance, grazing, recreation, and wildland fires within the CESA can contribute to the chance of spreading noxious and non-native, invasive weeds. Past activities have facilitated the spread of non-native, invasive species, especially along transportation routes and drainages.

Establishment of non-native, invasive species would likely occur under the proposed action and other RFFAs. The spread of non-native invasive species would be minimized through the measures listed in the Risk Assessment for Noxious and Invasive Weeds (Appendix II and III). In addition, the active BLM Ely District Weed Management Program would minimize the spread of weeds throughout the CESA.

Special Status Animal Species—Greater Sage-Grouse

The proposed action, in combination with RFFAs, is expected to have minimal cumulative effect on any greater sage-grouse extant within the CESA. Insofar as the proposed action, in combination with the potential proposed actions for other livestock operators holding common use permits on the project area, works to move the vegetative community conditions toward those outlined in the sage-grouse guidelines (Connelly et al. 2000), the Ely ROD/RMP (2008), and the RAC Standards and Guidelines, they will benefit Greater Sage-Grouse populations within the CESA.

Fish and Wildlife

The proposed action, in combination with RFFAs, is expected to have no additional cumulative effect on fish and wildlife above that described in Section 3.2.3.

5.0 Proposed Mitigation and Monitoring

5.1 Proposed Mitigation

Outlined design features incorporated into the proposed action are sufficient. No additional mitigation is proposed based on the analysis of environmental consequences.

5.2 Proposed Monitoring

Additional monitoring has been included as part of the Proposed Action.

6.0 List of Preparers - BLM Egan Field Office Resource Specialists

Amanda Anderson	Rangeland Resources/Project Lead
Gina Jones	Ecology/Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Bonnie Million	Noxious and Invasive, Non-native Species
Mindy Seal	Vegetation, Noxious and Invasive, Non-native Species
Cameron Collins	Wildlife, Special Status Species, and Migratory Birds
Kalem Lenard	Recreation and Visual Resources
Lisa Gilbert	Cultural Resources
Mark D'Aversa	Soil, Water, Wetland and Riparian, and Floodplain Resources
Ruth Thompson	Wild Horse and Burro Resources
Elvis Wall	Native American Cultural Concerns
Dave Jacobson	Wilderness Resources
Zach Peterson	Forestry Resources
Chris Mayer	Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist

6.1 Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted

Pete Paris, Jr.	Paris Livestock
Michele McDaniel	Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Tom Darrington	Rangeland Resources, Mount Lewis Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Valerie Metscher	Rangeland Resources, Tonopah Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Shawn Richardson	Wild Horse and Burro Resources, Mount Lewis Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Amy Ruhs	Wild Horse and Burro and Rangeland Resources, Tonopah Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Devin Englestead	Wildlife, Special Status Species, and Migratory Birds, Tonopah Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Marc Pointel	Rangeland Resources, Tonopah Field Office, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Christopher Cook	Cultural Resources, Battle Mountain District, BLM
Steve Foree	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Chris Crookshanks	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Tony Wasley	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Mike Podborny	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Jerry Millett	Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
Dianna Buckner	Ely Shoshone Tribe
Rupert Steele	Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Indian Reservation
Lora Tom	Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Jeannine Borchardth	Indian Peaks Band
Glenn Rogers	Shivwits Band of Paiutes

Ranae Pete	Cedar City Band of Paiutes
Ona Segundo	Kaibab Band of Paiutes Indians
Alfeda Mitre	Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Lawrence Bear	Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians
Philbert Swain	Moapa Band of Paiutes
David Gonzales	Te-Moak Tribe of the Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada

6.2 Public Notice of Availability

On November 20, 2008 letters were sent to interested persons and organizations informing them of the Paris Livestock term grazing permit renewal. On December 8, 2008, this grazing permit renewal summary was posted on the BLM Ely District Website is located at:

<http://www.blm.gov/nv>

An external review period of the preliminary EA will be issued.

