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

Final Decision

(DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022 EA)

August 17, 2012

Authorizations #2703629, #2703578 and #2705002
on the
Enterprise Allotment (#11031)

Lincoln County, Nevada

U.S. Department of the Interior
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August 17, 2012

In Reply Refer To:
4160 (NVL0300)

FINAL DECISION

Authorizations #2703629, #2703578, and #2705002
on the Enterprise Allotment (#11031)

Background Information

On June 7, 2012 the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Authorizations #2703629, #2703578, and #2705002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11031) was signed. The Final Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022 EA), Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Standards Determination Documents are contained herein. This proposed decision is issued in accordance with 43 CFR § 4160.3.

The proposed action, associated with DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022 EA (EA), is to fully process and issue new term grazing permits, to the aforementioned, on the Enterprise Allotment which encompasses approximately 21,585 acres.

Authorization #2703629 was previously issued for the period 9/04/09 – 8/31/2019, while Authorization #2703578 was previously issued for the period 9/30/10 – 9/22/2020. However, both of these permits were issued under the authority of section 426, public law 111-8. Authorization # 2705002 was previously fully processed during 2008, and was issued for the period 12/20/2008 – 12/19/2018.

The new grazing permits will reflect terms and conditions in accordance with the Final EA.

The Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) (August 2008) states as a goal (p. 85): "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." It further states as an objective (p. 86): "To allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health."

Fully processing and renewing the term grazing permit to authorize grazing on the Enterprise Allotment, provides for a legitimate multiple use of the public lands. The permit includes terms and conditions for grazing use that conform to Guidelines and will continue to achieve the Standards for 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 in

part, **"**Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans".

Consequently, this decision specifically identifies management actions and terms and conditions to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives. The proposed actions that were developed under this proposed decision execute management actions that will ensure that progress toward achievement or continued achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health and multiple use objectives occur.

Conclusions of the Standards Determination Document

Current monitoring data were reviewed and an evaluation of the rangeland health was completed during the permit renewal process. As a result, a Standards Determination document was prepared (Appendix II of EA). The results of the findings, regarding the achievement or non-achievement of the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for Rangeland Health for the aforementioned allotment are summarized in Table 1, below

Table 1. Summary of Assessment of the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for the Enterprise Allotment.

Standard	Status
1. Soils	Achieved
2. Riparian and Wetland Sites Standard	Upland portion – Achieved Riparian Portion – Not Applicable
3. Habitat and Biota Standard	Achieved

The data indicate that grazing is in conformance with all applicable Guidelines. However, the new term permit will include terms and conditions directed toward the achievement of both, the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration and other pertinent land use objectives for livestock use.

Consultation and Coordination

On December 16, 2011, the Ely BLM mailed the annual Consultation, Cooperation, and Coordination (CCC) letter, which notified interested parties of the livestock grazing term permit renewals scheduled for 2012.

On February 14, 2012, a BLM internal meeting was held in coordination between the Caliente Field Office and the Ely BLM District Office. The term permit renewal proposal for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030) was presented and scoped by resource specialists to identify any relevant issues. No potential issues were identified.

On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes initiating the consultation compliance process in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The letter solicited input for various permit renewals

scheduled during 2012, including those on the Enterprise Allotment. No comments were received.

On March 02, 2012, the BLM sent each of the three permittees, on the Enterprise Allotment, a letter informing them of the proposed term permit renewal process scheduled for their allotment during 2012. No comments were received.

The Preliminary EA was posted for a 15 day public review and comment period on the Nevada State Clearinghouse website. No comments were received during the public review comment period.

On June 7, 2012 the Proposed Decision was issued. A protest was received by Western Watersheds Project in the form of a facsimile (Fax). A hard copy of the same protest was received on July 11, 2012. The protest points were reviewed and were determined to be either conjecture, statements of opinion, unfounded claims of fact, or outside the scope of the proposed action.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT DECISION

In accordance with 43 CFR §4130.3, §4130.3-1 and §4130.3-2, the Mandatory Terms and Conditions (Season of Use, Active Use, Suspended Use and Number and Kind of Livestock) the Enterprise Allotment will remain unchanged. Therefore, the term permit will be issued according to the following:

ALLOTMENT		Authorization Num.	LIVESTOCK		GRAZING PERIOD		** % Public Land	AUMs		
Name	Number		* Number	Kind	Begin	End		Active Use	Hist. Susp. Use	Total Use
Enterprise	11027	#2703629	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	421	291	712
		#2703578	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709
		#2705002	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709

* These numbers are approximate
** This is for billing purposes only.

The renewal of the term grazing permits would be for a period of up to 10 years. If the grazing privileges, associated with any of the permits, are transferred during this 10-year period – with no changes to the terms and conditions of the permit in question – the new term permit would be issued for the remainder of the 10-year period.

The following Term and Condition (BMP) would also be added to the Term Grazing Permit:

1. Allowable Use Levels on current year's growth of upland vegetation (grasses, forbs and shrubs) within the Enterprise Allotment - during the authorized grazing use period (May 1–October 31) - will not exceed 45%.

<u>Standard Operating Terms and Conditions</u>

The new term permits will include terms and conditions which further assist in maintaining the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration in addition to other pertinent land use objectives for livestock use.

In accordance with 43 CFR §§ 4130.3, 4130.3-1 and 4130.3-2, the following will also be included as terms and conditions in the term grazing permit for the term permit renewal on the Enterprise Allotment:

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 are consistent with multiple-use objectives. Such deviations will require an application and written authorization from the authorized officer prior to grazing use.

2. The authorized officer is requiring that an actual use report (Form 4130-5) be submitted within 15 days after completing your annual grazing use.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. The permittee is responsible for all maintenance of assigned range improvements including wildlife escape ramps for both permanent and temporary water troughs.

7. 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.

8. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture (where applicable) 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.

9. The placement of mineral or salt supplements will be a minimum distance of 1/2 mile from known water sources, riparian areas, winterfat dominated sites, sensitive sites, populations of special status plant species, and cultural resource sites. Mineral and salt supplements will also be one mile from active sage-grouse leks. Placing supplemental feed (i.e. hay, grain, pellets, etc.) on public lands without authorization is prohibited.

Rationale

Monitoring data review and assessment findings indicate that all Standards, or their applicable portions thereof, are being achieved (Standards 1 and 3; and the upland portion of Standard 2). The data also indicates that grazing is in conformance with all applicable Guidelines.

It is anticipated and reasonable to expect, then, that Standards 1, 3 and the upland portion of Standard 2 would continue to be achieved.

The Proposed Action would also add other terms and conditions (BMPs) to the permit that would aid in maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards.

Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) dated August 20, 2008. The proposed action is specifically provided for in 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."

AUTHORITY: The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2004), which states in pertinent part(s):

§ 4130.2 Grazing Permits and Leases

(a) States in part: "Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans."

§ 4130.3: "Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve the management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part."

§ 4130.3-1 Mandatory terms and conditions.

(a) "The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity of the allotment.

(b) All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease.

(c) Permits and leases shall incorporate terms and conditions that ensure conformance with subpart 4180 of this part."

§ 4130.3-2 Other Terms and Conditions

"The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits or leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands."

§ 4160.3 Final Decisions.

(a) "In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision.

(b) Upon the timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider her/his proposed decision in light of the protestant's statement of reasons for protest and in light of other information pertinent to the case. At the conclusion to her/his review of the protest, the authorized officer shall serve

her/his final decision on the protestant or her/his agent, or both, and the interested public.

(c) A period of 30 days following receipt of the final decision, or 30 days after the date the proposed decision becomes final as provided in paragraph (a) of this section, is provided for filing an appeal and petition for stay of the decision pending final determination on appeal. A decision will not be effective during the 30-day appeal period, except as provided in paragraph (f) of this section. See Sec. Sec. 4.21 and 4.470 of this title for general provisions of the appeal and stay processes."