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APPENDIX I—Maps

Figure 1—Project Area Map

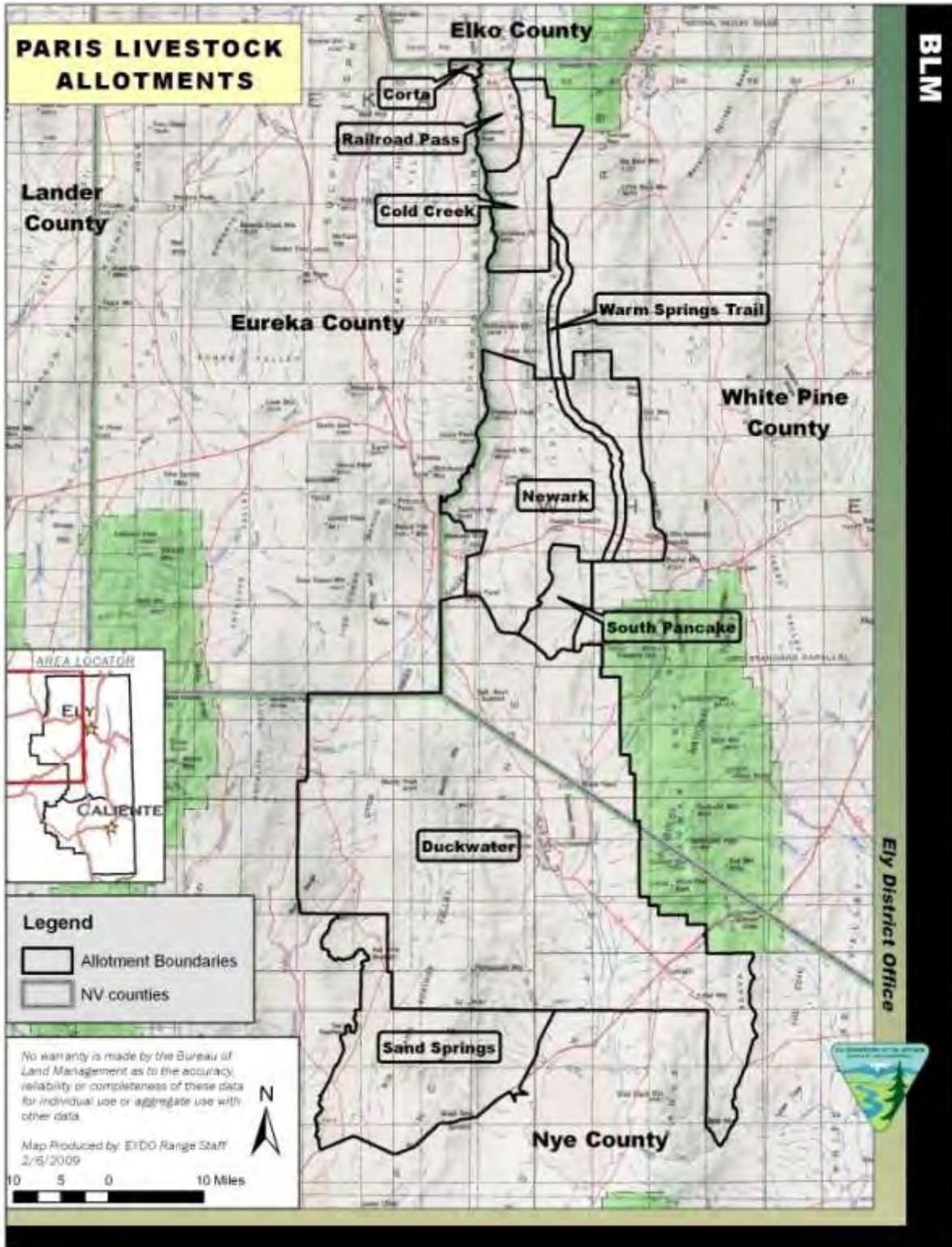


Figure 2—Railroad Pass Allotment

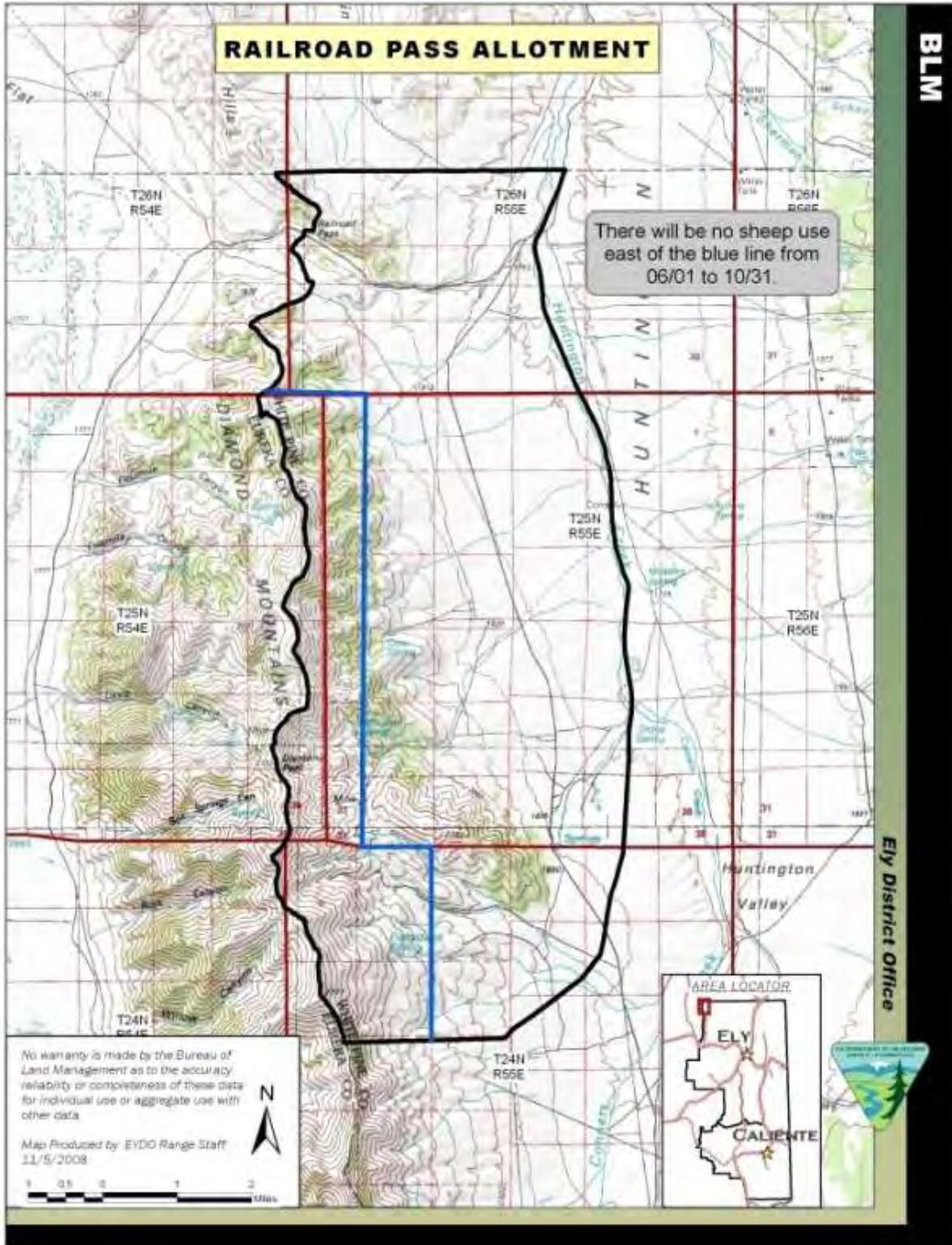


Figure 3—Newark Allotment

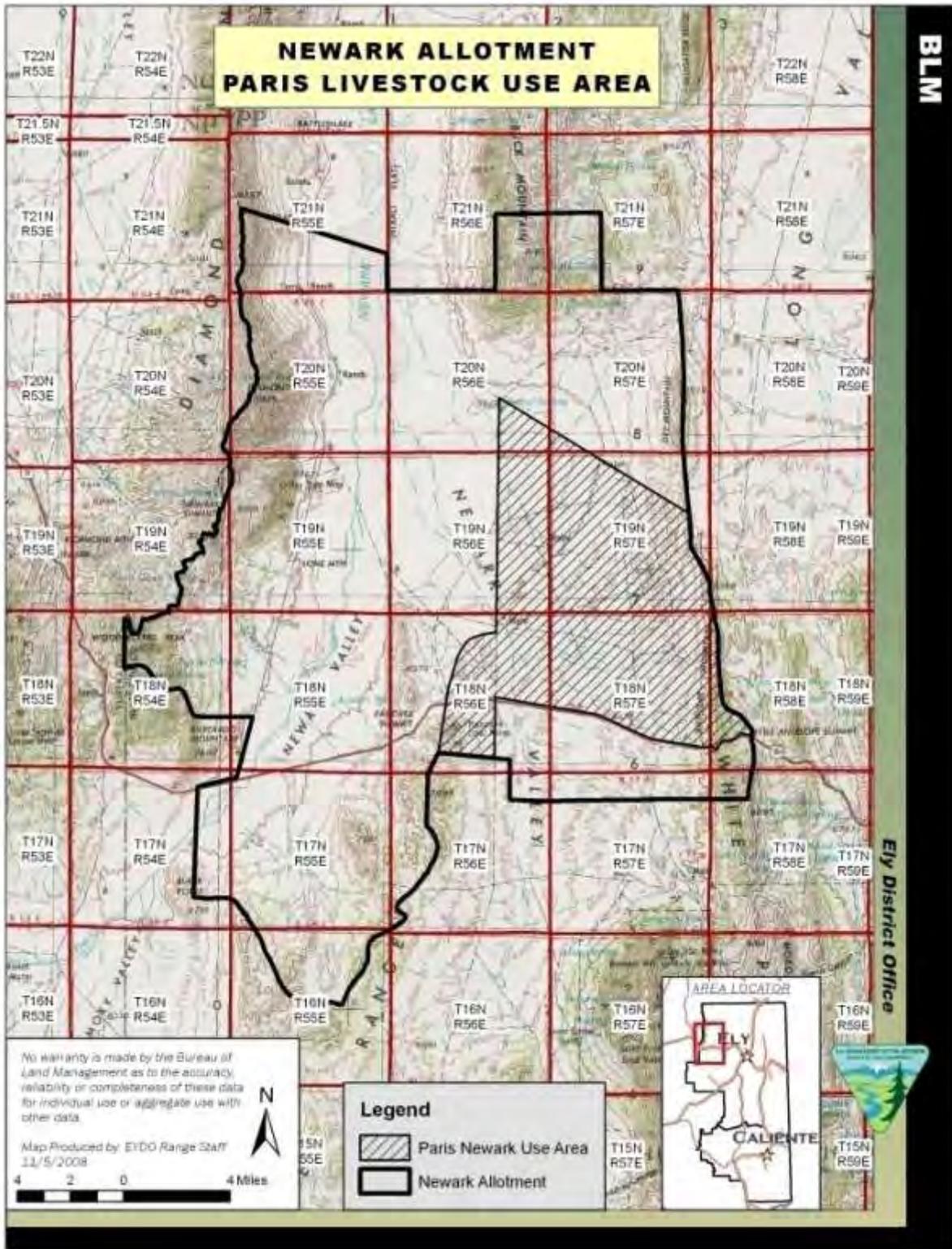


Figure 4—Duckwater Allotment

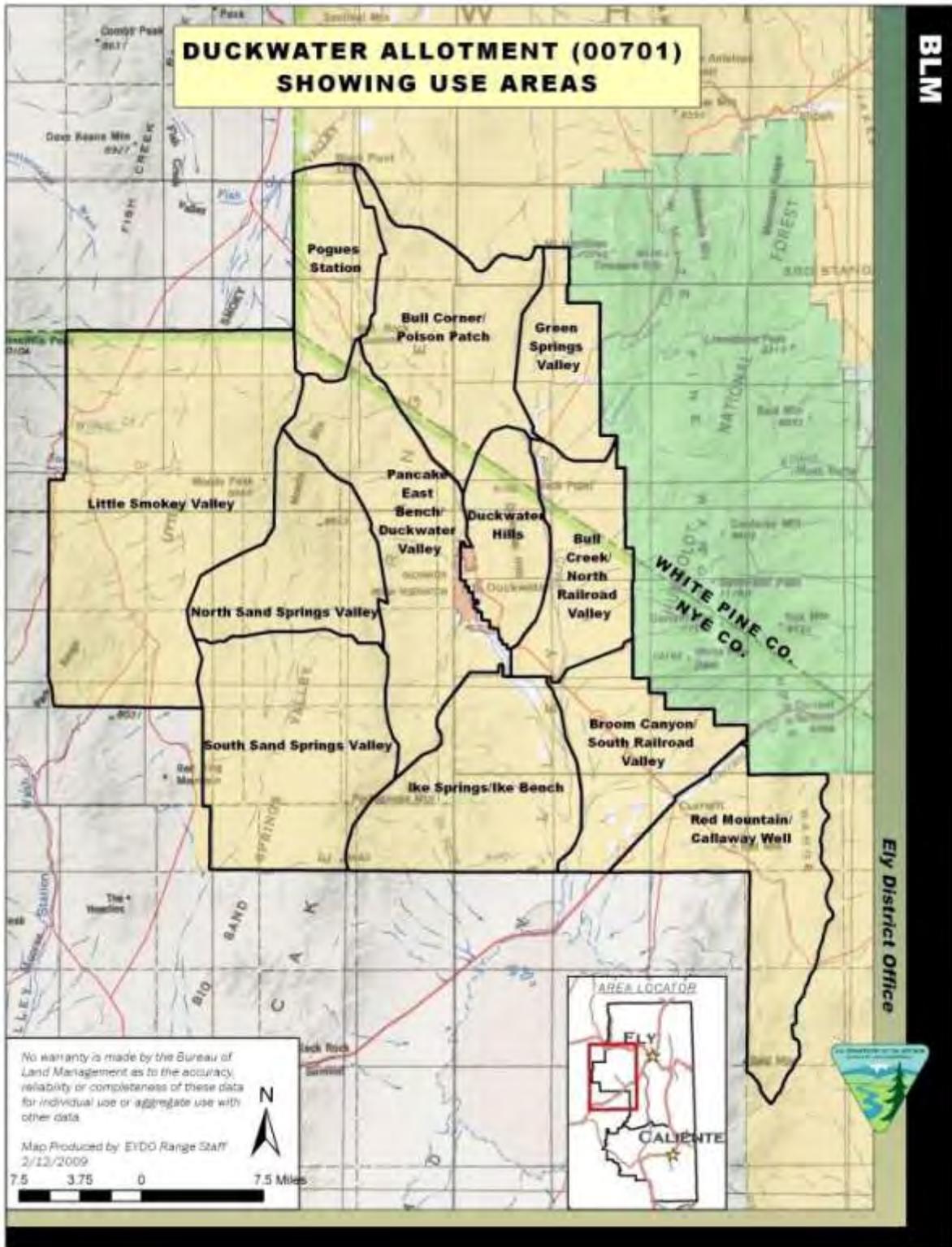


Figure 5—Cold Creek Allotment

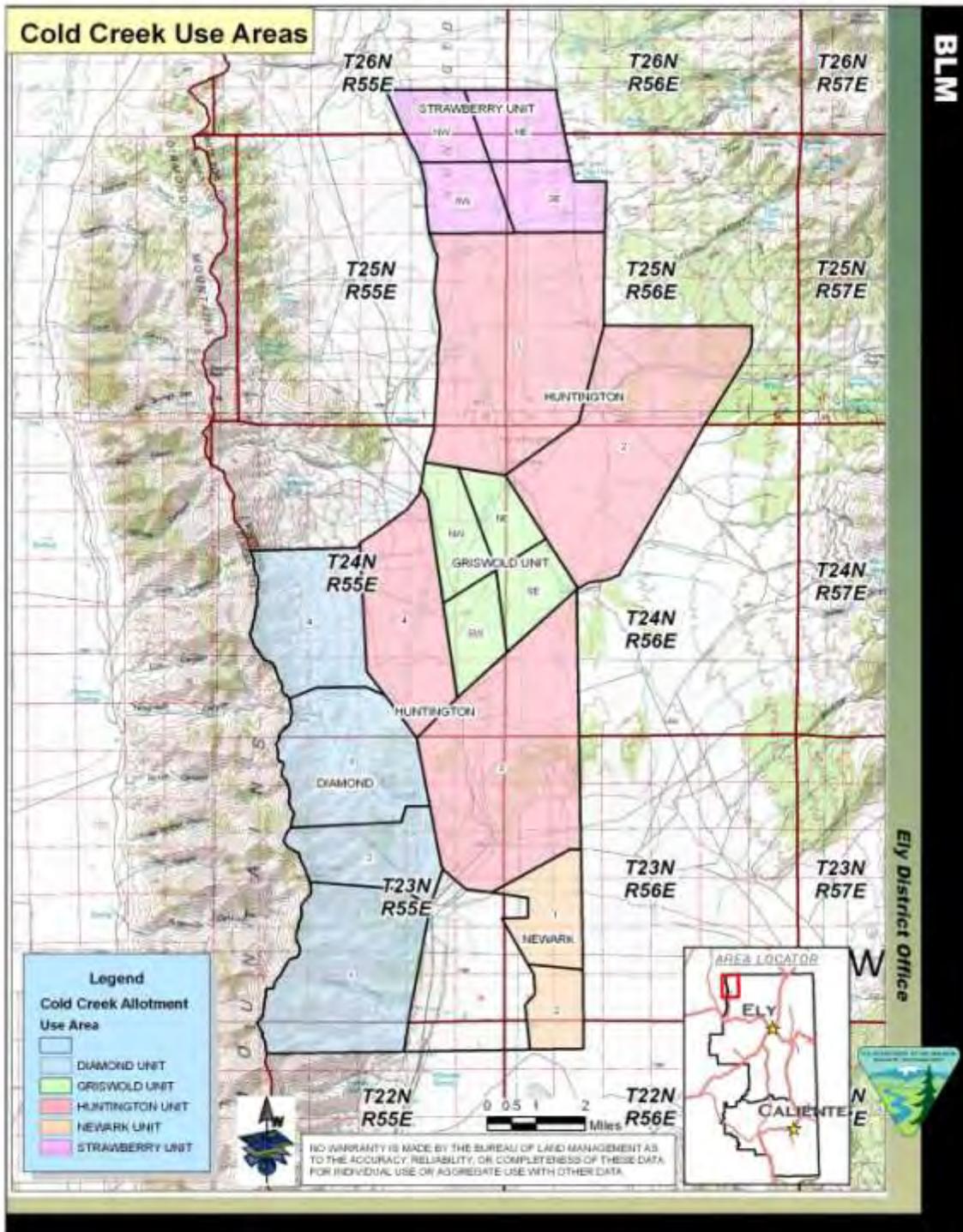


Figure 6—Warm Springs Trail

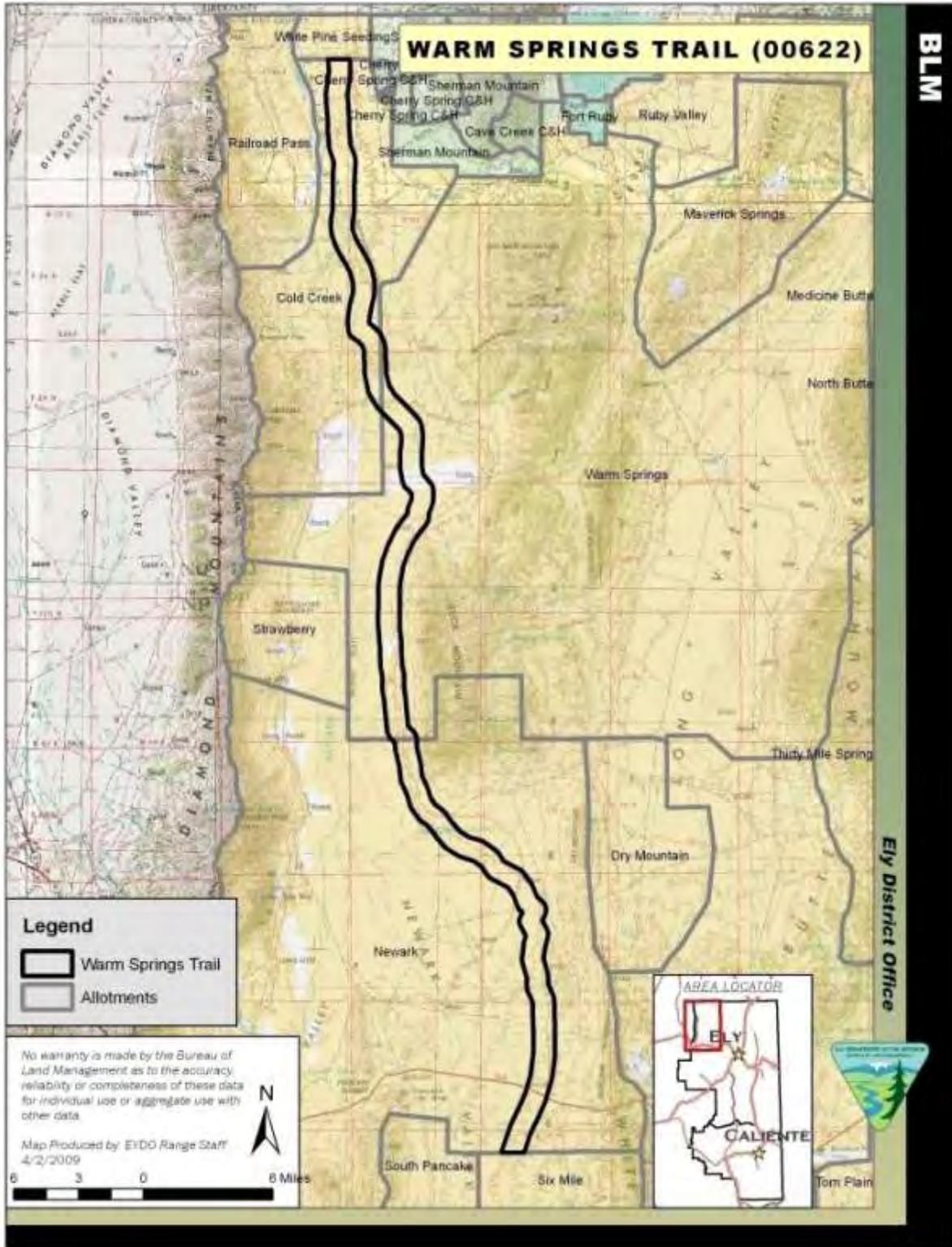


Figure 7—Corta Allotment

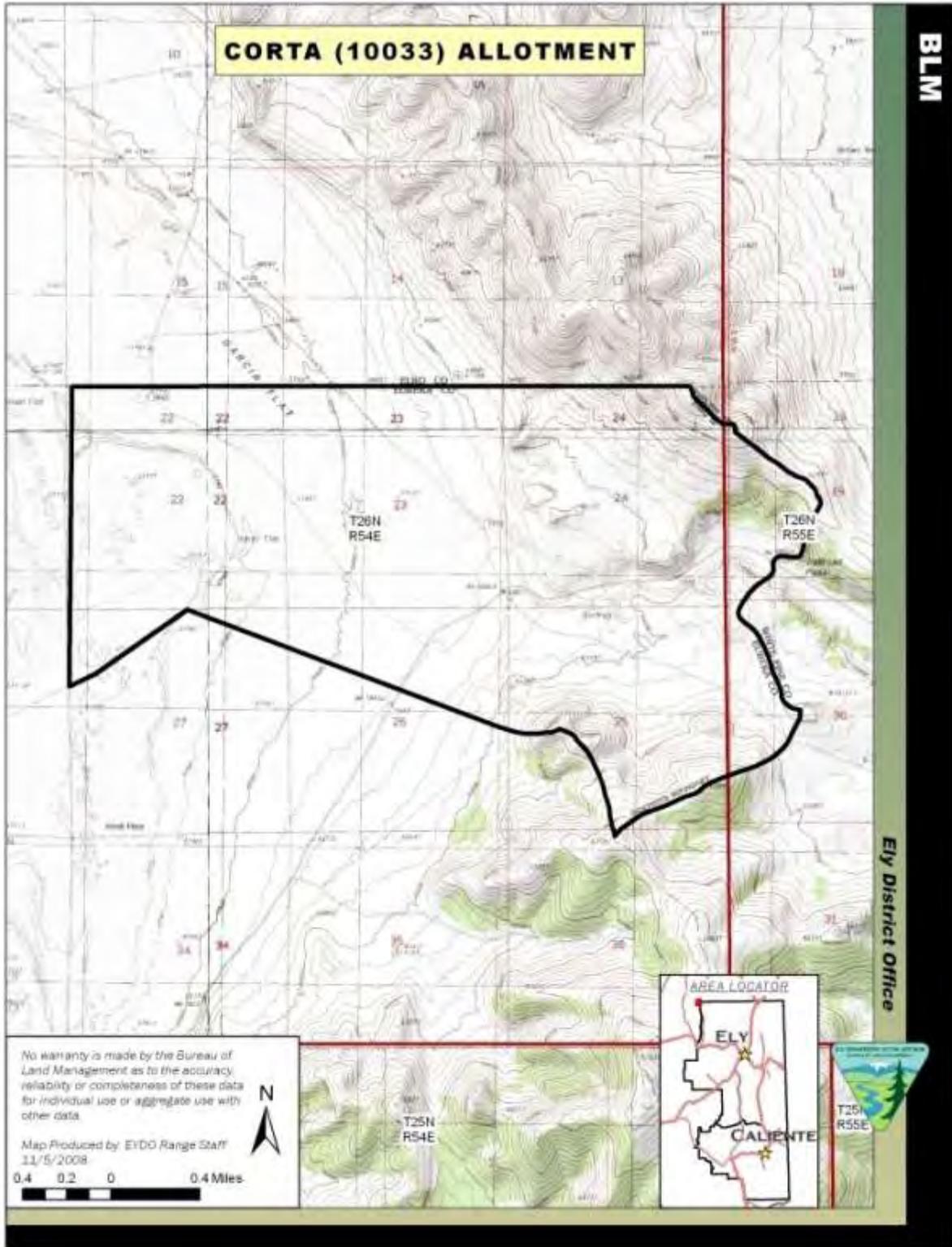


Figure 8—South Pancake Allotment

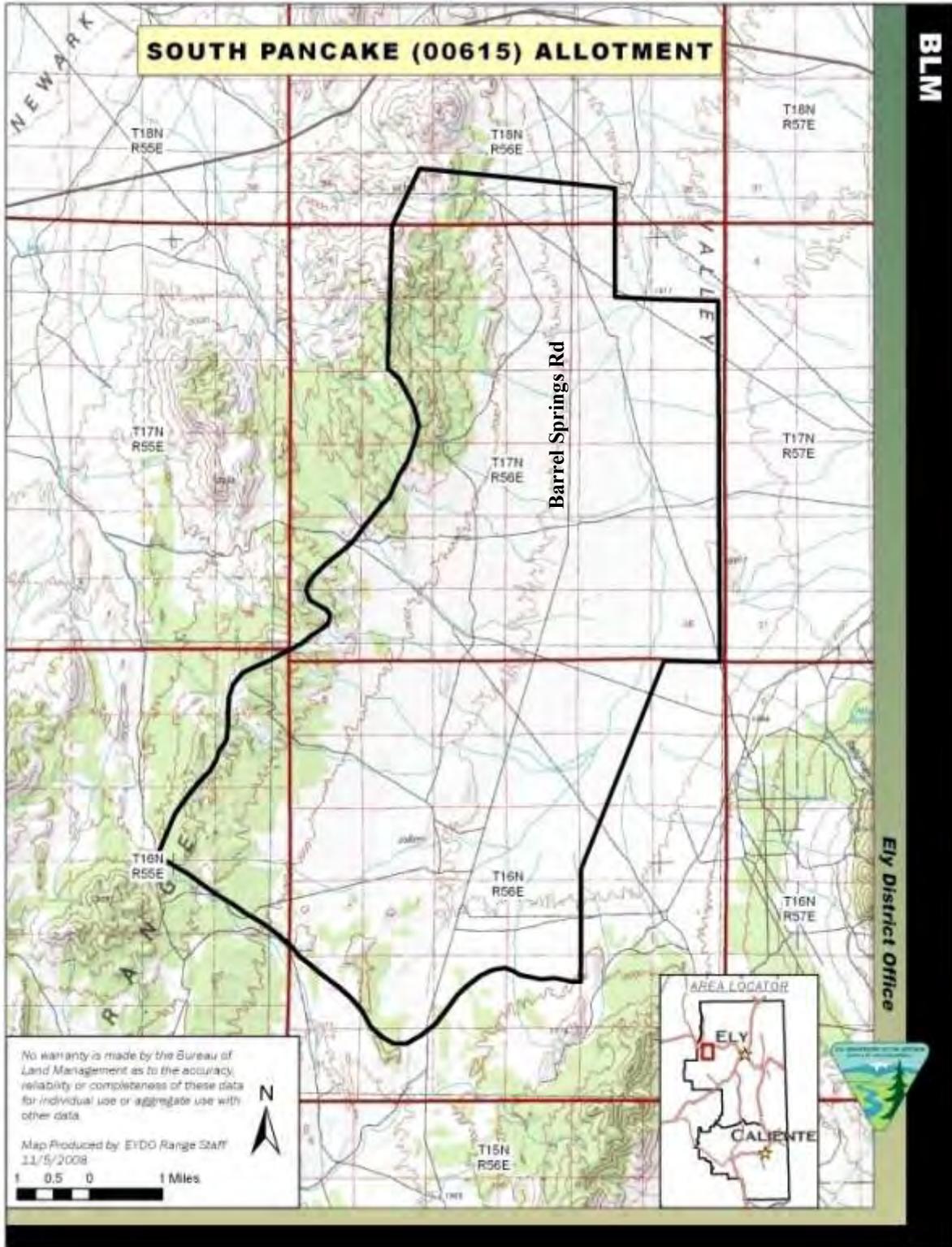


Figure 9—Sand Springs Allotment

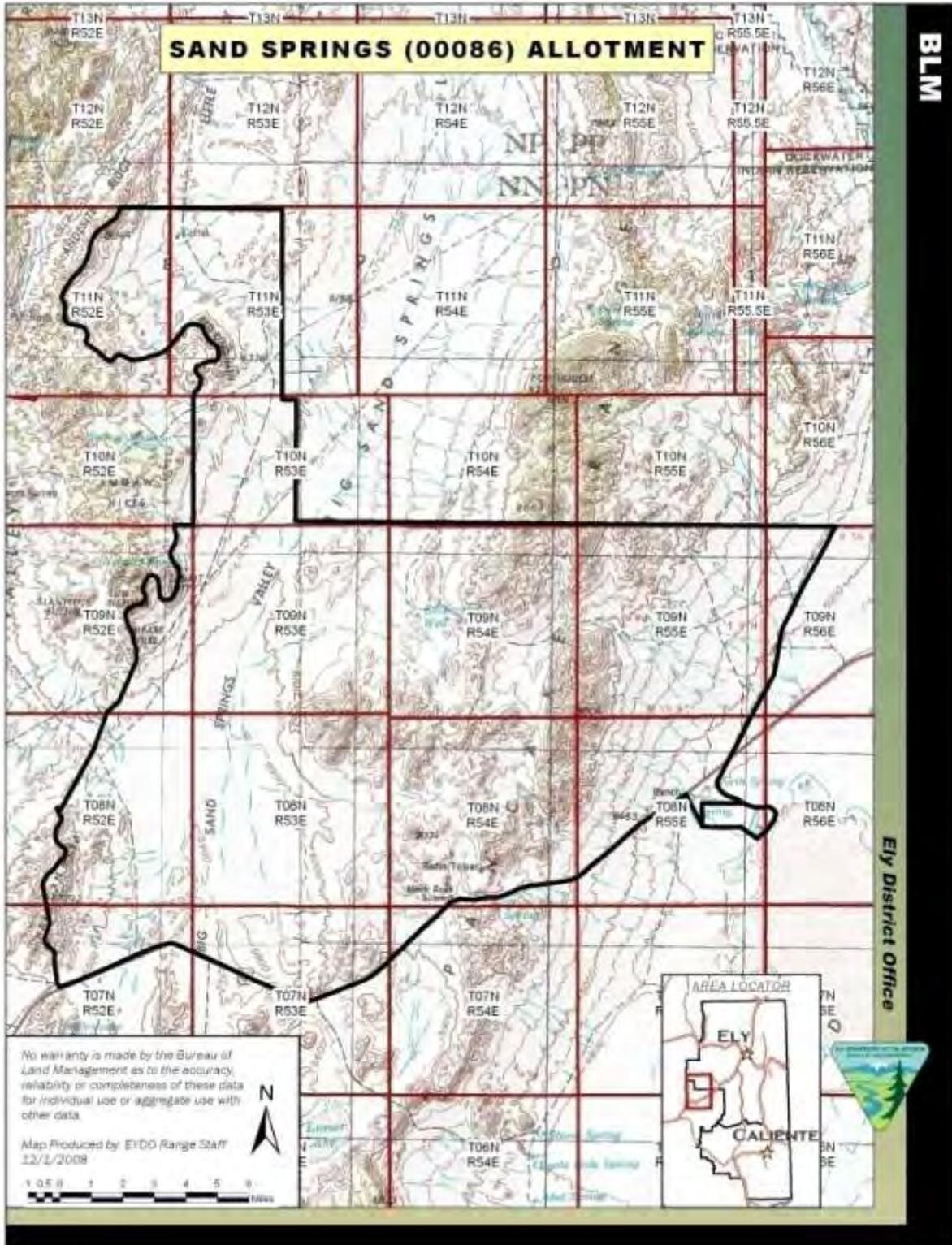
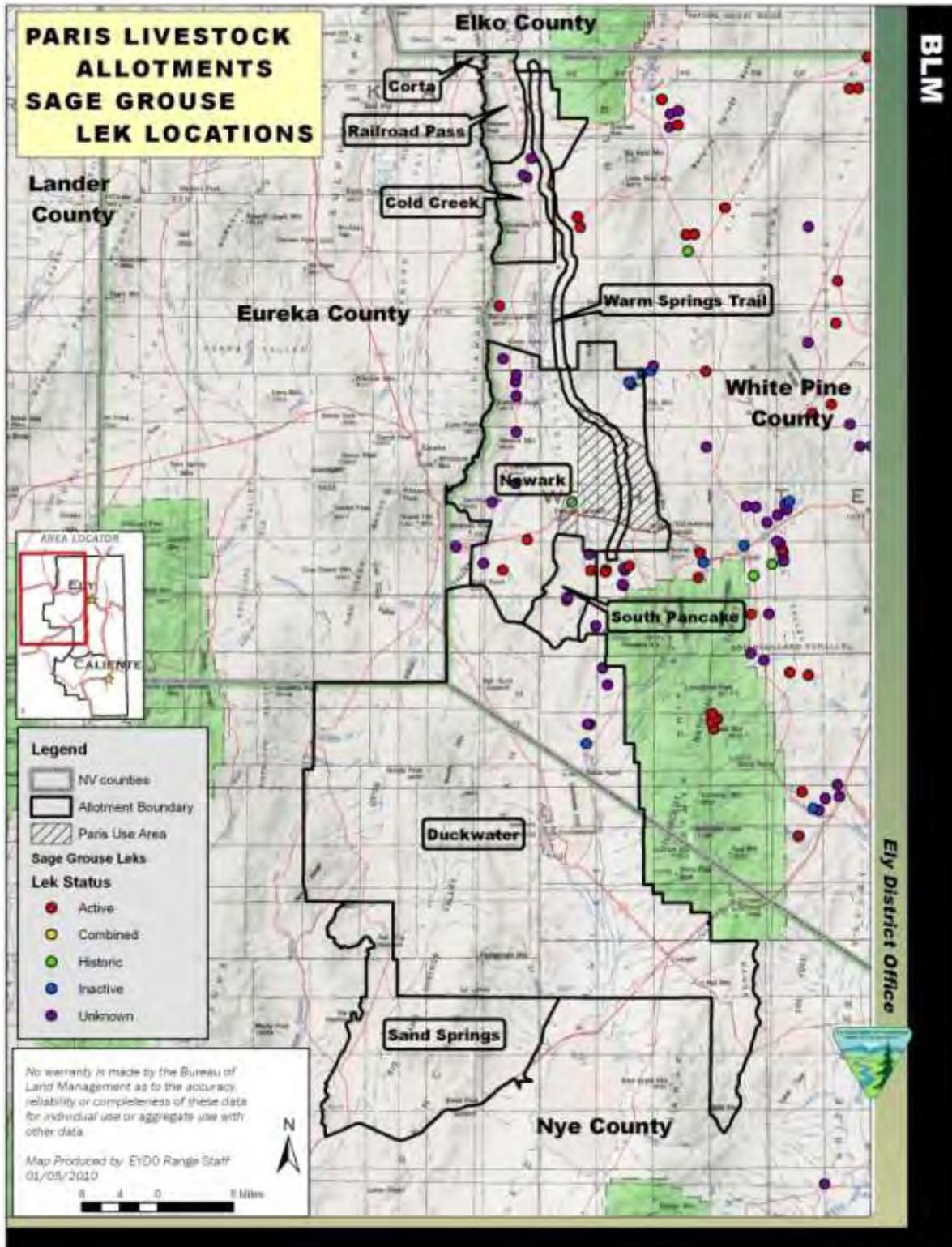


Figure 10—Sage-grouse Lek Locations



APPENDIX II—Weed Risk Assessment (Ely District)
RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS

Term Grazing Permit Renewal for Paris Livestock
Cold Creek, Corta, Duckwater, Newark, Railroad Pass, Sand Springs, South
Pancake, & Warm Springs Trail Allotments
Nye & White Pine County, Nevada

On November 6th, 2008 a Noxious & Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for the term grazing permit renewal for Paris Livestock for the Cold Creek, Corta, Duckwater, Newark, Railroad Pass, Sand Springs, South Pancake, and Warm Springs Trail Allotments in Nye and White Pine Counties, NV. The current term permit is issued for the period 10/15/2006 to 10/14/2016. The following table outlines what the current term permit authorizes.