§ 4180.1 Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration.

"The authorized officer shall take appropriate action under subparts 4110, 4120, 4130, and 4160 of this part as soon as practicable but not later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management needs to be modified to ensure that the following conditions exist.

(a) Watersheds are in, or are making significant progress toward, properly functioning physical condition, including their upland, riparian-wetland, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance with climate and landform and maintain or improve water quality, water quantity, and timing and duration of flow.

(b) Ecological processes, including the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow, are maintained, or there is significant progress toward their attainment, in order to support healthy biotic populations and communities.

(c) Water quality complies with State water quality standards and achieves, or is making significant progress toward achieving, established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.

(d) Habitats are, or are making significant progress toward being, restored or maintained for Federal threatened and endangered species, Federal Proposed, Category 1 and 2 Federal candidate and other special status species."

Appeal

In accordance with 43 CFR §§ 4.470 and 4160.4, any person who wishes to appeal or seek a stay of a BLM grazing decision must follow the requirements set forth in 4.470 through 4.480 of this title. The appeal or petition for stay must be filed with the BLM office that issued the decision within 30 days after its receipt or within 30 days after the proposed decision becomes final as provided in § 4160.3 (a).

The appeal and any petition for stay must be filed at the office of the authorized officer:

Victoria Barr
Field Manager
Caliente Field Office
1400 S. Front Street
Caliente, NV 89008

Within 15 days of filing the appeal and any petition for stay, the appellant also must serve a copy of the appeal and any petition for stay on any person named in the decision and listed at the end of the decision, and on the Office of the Solicitor, Regional Solicitor, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1712, Sacramento, California 95825-1890.

Pursuant to 43 CFR 4.471(c), a petition for stay, if filed, must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

(1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
(2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
(3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and,
(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

43 CFR 4.471(d) provides that the appellant requesting a stay bears the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Any person named in the decision from which an appeal is taken (other than the appellant) who wishes to file a response to the petition for a stay may file with the Hearings Division in Salt Lake City, Utah, a motion to intervene in the appeal, together with the response, within 10 days after receiving the petition. Within 15 days after filing the motion to intervene and response, the person must serve copies on the appellant, the Office of the Solicitor and any other person named in the decision (43 CFR 4.472(b)).

At the conclusion of any document that a party must serve, the party or its representative must sign a written statement certifying that service has been or will be made in accordance with the applicable rules and specifying the date and manner of such service (43 CFR 4.422(c)(2)).

Sincerely,

/s/ Victoria Barr

Victoria Barr
Field Manager
Caliente Field Office

Enclosures

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Term Grazing Permit renewal
on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030)

DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022 EA.

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2012-0001 EA). After consideration of the environmental effects as described in the EA, and incorporated herein, I have determined that the proposed action associated with fully processing the term permit renewals identified in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NV- L030-2011-0022 EA has been reviewed through the interdisciplinary team process.

Rationale:

I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP/ROD) to manage the public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management's Ely District Office (August 20, 2008).

This proposed term permit renewal would be effective in improving/maintaining rangeland health and watershed condition on public lands within the Pahranagat East Allotment. Through the introduction and implementation of the sound livestock management practices associated with the Proposed Action, progression will be made towards achievement of Standards and conformance to the Guidelines for Grazing Administration.

The finding and conclusion of no significant impact is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA.

Context:

The Enterprise allotment, a land based allotment of approximately 21,585 acres, is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Panaca, Nevada within Lincoln County. The allotment falls within the Clover Mountain Range and is characterized by rolling hills and benches covered predominantly by pinyon/juniper woodlands.

Elevation ranges from approximately 5,800 feet near Browns Well in the northwest part of the allotment to approximately 6,400 feet in the southeast part.

Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within a Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA), a Wilderness Study Area, sage grouse habitat, or within desert tortoise habitat. A small portion of the Tunnel Spring Wilderness Area occurs within the higher elevations of the far southeast part of the allotment. However, the portion of the wilderness area boundary that occurs within the allotment is fenced, and therefore prevents livestock wilderness access.

There are no known riparian areas located within the allotment on BLM managed lands

Lincoln County is sparsely populated, with approximately 5,345 (2010 census) people living mostly within five towns. Although the acreage involved is extensive, impacts from livestock grazing are dispersed, and compatible with the rural, agricultural setting throughout most of the County.

Intensity:

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

The Environmental Assessment considered both, beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action. None of the impacts disclosed in the EA approach the threshold of significance (i.e., exceeding air or drinking water quality standards, contributing a decline in the population of a listed species, etc.). None of the resource impacts are intensely adverse or beneficial.

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

The Proposed Action will not result in potentially substantial or adverse impacts to public health and safety.

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

The Ely RMP EIS has evaluated the impacts of livestock grazing on natural resources and unique geographic characteristics found on public lands throughout the district, and decisions were made to eliminate grazing in areas where the impacts could cause unacceptable degradation to natural resources and unique geographic characteristics. No site specific concerns were identified in the EA.

There are no parks, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical areas (ACECs) found within the allotment.

Some Prime and Unique Farmland occurs in the lower elevations along the west border of the allotment. Livestock grazing will have impacts to prime farmlands, because it will not change soil characteristics that affect farmland status.
Historic and cultural resources identified in the proposed area were reviewed and analyzed. No effects to unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources were identified.

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

Whereas, it may be controversial to continue to permit livestock grazing on public lands in spite of the effects, there is little controversy as to what they are. The Ely RMP EIS

analyzed several alternatives with various effects to conflicting uses of natural resources and disclosed these effects. Decisions were made to continue livestock grazing in areas deemed appropriate.

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

The effects of livestock grazing are well known and documented. Management practices are employed to meet resource objectives and maintain or achieve rangeland health. The Ely RMP EIS analyzed the effects of livestock grazing throughout the district and has eliminated grazing in areas where unique environmental risks could occur.

6) ***The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.***

The Proposed Action will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. Renewing the grazing permits does not establish a precedent for other Rangeland Health Assessments and Decisions. Any future actions or projects - within either the proposed action area or surrounding areas - will be analyzed and evaluated as a separate action; and, independently of the current proposed action.

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

No significant cumulative impacts have been identified in the EA. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the cumulative impact assessment area would not result in cumulatively significant impacts. For any actions that may be propose in the future, further environmental analysis, including the assessment of cumulative impacts, will be required.

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

A *Findings for Cultural Resources Needs Assessment* was completed on April 9, 2012. There are no known conflicts between current grazing practices and cultural resources within the allotment associated with this permit renewal. The proposed action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources. The Bureau of Land Management reserves the right to expeditiously mitigate or eliminate impacts to cultural resources discovered after this permit is issued.

All future range improvements, surface disturbing projects, and changes in grazing patterns that will concentrate grazing and may create impacts related to this permit will be subject to Section 106 review and, if needed, SHPO consultation as per the BLM Nevada's implementation of the Protocol for cultural resources.

9) ***The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the ESA of 1973.***

The BLM is required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, to ensure that no action on the public lands jeopardizes a threatened, endangered, or proposed species.

There are no known Threatened or Endangered Species which are listed, or are proposed for listing, or critical habitat within the project area.

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

The proposed action will not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

/s/ Victoria Barr — 6/7/2012

Victoria Barr — Date
Field Manager
Caliente Field Office

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

Final Environmental Assessment

DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022-EA

August 17, 2012

Grazing Permit Renewals
For
Authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002
on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030)

Lincoln County, Nevada

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Caliente Field Office
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BLM

1.0 Introduction

This document identifies issues, analyzes alternatives, and discloses the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed term grazing permit renewals for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030).

Background

The Enterprise Allotment, a land based allotment having three permittees, is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Panaca, Nevada in the Clover Mountain Range (Appendix I). Cattle are the type of livestock grazed on the allotment.

Allotment General Location:

T.3 S., R.71 E., MDBM, many sections
T.4 S., R.70 E., MDBM, many sections
T.4 S., R.71 E., MDBM, many sections
T.5 S., R.70, E., MDBM, many sections
T.5 S., R.71, E., MDBM, many sections

1.2 Introduction of the Proposed Action.

The BLM, Caliente Field Office, proposes to renew the aforementioned term grazing permits on the Enterprise Allotment.

Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration were developed by the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February 12, 1997.

The BLM collected and analyzed monitoring data, and conducted professional field observations, as part of the permit renewal process. This information was used to evaluate livestock grazing management and rangeland health within the Enterprise Allotment. Subsequently, an evaluation of rangeland health along with recommendations associated with grazing management practices, in the form of a Standards Determination Document (SDD), was completed in 2008 when the term grazing permit for authorization number 2705002 was renewed (Appendix II). However, authorization numbers 2703629 and #2703578 were not renewed at that time.

Professional field observations, during 2012 showed there were no qualitative or quantitative changes to vegetation, within the allotment, since the 2008 assessment completion. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to apply the evaluation during 2012 to renew the term grazing permits for all three authorizations.

Changes to grazing management are recommended which would establish a Best Management Practice (BMP) within the allotment. The BMP would assist in maintaining these Standards. A summary of the RAC Standards assessment is found in Table 1.2, below.

Table 2.2 Summary of Assessment of the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for the Enterprise Allotment.

Standard	Status
1. Soils	Achieved
2. Riparian and Wetland Sites Standard	Upland portion – Achieved Riparian Portion – Not Applicable
3. Habitat and Biota Standard	Achieved

1.3 Need for the Proposed Action

The need for the proposal is to authorize grazing use on public lands in a manner which satisfies the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) while being consistent with multiple use, sustained yield and the Nevada's Mojave-Southern Great Basin Area Standards for Rangeland Health; to manage livestock in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies; and to renew the term livestock grazing permit on the Enterprise Allotment while introducing management practices, along with specific terms and conditions, directed toward the attainment and/or continued achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration.

1.3.1 Objectives for the Proposed Action

- To renew the grazing term permits for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030); and authorize grazing in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and land use plans (LUP) on 218,229 acres of public land.

- To improve and maintain vegetative health and growth conditions on the allotment while maintaining achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health as approved and published by Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC.

1.4 Relationship to Planning

The proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) (August 2008), which states as a goal (p. 85): "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." It further states as an objective (p. 86): "To allow livestock grazing to occur in a manner and at levels consistent with multiple use, sustained yield, and the standards for rangeland health."

Management Action LG-1 states, "Make approximately 11,246,900 acres and 545,267 animal unit months available for livestock grazing on a long-term basis."

Management Action LG-3 states, "Allow allotments or portions of allotments within desert tortoise habitat, but outside of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) to remain at current stocking levels unless a subsequent evaluation indicates a need to change the stocking level."

Management Action LG-5 states: "Maintain the current grazing 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."

1.5 Relationship to Other Plans

The proposed action is consistent with the *Lincoln County Public Lands Policy Plan* (2010) which states (p. 38):

"Policy 4-4: Grazing should utilize sound adaptive management practices consistent with the BLM Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council's Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration. Lincoln County supports the periodic updating of the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook to help establish proper levels of grazing. Lincoln County supports accountability between BLM and Lincoln County Commission to assure these management practices are carried out in a timely and professional manner.

Policy 4-5: Allotment management strategies should be developed that provide incentives to optimize stewardship by the permittee. Flexibility should be given to the permittee to reach condition standards for the range. Monitoring should utilize all science-based relevant studies, as described in the current Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook. Changes to these standards should involve pre-planning collaborative consultation with the permittee and Lincoln County Commission."

1.6 Relationship to Acts, Executive Orders, Agreements and Guidance

The proposed action was analyzed within the scope of other relevant Acts, Executive Orders and associated regulations, Agreements and Guidance listed below and found to be in compliance:

- State Protocol Agreement between the BLM, Nevada and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (October 26, 2009)

- National Historic Preservation Act (1966) (Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C. 470 as amended through 2000)

- Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) (1979)

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918 as amended) and Executive Order 13186 (1/11/01).
- Executive Order 13186: Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds (2001)
- The National Environmental Policy Act (1969) (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended 1975 and 1994)
- The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976) (43 U.S.C. §§ 1701-1782, October 21, 1976, as amended 1978, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990-1992, 1994 and 1996)
- Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Standards and Guidelines (12 February 1997).
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) (1973).

1.7 Tiering

This document is tiered to the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Ely PRMP/FEIS, Volumes I and II) (November 2007).

1.8 Relevant Issues and Internal Scoping/Public Scoping

The Ely District Office mails an annual Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination (CCC) letter, for various program areas, to individuals and organizations who have previously expressed an interest in federal actions on the Ely District. Through the CCC letter, the public has the opportunity to submit a request to be a 2012 interested public for grazing management actions on the Ely BLM District; and to specify the specific grazing management actions and grazing allotments in which they are interested. Grazing permittees are automatically included on the Grazing Interested Public Mailing List for any allotment on which they have a grazing permit.

On December 16, 2011, the aforementioned Ely BLM annual CCC letter was mailed.

On February 14, 2012, a BLM internal meeting was held in coordination between the Caliente Field Office and the Ely BLM District Office. The term permit renewal proposal for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030) was presented and scoped by resource specialists to identify any relevant issues. No potential issues were identified.

On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes initiating the consultation compliance process in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The letter solicited input for various permit renewals scheduled during 2012, including those on the Enterprise Allotment.

On March 02, 2012, the BLM sent each of the three permittees, on the Enterprise Allotment, a letter informing them of the proposed term permit renewal process scheduled for their allotment during 2012. No comments were received.

Relevant changes to the EA were made as appropriate.

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Proposed Action

The Bureau of Land Management, Caliente Field Office proposes to renew the term grazing permits for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030).

The Proposed Action is to maintain the current Active Use and Season of Use for all three permittees with grazing authorizations being based on annual forage availability.

The Proposed Action would also add another term and conditions (BMP) to the permit that would aid in maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards. No other changes to any of the permits would be made.

2.1.1 Current Permits

Table 2.1.1, below, displays the mandatory terms and conditions for the current term grazing permits for authorization numbers 2705030, 2705033, 2705074 and 2705086 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030).

The current term grazing permits for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 were previously issued for the periods 9/4/2009 - 8/31/2019, 9/30/2010 - 9/22/2020 and 12/20/2008 - 12/19/2018, respectively.

Table 2.1.1 Current Term Grazing Permits, Showing Mandatory Terms and Conditions, for Authorization Numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment.

ALLOTMENT		Authorization	LIVESTOCK		GRAZING PERIOD		** %	AUMs		
Name	Number	Num.	* Number	Kind	Begin	End	Public Land	Active Use	Hist. Susp. Use	Permitted Use
Enterprise	11030	#2703629	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	421	291	712
		#2703578	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709
		#2705002	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709

* These numbers are approximate
** This is for billing purposes only.

2.1.2 Proposed Term Permits

The new term permit would contain the same mandatory terms and conditions as the current term permit (Table 2.1.1).

The renewal of the term grazing permits would be for a period of up to 10 years. If the grazing privileges, associated with any of the permits, are transferred during this 10-year period – with no changes to the terms and conditions of the permit in question – the new term permit would be issued for the remainder of the 10-year period.