Allotment/Pasture	Number & Kind of Livestock	Use Period	AUMS
Sand Springs	934 Sheep	11/01 to 03/31	927
	1198 Sheep	11/01 to 03/31	1190
Railroad Pass	467 Sheep	04/05 to 11/15	691
Cold Creek	1182 Sheep	04/15 to 4/30	124
	1200 Sheep	11/01 to 11/15	118
Newark	1642 Sheep	04/01 to 04/30	324
	1642 Sheep	11/01 to 11/30	324
South Pancake	2268 Sheep	03/15 to 04/30	701
	1114 Sheep	11/15 to 01/15	454
Warm Springs Trail	2750 Sheep	04/15 to 05/01	307
	2754 Sheep	11/15 to 12/01	308
Duckwater	1572 Sheep	12/15 to 03/31	1106
	1122 Sheep	01/01 to 03/31	664
Corta	4850 Sheep	05/01 to 05/04	128
Railroad Pass/Corta Seeding	365 Sheep	04/05 to 11/15	540

Within the Duckwater Allotment the following use areas would be used: Bull Corner/Poison Patch, Little Smokey Valley, North Sand Springs Valley, Pancake East Bench/Duckwater Valley, Pogues Station, and South Sand Springs Valley. The issuance of the new term grazing permit could be for a period up to ten years. An evaluation of the range monitoring data and rangeland health will be conducted for the Cold Creek, Corta, Duckwater, Newark, Railroad Pass, Sand Springs, South Pancake, and Warm Springs Trail Allotments.

No field weed surveys were completed for this project. Instead the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted. The following species are found within the boundaries of the Cold Creek Allotment:

<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Black henbane
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle

The following species are found within the boundaries of the use areas for this permit in the Duckwater Allotment:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Newark Allotment:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Poison hemlock
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

The following species are found within the boundaries of the Railroad Pass Allotment:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cicuta maculata</i>	Water hemlock
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Euphorbia esula</i>	Leafy spurge
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

The following species is found within the boundaries of the South Pancake Allotment:

<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
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The following species are found along the Warm Springs Trail Allotment:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Black henbane
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress

The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to all allotments:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed
<i>Cicuta maculate</i>	Water hemlock
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Poison hemlock
<i>Euphorbia esula</i>	Leafy spurge
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Black henbane
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

These areas were last inventoried for noxious weeds in 2002, 2003 and 2005. It should be noted that these allotments border the BLM Battle Mountain or Elko Districts or, in the case of the Corta and Sand Springs Allotments, are entirely within them. No weed inventory data for these Districts is currently available. While not officially documented the following non-native invasive weeds probably occur in or around both allotments: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*).

Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.

None (0)	Noxious/invasive weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious/invasive weed species in the project area.
Low (1-3)	Noxious/invasive weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be implemented and prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the project area.
Moderate (4-7)	Noxious/invasive weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious/invasive weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds within the project area.
High (8-10)	Heavy infestations of noxious/invasive weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area.

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (4) at the present time. The proposed action could increase the populations of the noxious and invasive weeds already within the allotments and could aid in the introduction of weeds from surrounding areas. Within the allotments, watering and salt block sites are of particular concern of new weed infestations due to the concentration of livestock around those sites and the amount of ground disturbance associated with that.

Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious/invasive weed establishment in the project area.

Low to Nonexistent (1-3)	None. No cumulative effects expected.
Moderate (4-7)	Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited.
High (8-10)	Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious/invasive weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable.

This project rates as Moderate (7) at the present time. If new weed infestations establish within the allotments this could have an adverse impact those native plant communities however, since there are many weed infestations currently within the allotments, those impacts would be limited. Also, any increase of cheatgrass could alter the fire regime in the area.

The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.

None (0)	Proceed as planned.
Low (1-10)	Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious/invasive weed populations that get established in the area.
Moderate (11-49)	Develop preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.
High (50-100)	Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious/invasive weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.

For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (32). This indicates that the project can proceed as planned as long as the following measures are followed:

- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, hay/straw, or other organic products used for feed or bedding will be certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM Ely District Office.
- Prior to entering public lands, the BLM will provide information regarding noxious weed management and identification to the permit holders affiliated with the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
- The range specialist for the allotments will include weed detection into project compliance inspection activities. If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriated weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations.
- Grazing will be conducted in compliance with the Ely District BLM noxious weed schedules. The scheduled procedures can significantly and effectively reduce noxious weed spread or introduction into the project area.
- Control or restrict the timing of livestock movement to minimize the transport of livestock-borne noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes between weed-infested and weed-free areas.

- Any newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds discovered will be communicated to the Ely District Noxious and Invasive Weeds Coordinator for treatment.

Reviewed by: /s/ Bonnie M. Million
Bonnie M. Million
Ely District Noxious & Invasive Weeds Coordinator

11/6/2008
Date

Cold Creek Allotment Term Permit Renewal Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

Location within the Ely District boundary

BLM

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Bonnie M Allison
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
11/06/2008



Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Cold Creek Allotment | BLACK HENBANE | SALT CEDAR |
| Other BLM Districts | BULL THISTLE | SCOTCH THISTLE |
| Ely District boundary | CANADA THISTLE | SPOTTED KNAPWEED |
| BLM | LEAFY SPURGE | TALL WHITETOP |
| US Forest Service | MUSK THISTLE | WATER HEMLOCK |
| Private | RUSSIAN KNAPWEED | WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS |



Ely District Office



Duckwater Allotment Term Permit Renewal Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

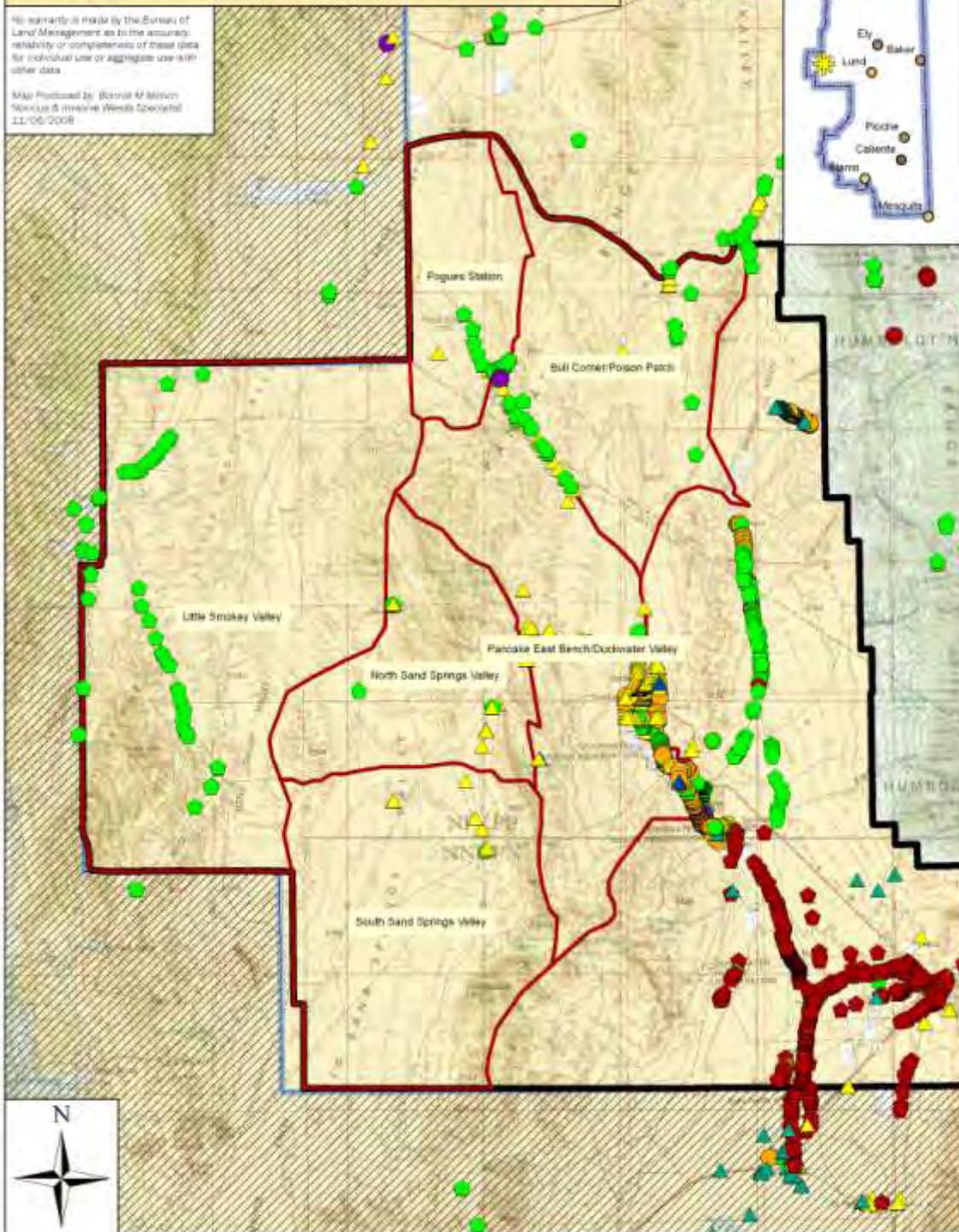
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Bernice M. Atkinson
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
11/05/2008

Location within the Ely District boundary



BLM



Ely District Office

Legend

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Duckwater Use Areas | BLM | BLACK HENBANE | SALT CEDAR |
| Duckwater Allotment | US Forest Service | BULL THISTLE | SCOTCH THISTLE |
| Other BLM Districts | Duckwater Shoshone Tribe | CANADA THISTLE | SPOTTED KNAPWEED |
| Ely District boundary | Private | MUSK THISTLE | TALL WHITETOP |
| | | RUSSIAN KNAPWEED | WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS |

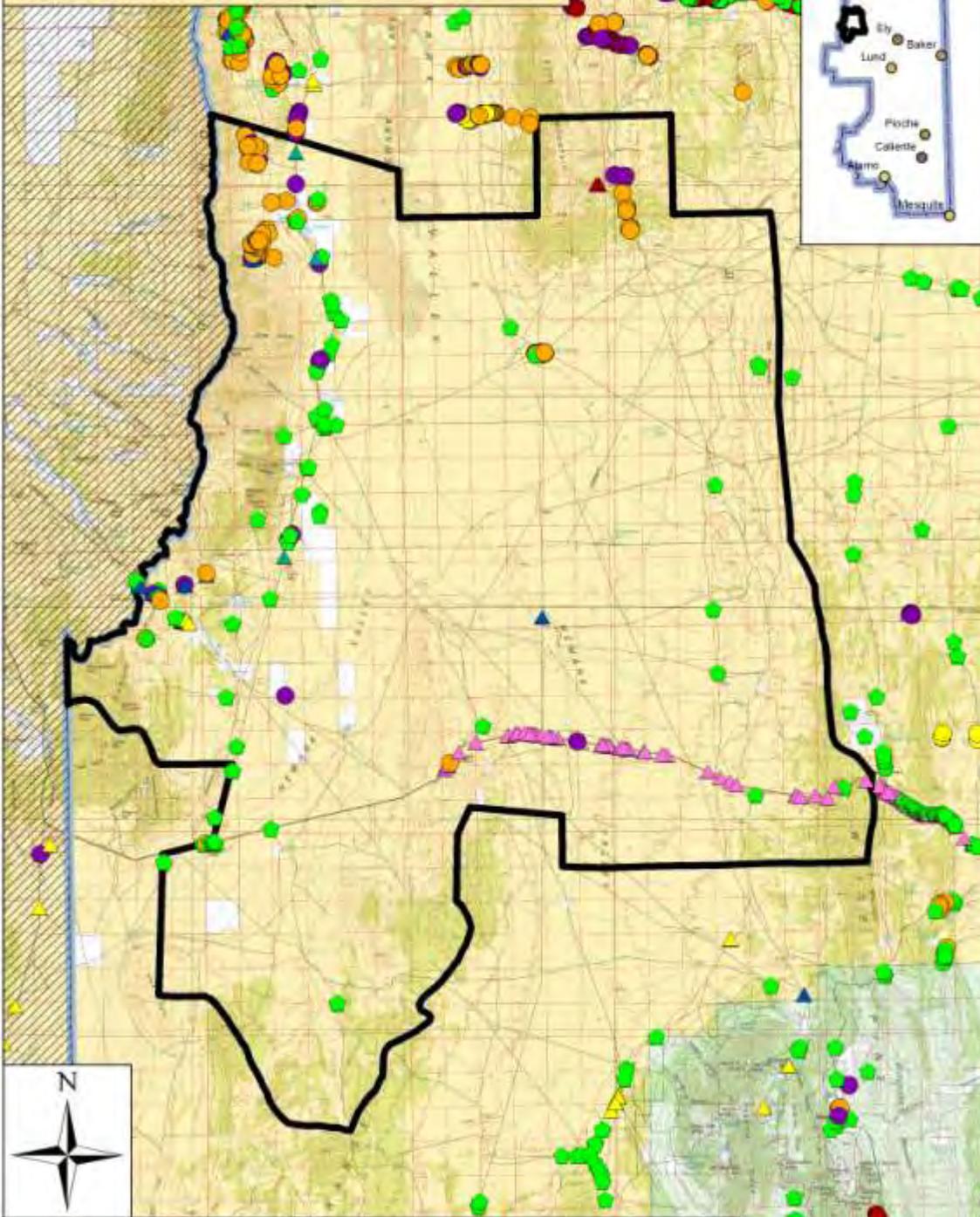


Newark Term Permit Renewal Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

Location within the Ely District boundary



BLM



Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Newark Allotment | BLACK HENBANE | SALT CEDAR |
| Other BLM Districts | BULL THISTLE | SCOTCH THISTLE |
| Ely District boundary | CANADA THISTLE | SPOTTED KNAPWEED |
| BLM | MUSK THISTLE | TALL WHITETOP |
| US Forest Service | POISON HEMLOCK | WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS |
| Private | RUSSIAN KNAPWEED | |

Ely District Office

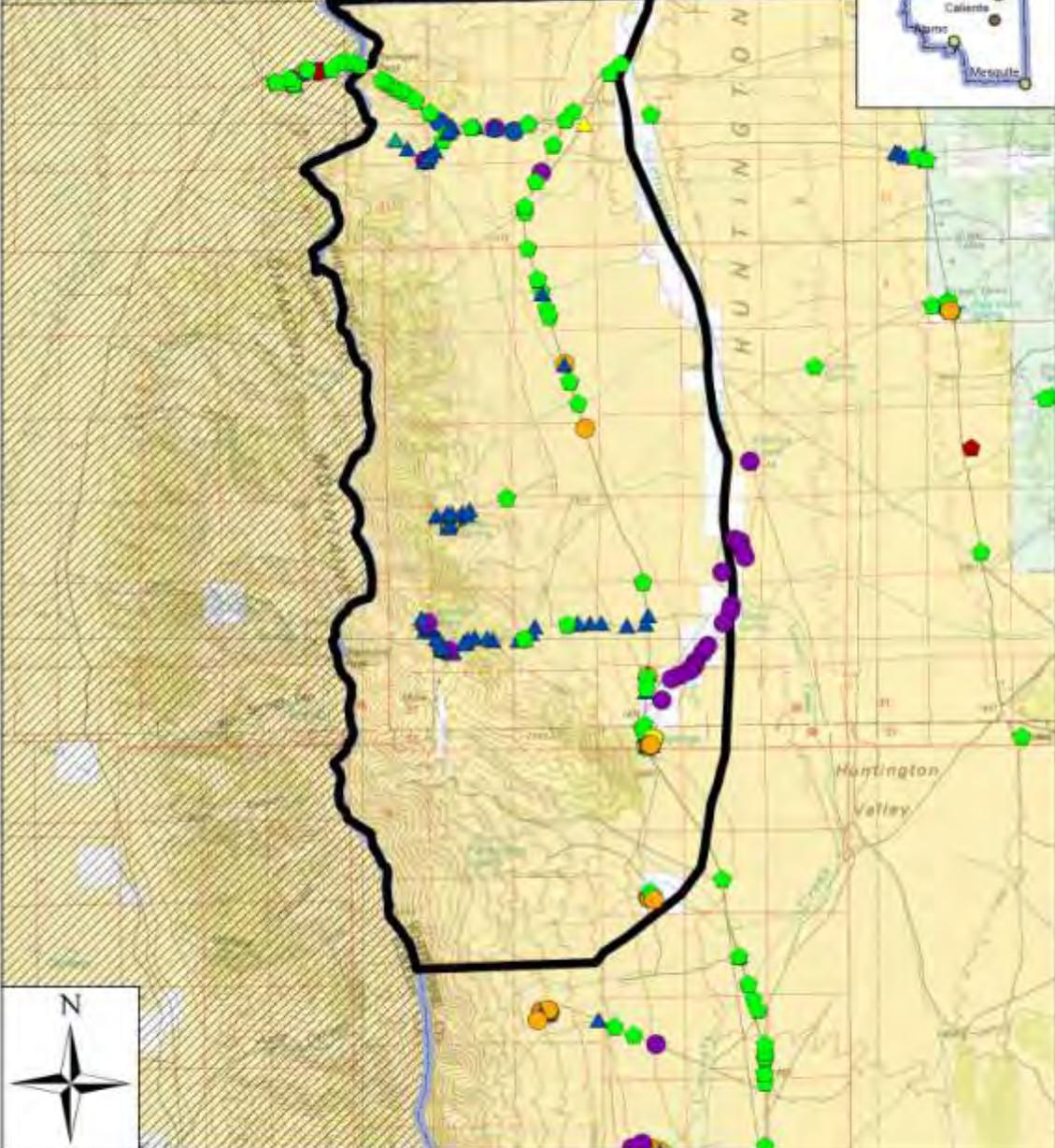


No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.
Map Produced by Stinne M. Milton, Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist, 10/21/2008

Railroad Pass Term Permit Renewal Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Bethel M. Miller
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
10/21/2008



Legend

Railroad Pass Allotment	BLACK HENBANE	SALT CEDAR
Other BLM Districts	BULL THISTLE	SCOTCH THISTLE
Ely District Boundary	CANADA THISTLE	SPOTTED KNAPWEED
BLM	LEAFY SPURGE	TALL WHITETOP
US Forest Service	MUSK THISTLE	WATER HEMLOCK
Private	RUSSIAN KNAPWEED	WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS

0 1 2 4 6 8 Miles

Ely District Office



BLM

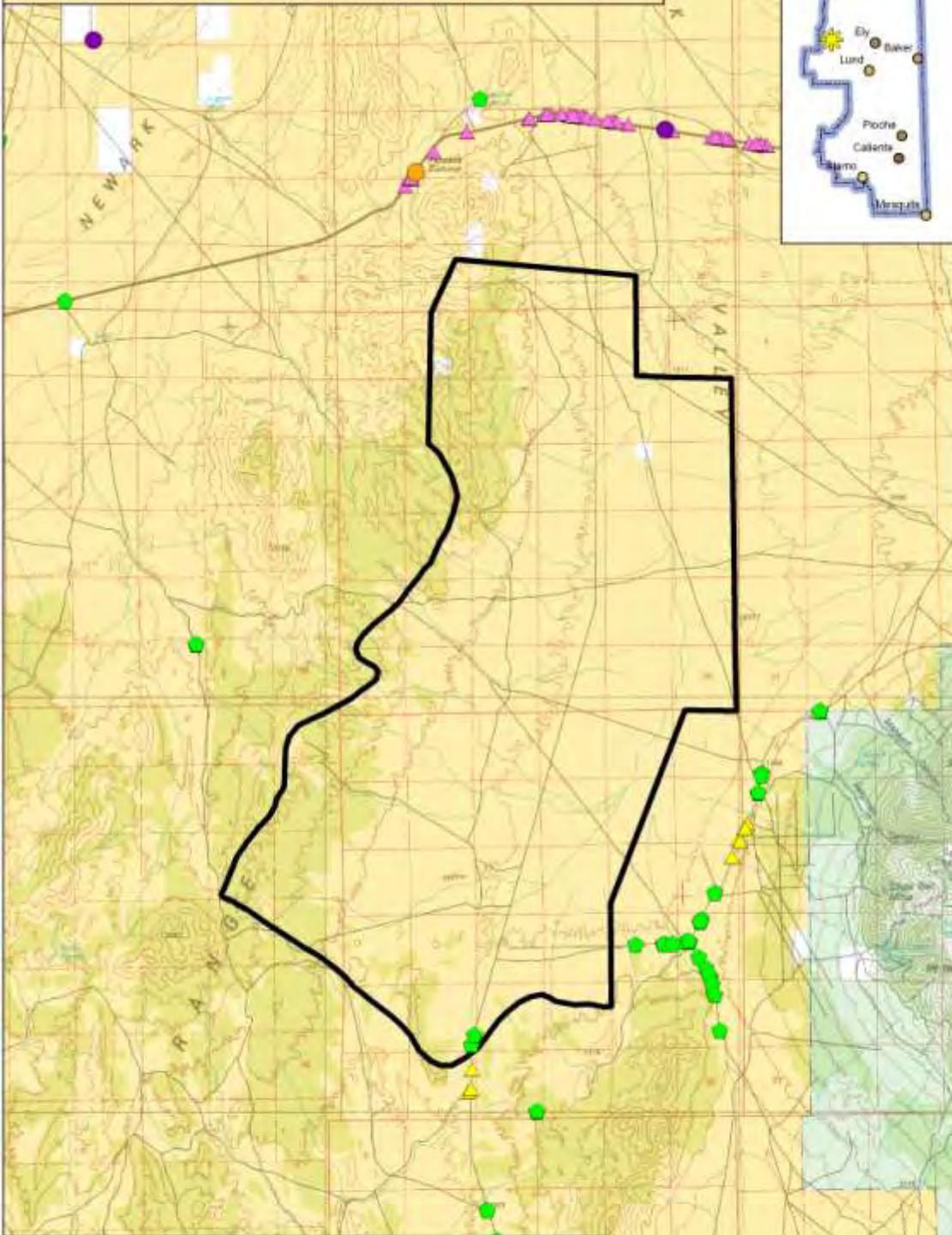
South Pancake Allotment Term Permit Renewal

Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

Location within the Ely District boundary



BLM



Ely District Office

Legend

- South Pancake Allotment
- BLM
- US Forest Service
- Private
- BULL THISTLE
- MUSK THISTLE
- RUSSIAN KNAPWEED
- SPOTTED KNAPWEED
- WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Corinne M. Milton
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
11/06/2008



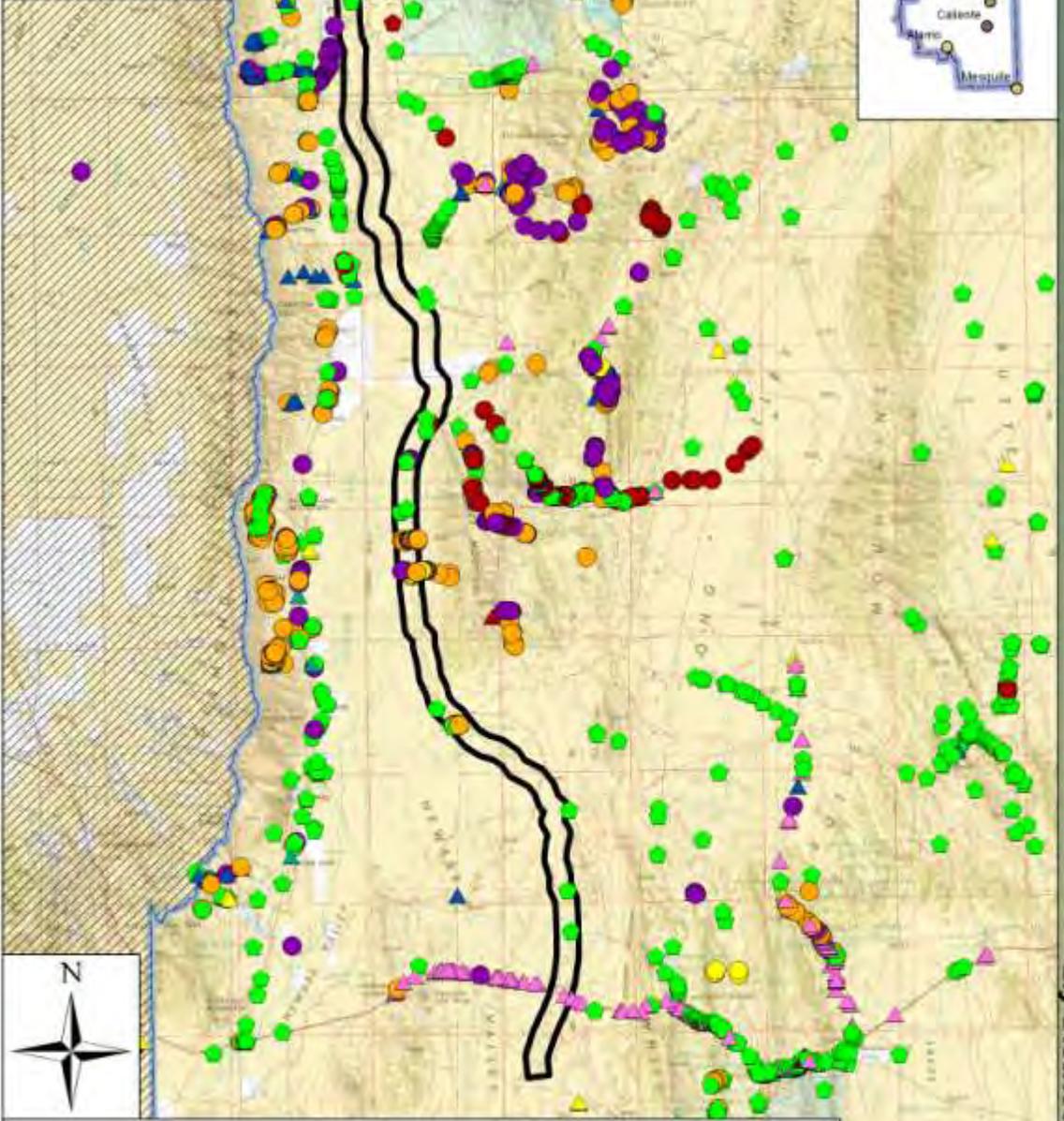
Warm Springs Trail Term Permit Renewal Documented Noxious & Invasive Weed Infestations

Location within the Ely District boundary

BLM

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map Produced by: Bonnie M. Milton
Noxious & Invasive Weeds Specialist
11/05/2008



Ely District Office

Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Warm Springs Trail Allotment | BLACK HENBANE | SALT CEDAR |
| Other BLM Districts | BULL THISTLE | SCOTCH THISTLE |
| Ely District boundary | CANADA THISTLE | SPOTTED KNAPWEED |
| BLM | LEAFY SPURGE | TALL WHITETOP |
| US Forest Service | MUSK THISTLE | WATER HEMLOCK |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | POISON HEMLOCK | WHITETOP/HOARY CRESS |
| Private | RUSSIAN KNAPWEED | |



APPENDIX III—Weed Risk Assessment (Corta Allotment)
RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS
Term Grazing Permit Renewal for Paris Livestock
Corta Allotment
Eureka County, Nevada

On February 13, 2009 a Noxious & Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for the term grazing permit renewal for Paris Livestock on the Corta Allotment in Eureka County, NV. The Corta Allotment encompasses approximately 1,130 public land acres. The grazing allotment occurs entirely within Eureka County, and is situated approximately 45 miles north of Eureka, Nevada. This grazing allotment is within the Battle Mountain BLM District and borders the Ely and Elko BLM Districts. This is a sheep permit with a total grazing preference of 200 animal unit months (AUMs). Of these, 128 AUMs are active and 72 AUMs are suspended nonuse. The current term permit authorizes approximately 4,850 head of cattle with a season of use from 05/01 to 05/04. The issuance of the new term grazing permit could be for a period up to ten years.

No field weed surveys were completed for this project. Instead the Battle Mountain District weed inventory data was consulted. The following species are found within the boundaries of the Corta Allotment:

Hoary Cress	<i>Cardaria draba</i>
Russian Knapweed	<i>Acroptilon repens</i>
Musk Thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>
Scotch Thistle	<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>
Black Henbane	<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>

The Corta Allotment was last inventoried for noxious weeds in 2002 and is scheduled for inventory again in 2010. In 1989, leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) was documented on the allotment, however has not been documented since that time. Also see the Risk Assessment for Noxious and Invasive Weeds completed for the Railroad Pass Allotment on the Ely BLM District as these two allotments are adjacent to each other. While not officially documented the following non-native invasive weeds probably occur in or around the allotment: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*).

Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.

None (0)	Noxious/invasive weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious/invasive weed species in the project area.
Low (1-3)	Noxious/invasive weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be implemented and prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the project area.
Moderate (4-7)	Noxious/invasive weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious/invasive weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds within the project area.
High (8-10)	Heavy infestations of noxious/invasive weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area.

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (4) at the present time. The proposed action could increase the populations of the noxious and invasive weeds already within the allotment and could aid in the introduction of weeds from surrounding areas. Within the allotment, watering and mineral supplement sites are of particular concern of new weed infestations due to the concentration of livestock around those sites and the amount of ground disturbance associated with this concentration.

Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious/invasive weed establishment in the project area.

Low to Nonexistent (1-3)	None. No cumulative effects expected.
Moderate (4-7)	Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited.
High (8-10)	Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious/invasive weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable.

This project rates as Moderate (7) at the present time. If new weed infestations establish within the allotment this could have an adverse impact those native plant communities however, since there are many weed infestations currently within the allotment, those impacts would be limited. Also, any increase of cheatgrass could alter the fire regime in the area.

The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.

None (0)	Proceed as planned.
Low (1-10)	Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious/invasive weed populations that get established in the area.
Moderate (11-49)	Develop preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.
High (50-100)	Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious/invasive weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.

For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (32). This indicates that the project can proceed as planned as long as the following measures are followed:

- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, hay/straw, or other organic products used for feed or bedding will be certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM.
- Prior to entering public lands, the BLM will provide information regarding noxious weed management and identification to the permit holders affiliated with the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
- The range specialist for the allotments will include weed detection into project compliance inspection activities. If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriated weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations.
- When necessary, control or restrict the timing of livestock movement to minimize the transport of livestock-borne noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes between weed-infested and weed-free areas.
- Any newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds discovered will be communicated to the BLM.