The new term permits would also include standard terms and conditions that further assist in maintaining the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration in addition to other pertinent land use objectives for livestock use (Appendix III).

Utilization objectives for the allotment are a quantification of the land use plan objectives and will be included as a Best Management Practice (BMP).

The following Term and Condition (BMP) would also be added to the Term Grazing Permit:

1. Allowable Use Levels on current year's growth of upland vegetation (grasses, forbs and shrubs) within the Enterprise Allotment - during the authorized grazing use period (May 1–October 31) - will not exceed 45%.

In relation to grazing, there would be no additional terms and conditions needed management practices to conform to guidelines either to make progress toward or to maintain achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

2.1.3 Invasive, Non-Native Species and Noxious Weeds

A Weed Risk Assessment (WRA) was completed for this project (Appendix IV). According to recent weed surveys (2009), the following noxious weed species are found within the boundaries of the Enterprise allotment:

Lepidium draba	Hoary cress
Onopordum acanthium	Scotch thistle

The term permit renewal area would also be monitored on a regular basis for noxious weeds or non-native invasive species. The measures listed in the Weed Risk Assessment will be followed, when grazing occurs on the allotment, to minimize the spread of weeds.

2.1.4 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" (p. 88).

2.2 Description of Alternatives Analyzed in Detail

2.2.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative, for livestock grazing, permit renewals is defined as "continuing to graze under current terms and conditions" in IM-2000-022, Change 1 (re-authorized by IM-2010-063)

Therefore, the No Action Alternative would reflect the status quo. The term permit would be issued without changes to grazing management, or modifications to the existing terms and conditions of the permit.

The renewal of the term grazing permits would be for a period of up to 10 years. If the grazing privileges, associated with any of the permits, are transferred during this ten-year period – with no changes to the terms and conditions of the permit in question – the new term permit would be issued for the remainder of the 10-year period.

2.2.2 No Grazing Alternative

Under this alternative a new term grazing permit would not be issued, once the current term permit expired, resulting in no authorized livestock grazing on the allotment.

This alternative was also considered and analyzed in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) which is addressed below.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

The Ely PRMP/FEIS (Volume II) analyzed the Environmental Impacts of livestock grazing under the Proposed RMP, along with four alternatives (p.4.16-1 to 4.16-15.), which included a no-grazing alternative (Alternative D). It also analyzed Environmental impacts on vegetative resources from livestock grazing under the Proposed RMP and the four alternatives (4.5-1 to 4.5-28), which included the no-grazing alternative. No further analysis is necessary in this document for Alternatives A, B and C. However, the no-grazing alternative is additionally analyzed in this EA. The following is a list of the four Alternatives contained within the PRMP/FEIS (Volume II):

- 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 Description of the Affected Environment and Associated Environmental Consequences

3.1 Allotment Information

The Enterprise allotment, a land based allotment of approximately 21,585 acres, is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Panaca, Nevada within Lincoln County. The allotment falls within the Clover Mountain Range and is characterized by rolling hills and benches covered predominantly by Pinyon/Juniper woodlands. The allotment is located within the Beaver Dam Wash (#215) and Clover Creek North (#212N) watersheds.

Elevation ranges from approximately 5,800 feet near Browns Well in the northwest part of the allotment to approximately 6,400 feet in the southeast part. Generally, the precipitation level is between 10-18 inches on the allotment. Precipitation occurs primarily as winter snow or spring and fall thunderstorms.

The BLM completed chaining and seeding projects within the Enterprise Allotment during fiscal years 1964 and 1970. They consist of the Enterprise chaining and crested wheatgrass seeding (approximately 3,375 acres), and the Staheli chaining and crested wheatgrass seeding (2,893 acres). In 1998, the BLM conducted prescribed burn within both chainings to maintain the native and non-native perennial understory. The allotment is fenced to allow a three-pasture rest rotation system within the allotment.

Vegetative types on the allotment include mostly pinyon-juniper woodlands, with the bottoms in the center of the allotment previously seeded with crested wheatgrass.

Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within a Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA), a Wilderness Study Area, sage grouse habitat, or within desert tortoise habitat. A small portion of the Tunnel Spring Wilderness Area occurs within the higher elevations of the far southeast part of the allotment. However, the portion of the wilderness area boundary that occurs within the allotment is fenced, and therefore prevents livestock wilderness access.

There are multiple livestock watering locations on the allotment (Appendix I).

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 Lincoln County is classified by the State of Nevada as being "unclassifiable" since no monitoring has been conducted to determine the classification and National Ambient Air Quality Standards; violations would not otherwise be expected in the county. The proposed action would not have a measurable effect on the air quality of Lincoln County. Any dust created would be expected to be ephemeral.
Cultural Resources	No	Impacts from livestock grazing on Cultural Resources are analyzed on page 4.9-5 of the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). A *Findings for Cultural Resources Needs Assessment* was completed on April 9, 2012. All range improvements, surface disturbing projects, and changes in grazing patterns that will concentrate grazing and may create impacts related to this permit will be subject to Section 106 review and, if needed, SHPO consultation as per the BLM Nevada's implementation of the Protocol for cultural resources. There are no known conflicts between current grazing practices and cultural resources within the allotment associated with this permit renewal. The proposed action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources. The Bureau of Land Management reserves the right to expeditiously mitigate or eliminate impacts to cultural resources discovered after this permit is issued.
Paleontological Resources	No	No currently identified paleontological resources are present in the project area.
Native American Religious Concerns and other concerns	No	On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes requesting comments regarding the permit renewal process for the Enterprise Allotment. Direct impacts and cumulative impacts would not occur, because there were no identified concerns through coordination.
Noxious and Invasive Weed Management	No	Livestock grazing has the potential to spread noxious and invasive weeds. On a January 25, 2012, a Noxious Weed Risk Assessment was completed for this project (Appendix IV). The design features of the proposed action in addition to the vigilant practices described in the Noxious Weed Risk Assessment will help prevent livestock grazing from spreading noxious and non-native, invasive weeds. No additional analysis is needed.
Vegetative Resources	Yes	Impacts from livestock grazing on Vegetation 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.
Rangeland Standards and Health	Yes	Impacts from livestock grazing on Rangeland Standards and Health are 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.

Resource Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
		Analysis of the proposed action and alternatives is provided in the affected environment and environmental impacts sections.
Forest Health[1]	No	Cattle do not graze pinyon-juniper.
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	No	No hazardous or solid wastes exist on the permit renewal area, nor would any be introduced by the proposed action or alternatives.
Wilderness	No	A portion of the Tunnel Springs Wilderness is within the Enterprise Allotment, but is excluded from grazing by a boundary fence. There are no Wilderness areas that are being grazed within the Enterprise Allotment.
Special Designations other than Designated Wilderness	No	No Special Designations occur within the project area.
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	No	No wetland/riparian resources occur on public land in the analysis area.
Water Quality, Drinking/Ground	No	The Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) disclosed effects to Water Resources from livestock grazing on page 4.3-5. The proposed action would not affect water quality (surface or groundwater sources) or drinking water in the project area. No surface water in the project area is used as human drinking water sources and no impaired water bodies of the State on Nevada are present in the project area.
Water Resources (Water Rights)	No	The Proposed Action would not affect existing or pending water rights in the project analysis area.
Floodplains	No	The project analysis area is not included on FEMA flood maps. The resource does not exist in the proposed project area.
Migratory Birds	No	The migratory bird species that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix V. This list includes BLM Sensitive species. It is anticipated that the establishment of Allowable Use Levels would aid in maintaining achievement of the Standards and Guidelines for rangeland health; thereby, maintaining or improving habitat conditions for all migratory birds of concern. There is always a possibility that the nests, and/or developing young, of ground nesting birds during the spring nesting period could be trampled by cattle. However, the potential for nest trampling is anticipated to be remote and upon occurrence, would be limited to an occasional individual or nest. If nests were lost due to trampling, birds would likely re-nest. Grazing would also reduce the height of existing vegetative structure and cover to some degree. However, with the establishment Allowable Use Levels it is anticipated that vegetative structure and cover would be negligibly affected. In view of the aforementioned, it is anticipated that the impacts to migratory

Resource Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
		bird populations, as a whole, would be negligible.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Listed or proposed for listing Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat.*	No	There are no known Threatened or Endangered Species that are listed or are proposed for listing or critical habitat within the Enterprise Allotment.
Special Status Plant Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered	No	There are no BLM Special Status Plant Species known to occur within the Enterprise Allotment.
Special Status Animal Species, other than those listed or proposed by the UFWS as Threatened or Endangered	No	There are no BLM Special Status Animal Species known to occur within the Enterprise Allotment.
Fish and Wildlife	No	There are no lentic or lotic riparian areas located within the Enterprise Allotment on BLM managed lands. However, wildlife species (plant and animal) – including sensitive species – that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix V. Impacts from livestock grazing on Fish and Wildlife are analyzed on pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-11 in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007). Grazing would reduce the amount of available forage (grass and forbs); however, compliance with Ely Resource Management Plan standards for utilization percentages ensures that forage is present in the allotment after cattle are removed. Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed action would have no a measurable affect this resource.
Wild Horses	No	Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within a Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA).
Soil Resources	No	The Ely Proposed resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) disclosed effects to Soil Resources resulting from livestock grazing actions on page 4.4-4. Soils in the project analysis area are not prone to compaction or erosion problems; infiltration rates and soil permeability are high and soil textures are coarse throughout the area It is expected that the proposed action would not measurably affect soil resources.
Mineral Resources	No	There would be no modifications to mineral resources through the proposed action or alternatives; therefore, no direct or cumulative impacts would occur to

Resource Concern Considered	Issue(s) Analyzed	Rationale for Dismissal from Analysis or Issue(s) Requiring Detailed Analysis
		minerals.
VRM	No	The proposed action is consistent with the VRM classification objectives for VRM classes 2, 3 and 4 within the allotment; therefore, no direct or cumulative impacts to visual resources would occur.
Recreation Uses	No	Design features identified in the proposed action would result in negligible impacts to recreational activities
Grazing Uses	Yes	Wildlife species (plant and animal) that likely occur in or near the project area are listed in Appendix V. Livestock grazing is analyzed in the EA.
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.
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 or alternatives.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	No	Resource not present in allotment.
Farmlands (Prime or Unique)	No	Some Prime and Unique Farmland occurs in the lower elevations along the west border of the allotment. Livestock grazing will have impacts to prime farmlands, because it will not change soil characteristics that affect farmland status.

[1] Healthy Forests Restoration Act projects only

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

An analysis of grazing impacts on the following resources – noted in the above table as being negligibly affected – may be found in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) on the noted pages: Cultural Resources (page 4.9-5); Water Quality, Drinking/Ground (page 4.3-5); Fish and Wildlife (pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-11); and Soil Resources (page 4.4-4). Consequently, these resources do not require a further detailed analysis.

3.3 Resources/Concerns Analyzed

The following is a detailed analysis regarding Vegetative Resources, Rangeland Standards and Health, and Grazing Uses. These three resources were assigned a "Yes" under the "Issue(s) Analyzed" column in the above table; and have been identified by the BLM interdisciplinary team as resources within the affected environment that merit a detailed analysis.

An analysis of grazing impacts on the former two resources may be found in the Ely Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (November 2007) (Volume II), on the following noted pages: Vegetative Resources (page 4.5-9); Rangeland Standards and Health (pages 4.16-3 through 4.16-4).

3.3.1 Vegetative Resources, Rangeland Standards and Health, and Grazing Uses

3.3.1.1 Affected Environment

Section 3.1, above, describes some basic information about the Enterprise Allotment.

An assessment and evaluation of livestock grazing managements achievement of the standards and conformance to the guidelines; SDD was completed in conjunction with this project (Appendix II).

Standard 1 is being achieved. The upland portion of Standard 2 is being achieved, while the riparian portion of this Standard 2 is not applicable. Standard 3 is being achieved.

3.3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the season of use would remain the same. The BLM anticipates and finds it reasonable to expect, then, that Standard 1, the upland portions of Standard 2, and Standard 3 would continue to be achieved.

The Proposed Action would also add other terms and conditions, regarding Allowable Use Levels, to the permit that would aid in maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards.

No Action Alternative

All of the mandatory terms and conditions of the current permit, as displayed under section 2.1.1, would remain unchanged. Therefore, the impacts of continued grazing would not be anticipated to change the attainment of standards on the Enterprise Allotment.

Under the no action alternative, the standard terms and conditions referenced under 2.1.2 in the Proposed Action and in Appendix III of this EA - which further assist in maintaining the Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration in addition to other pertinent land use objectives for livestock use - would not be included in the new permit.

No Grazing Alternative

For a short period of time following implementation, this may accomplish the same desired result as allowing periodic rest during the spring critical growing period for plants by allowing perennial forage plants rest during the vital phenological stages (such as budding, flowering, seed dropping, etc.) of their annual growing cycle. However, according to studies this benefit would be short-lived.

In fact, it is realized in the scientific community that, over time, grasses may become wolfy (too coarse to be palatable) from lack of grazing use (Ganskopp 2004, Anderson 1993). If this occurs, substantial forage can become wasted, because current year's growth is intermixed with older, cured materials that are nutritionally deficient and present a physical barrier to cattle grazing. Such plants would also lose vigor and become less palatable, thereby contributing to less productive rangelands for either wildlife or domestic livestock that depend on such a forage base.

Anderson (1993) elaborated on the consequences of choosing a No Grazing option. He states: "After a period of time, ungrazed herbaceous fibrous-rooted plant species become decadent or stagnant. Annual aboveground growth is markedly reduced in volume and height. Root systems likely respond the same. The result is reduction in essential features of vegetational cover, including the replacement of soil organic matter and surface residues, and optimum capture of precipitation." He also lists two other consequences: "(1) loss of quality herbaceous forage for wild herbivores, causing them to move to areas where regrowth following livestock grazing provides succulent forage (Anderson 1989), and (2) increased hazard from wildfires that can be devastating from a rangeland watershed standpoint."

Courtois et. al. (2004) found that 65 years of protection from grazing on 16 exclosures, at different locations across Nevada, resulted in relatively few differences between vegetation inside the exclosures and that exposed to moderate grazing outside the exclosures. Where differences occurred, total vegetation cover was greater inside the exclosures while density was greater outside the exclosures. Protection from grazing failed to prevent expansion of cheatgrass into the exclosures (Ely PRMP/FEIS pg. 4.5–27).

4.0 Cumulative Effects

4.1 Past Actions

Livestock grazing operations in the planning area developed during the mid to late-1800s. The Ely PRMP/FEIS summarizes livestock grazing history in the region on pages 3.16–1 to 3.16–3. Range improvements have occurred on all allotments to improve grazing management and include fencing, stockwater developments, and vegetation treatments. The Ely PRMP/FEIS summarizes wild horse history in the west, specifically on the Ely District, on pages 3.8–1 to 3.8–7. Wild horse use has occurred throughout the project area since the 1800s, this area is not a wild horse HMA.

There have been limited previous actions occurring in the project area. Historical mineral mining has been common in the area of the Enterprise Allotment. There has been no historical oil or gas production and minimal oil exploration in the area. Based upon anecdotal evidence of BLM resource staff, woodcutting and pinyon nut gathering, hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, and other recreational activities including OHV use have been minimal on Enterprise Allotment. Small two track roads, associated with these activities, are not extensive and have not altered the landscape. Wildfire within the Enterprise Allotment is a naturally occurring event that is part of the ecological structure as described within the ecological site descriptions (see Appendix II). Based upon discussions between BLM resource specialists and the permittee, wildlife use has not been intensive in the area and has not fundamentally altered the plant communities. Livestock

grazing has taken place in this area since the late 1800's. There are a number of rangeland improvements to help in the distribution of livestock and ensure that an effective rest rotation system is in place to ensure standards and guidelines will continue to be achieved. Two prescribed burns took place in 1998 to maintain the crested wheatgrass seedings that were put back in during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Precipitation in southern Nevada is highly variable with frequent drought periods. Precipitation data collected at the Enterprise BLM rain gage, for the years 1999-2007 (8 years) is displayed in Table 1 in Appendix II. The variability of precipitation ranged from four inches in 2002 to 18 inches in 2004.

4.2 Present Actions

There are three permittees holding grazing privileges on the Enterprise Allotment. All three permittees share the same season of use (May 1 to October 31).

Based upon observations by BLM resource specialists, current activities or projects occurring in the project area are very limited. There is no current mineral mining or oil and gas exploration. Woodcutting and pinyon nut gathering are minimal. The seedings are currently progressing as described within the ecological site descriptions (see Appendix II). Current livestock grazing and wildlife use are not intensive in the area. Neither the allotment nor any of its portions are located within an HMA, Wilderness Study Area, or within desert tortoise habitat. There are no known riparian areas located within the allotment on BLM managed lands.

Widely dispersed incidental recreation occasionally occurs within the allotment in the form of hunting, trapping, four-wheeling (OHV) and wildlife viewing. Based upon observations by BLM resource specialists, there is only occasional use of the small two track roads in the area.

4.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Widely dispersed incidental recreation will continue into the future. Livestock grazing will continue under the existing grazing permit on the allotment. Upon expiration, the permit will be considered for renewal through site-specific NEPA analysis.

4.4 Cumulative Effects Summary

4.4.1 Proposed Action

According to page 36 of the 1994 BLM publication *Guidelines for Assessing and Documenting Cumulative Impacts*, the cumulative analysis should be focused on those issues and resource values where the incremental impact of the Proposed Action results in a meaningful change in the cumulative effect from other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions within the Cumulative Effects Study Area (CESA). In addition, a comprehensive cumulative impacts analysis can be found in section 4.28 of the Ely RMP/FEIS.

The CESA for this project is defined as the Enterprise Allotment.

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).

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 proposed action in conjunction with the past, present and reasonable foreseeable future actions would result in no noticeable overall changes to the affected environment. Grazing under the proposed permit renewal would aid in maintaining achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health, with the understanding that adjustments to grazing management would occur when any of the Standards are not being achieved. Appropriate action would be taken as soon as practicable but not later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on public lands are significant factors in failing to achieve the standards and conform with the guidelines (43 CFR §4180.2 (c)).

No cumulative impacts of concern are anticipated as a result of the proposed action in combination with any other existing or planned activity.

4.4.2 No Action Alternative

The no action alternative has the same cumulative effect as the Proposed Action.

4.4.3 No Grazing Alternative

The No Grazing Alternative, in combination with interrelated projects, will have no known cumulative effects on rangeland health.

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

Appropriate monitoring has been included as part of the Proposed Action. No additional monitoring is proposed as a result of the impact analysis.

6.0 Consultation and Coordination

6.1 List of Preparers - BLM Resource Specialists

Andy Daniels	Wildlife Biologist/Project Lead
Chris Mayer	Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist
Travis Young	NEPA Coordinator
Andrew Daniels	Wildlife, Special Status Species, Migratory Birds
Mark D'Aversa	Soil, Water, Wetlands and Riparian, Floodplains
Cameron Boyce	Noxious and Invasive, Non-native Species
Nick Pay	Cultural Resources
Elvis Wall	Native American Cultural Concerns
Melanie Peterson	Hazardous & Solid Waste/Safety
Lisa Domina	Recreation, Visual Resources
Samuel Styles	Wilderness

6.2 Persons, Groups or Agencies Consulted

This Final EA is being sent to the Interested Publics included on the annual Range Actions Interested Public Mailing List for 2011.

Public Notice of Availability

On December 16, 2011, the Ely BLM mailed the annual Consultation, Coordination and Cooperation (CCC) letter, which notified interested parties of the livestock grazing term permit renewals scheduled for 2012.

On February 14, 2012, a BLM internal meeting was held in coordination between the Caliente Field Office and the Ely BLM District Office. The term permit renewal proposal for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030) was presented and scoped by resource specialists to identify any relevant issues. No potential issues were identified.

On February 22, 2012, a letter was sent to local Native American tribes initiating the consultation compliance process in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The letter solicited input for various permit renewals scheduled during 2012, including those on the Enterprise Allotment. No comments were received.

On March 02, 2012, the BLM sent each of the three permittees, on the Enterprise Allotment, a letter informing them of the proposed term permit renewal process scheduled for their allotment during 2012. No comments were received.

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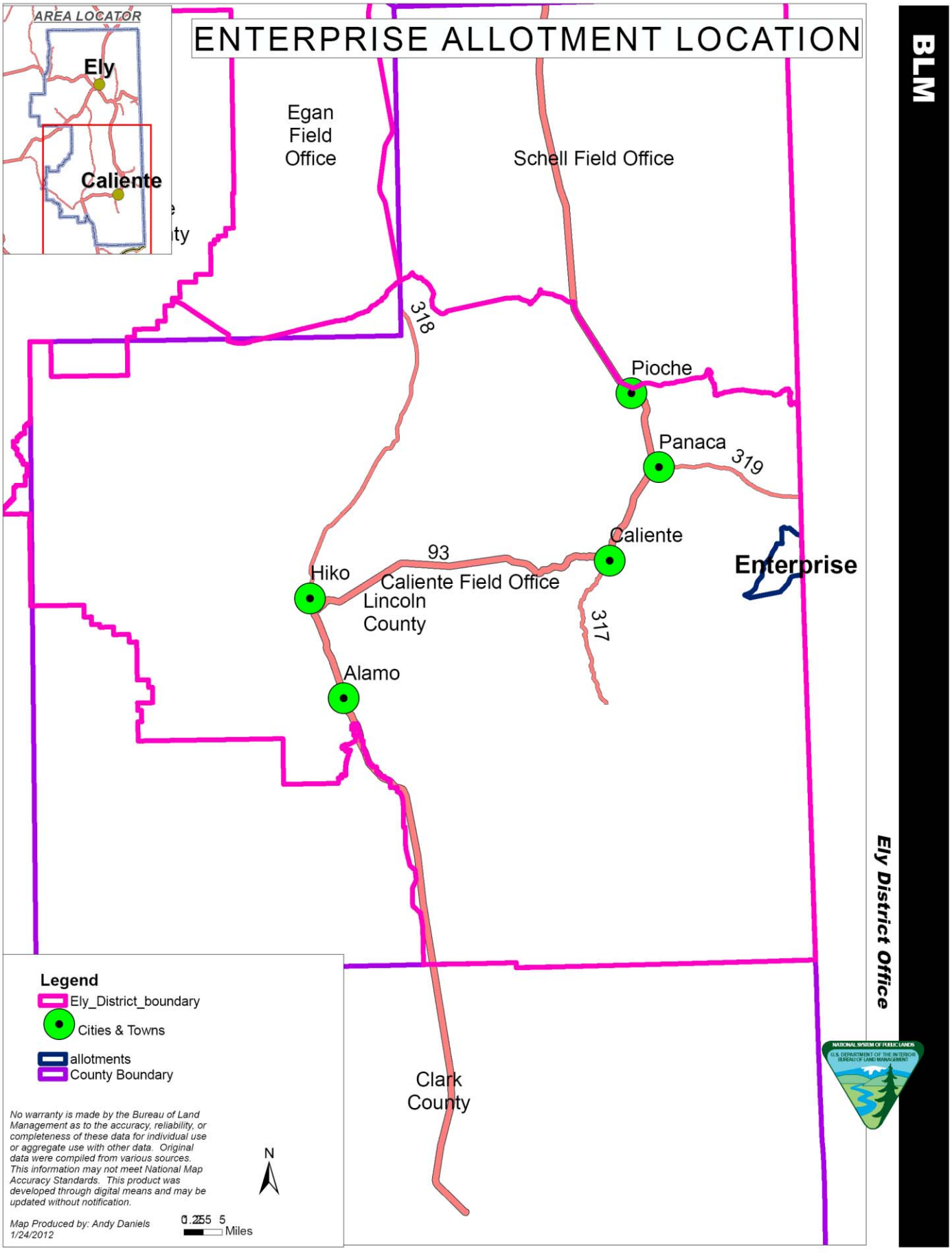
APPENDIX I

(EA)

MAP(S)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Pioche
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County
Enterprise
317
Alamo
Clark
County
BLM
Ely District Office
Legend
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Cities & Towns
allotments
County Boundary
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. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.
Map Produced by: Andy Daniels
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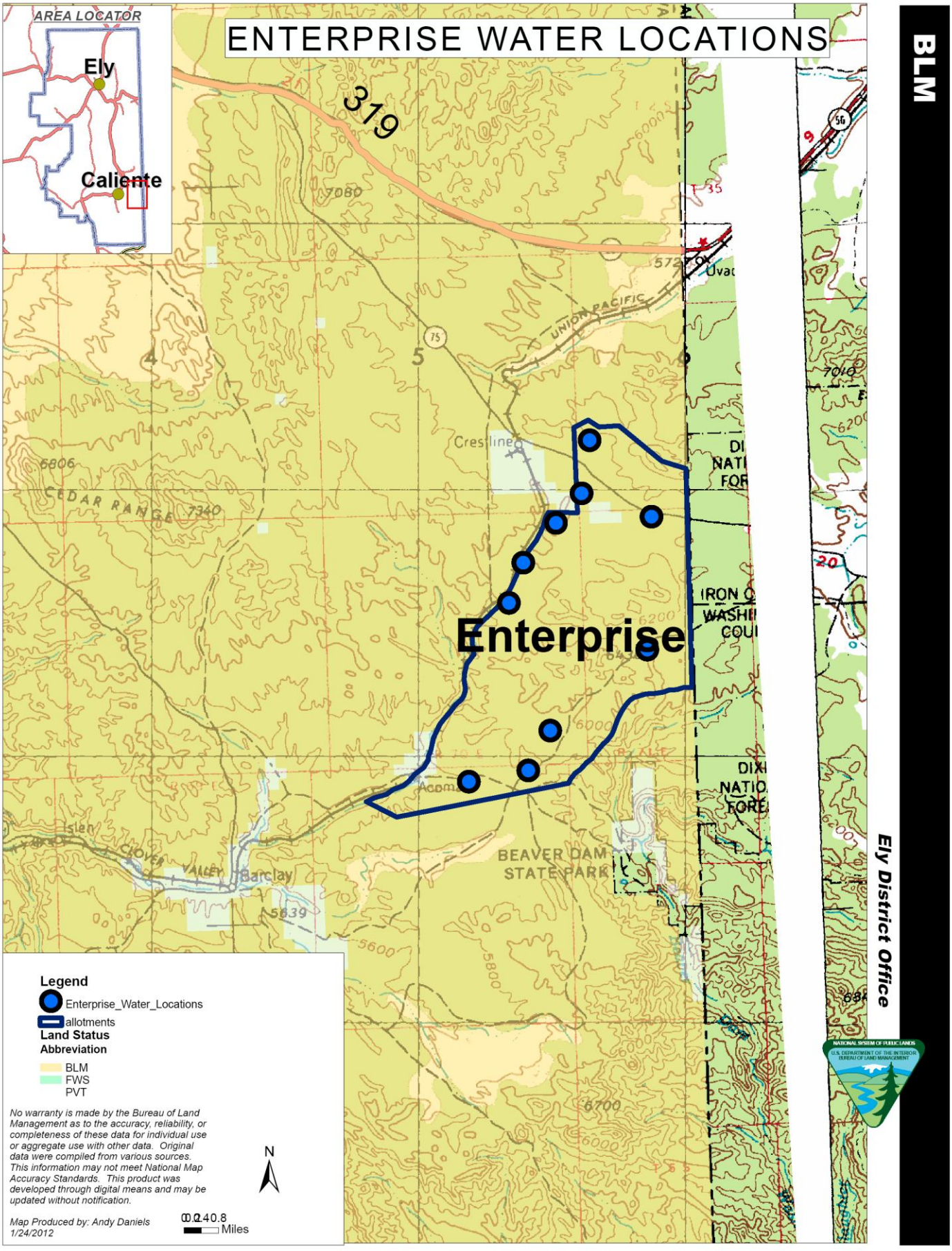
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Clover Valley
Barclay
Beaver Dam State Park
Union Pacific
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allotments
Land Status
Abbreviation
BLM
FWS
PVT
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.
Map Produced by: Andy Daniels
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APPENDIX II

(EA)

STANDARDS DETERMINATION DOCUMENT

Standards Determination and Evaluation Report
Enterprise Allotment
Prepared by Troy Grooms
May 2, 2008

STANDARDS DETERMINATION DOCUMENT

Permit Renewals for Authorization Numbers
2703629, 2703578 and 275002
on the
Enterprise Allotment (#11030)

(DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0022-EA)

Standards and Guidelines Assessment

The Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards and Guidelines for grazing administration were developed by the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February 12, 1997.

Standards and guidelines are likened to objectives for healthy watersheds, healthy native plant communities, and healthy rangelands. Standards are expressions of physical and biological conditions required for sustaining rangelands for multiple uses. Guidelines point to management actions related to livestock grazing for achieving the standards.

This Standards Determination Document evaluates and assesses livestock grazing management achievement of the Standards and conformance with the Guidelines for the Enterprise Allotment in the Ely Bureau of Land Management (BLM) District. This document does not evaluate or assess achievement of the wild horse and burro or Off Highway Vehicle Standards or conformance to the respective Guidelines.

The standards were assessed for the Enterprise Allotment by a BLM interdisciplinary team consisting of rangeland management specialists, wildlife biologist, weeds specialist, and watershed specialist. Documents and publications used in the assessment process include the Soil Survey of Lincoln County Nevada (NRCS year), Ecological Site Descriptions for Major Land Resource Area 29 (NRCS year) Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (USDI-BLM et al. 2000), Sampling Vegetation Attributes (USDI-BLM et al. 1996), and the National Range and Pasture Handbook (USDA-NRCS 1997). A complete list of references is included at the end of this document. All are available for public review in the Caliente BLM Field Station. The interdisciplinary team used rangeland monitoring data, professional observations, and photographs to assess achievement of the Standards and conformance with the Guidelines.

Cattle are the type of livestock grazed on the Enterprise Allotment. Authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 have an Active Use of 421, 420, and 420 Animal Unit Months (AUMs), respectively, on the Enterprise Allotment (1,261 AUMs total). Licensed use was analyzed from 1999 to 2007 (Table 1, Appendix B).

The Enterprise Allotment is divided into three pastures. The south pasture is located in the southern portion of the allotment and is approximately 11,515 acres. The middle pasture is located in the center of the allotment and is approximately 7,412 acres. The north pasture is located in the northern portion of the allotment and is approximately 2,658 acres. The Enterprise

Allotment receives 14" - 20" of annual precipitation per year. A three-pasture rest rotation system is used within the allotment.

There is one Key Management Area (KMAs) within each pasture (Map #1, Appendix A). The three key areas were established during the early 1980's. There are two chaining/seedings within the Enterprise Allotment. They are called the Enterprise chaining/crested wheat seeding (3,622 acres) and the Staheli chaining and crested wheat seeding (3,361 acres) implemented in 1964 and 1970, respectively. In 1998, both chainings had prescribed burns on them to maintain the vigor and diversity of the native/non-native perennial understory.

The Key Species Method was used in determining grazing use according to the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook (2006). This method is based on percent utilization of current year's growth, by weight. Cover data were obtained using the Line Intercept Method. The method is described in Sampling Vegetation Attributes (USDI-BLM et. al., 1996).

Monitoring data have been collected at the pastures from the mid 1980's to 2008. Monitoring data collected includes cover, utilization and ecological condition.

Line Intercept method was used in determining vegetative cover and was conducted in all three pastures during 2007 and 2008. Utilization was measured in 1990's, 2002, and 2008. A summary of monitoring data is located in Appendix B of this document.

All monitoring data and reports are available for public inspection at the Caliente Field Station during business hours.

The following is an analysis of monitoring data that were used to evaluate applied management practices during the evaluation period. These data were used in determining if such management practices yielded results that were in conformance with the Mojave - Southern Great Basin Standards.

PART 1. STANDARD CONFORMANCE REVIEW

Standard 1. Soils

"Watershed soils and stream banks should have adequate stability to resist accelerated erosion, maintain soil productivity, and sustain the hydrologic cycle."

Soil Indicators:

- Ground Cover (vegetation, litter, rock, bare ground).
- Surfaces (e.g., biological crust, pavement).
- Compaction/infiltration.

Riparian Soil Indicators:

- Stream bank stability.

Determination:

***X* Meeting the Standard**

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

☐ Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.

☐ Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard

☐ Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

Guidelines Conformance:

X In conformance with the Guidelines

☐ Not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion:

Standard Achieved.

UPLANDS:

Key Area -1

Figure 1. Key Area 1 within the north pasture of the Enterprise Allotment

A chaining was implemented in the mid 1970's along with a crested wheatgrass seeding. Key Management Area (KMA) 1 is located in the center of this pasture (Figure 1). This KMA is within the crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum*) seeding so the ecological site description will not apply.

Monitoring data collected June of 2008 (Table 1, below) show that cover is just over 17% at the site with perennial grasses accounting for 32%, shrubs 64% and forbs 4%. One grass species, crested wheatgrass, accounted for 100% of the cover at KMA-1. Shrubs present were Mexican cliffrose (*Purshia mexicana*), rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus spp.*) and sagebrush (*Artemisia spp.*). Forbs were phlox (*Linanthus spp.*) and lupine (*Lupinus spp.*). This upland site occurs on mid to upper mountain side-slopes on all aspects. The soils on this site are shallow to bedrock and well drained. The average annual growing season is 70 to 90 days. The soils are stable with no evidence of rill or gully formations. Vegetative litter is present which is essential for maintaining soil stability and dispersing potential erosion effects. The soils on the valley terrace and benches are gravelly silts, gravelly sandy loams, sandy loams, gravelly loams, or loams. The NRCS is currently in the process of finalizing soil mapping for the Clover Valley area.

Key Area -2

Figure 2. Key Area 2 within the south pasture of the Enterprise Allotment.

Vegetative cover collected at KMA-2 is within the Enterprise chaining that occurs within the middle pasture (Figure 2). Monitoring data collected March 2008 show that current cover is just over 30% at the site with perennial grasses accounting for 66%, and shrubs 34%. Forbs were not present at the time cover was collected due to the time of year monitoring occurred. Two species of perennial grasses accounted for the 66% herbaceous composition. They were blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and Crested wheatgrass. Two species of perennial shrubs accounted for the remaining 34% of the composition. They were Sagebrush and rabbitbrush. Other species present, but not within the study plot, were needleandthread (*Hesperostipa comata*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), and bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*). The soils show no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. This KMA is within the crested wheat seeding so the ecological site description will not apply (USDA-NRCS 6/91).

Key Area -3

KMA-3 occurs within the southern pasture of the Enterprise Allotment. This KMA is located within the Staheli chaining which was completed during fiscal year 1970. The chaining had a prescribed burn in 1998. Monitoring data collected in March 2008 showed that total vegetative cover was 31.57% with perennial grasses accounting for 21% of the cover and shrubs accounting for 79%. There were no forbs present due to the time of year that monitoring took place. The herbaceous component at KMA-3 consisted of crested wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*) and bottlebrush squirreltail. The shrub component consisted of bitterbrush, Mexican cliffrose and rabbitbrush. Other species present but not found inside the study plot were Juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) and blue grama. The soils are stable with no evidence of rill or gully formations. Vegetative litter is present which is essential for maintaining soil stability and dispersing potential erosion effects.

RIPARIAN:

There are no riparian areas, on BLM managed lands, within the Enterprise Allotment and, therefore, will not be examined further within the document.

Monitoring Data Review

Table 1

Line Intercept - 2008			
Key Area	**Total Cover**	**Desired Cover**	**Ecological Site**
KMA-1	**17.27%**	N/A	029XY008NV
KMA-2	**30.44%**	N/A	029XY102NV
KMA-3	**31.57%**	N/A	029XY120NV
Line intercept measures the amount of vegetative cover intercepted in 100 feet.			

Conclusion:

Standard Achieved.

All three KMAs are within crested wheat seedings/chaining that were established during the late 1960's and early 1970's. A prescribed fire was implemented on the allotment during the late 1990's to maintain a healthy diverse ecosystem. Though the ecological site descriptions would not apply here, the sites are reverting to native upland communities with healthy diverse shrub-forb-herbaceous understory as described within the ecological site descriptions. Small wildland fires have occurred sporadically throughout the allotment over the last ten years measuring several hundred acres or smaller. The result has been as described in the ecological site description as a reduction in overstory canopy or tree cover and a significant increase in herbaceous composition that transitions into shrub-herbaceous communities with pinyon/juniper

re-establishing over time. Within the ecological site description, it states: "Wildfire is recognized as a natural disturbance that strongly influenced the structure and composition of the climax vegetation of the woodland site."

All three sites show no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. Grazing within the allotment occurs from 5/1 to 10/31 predominantly within the existing crested wheatgrass seedings. Grazing is not an issue that would prevent attainment of the stated objectives for soil stability. Monitoring will continue to ensure proper species composition and diversity.

Standard 2. Ecosystem Components

Watersheds should possess the necessary ecological components to achieve State water quality criteria, maintain ecological processes, and sustain appropriate uses.

Riparian and wetlands vegetation should have structural and species diversity characteristic of the stage of stream channel succession in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, and capture, retain, and safely release water (watershed function).

Upland Indicators:

- Canopy and ground cover, including litter, live vegetation, biological crust, and rock appropriate to potential of the ecological site.
- Ecological processes are adequate for the vegetative communities.

Riparian Indicators:

- Stream side riparian areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation, large woody debris, or rock is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows.
- Elements indicating proper functioning condition such as avoiding acceleration erosion, capturing sediment, and providing for groundwater recharge and release are determined by the following measurements as appropriate to the site characteristics:
    - Width/Depth ratio.
    - Channel roughness.
    - Sinuosity of stream channel.
    - Bank stability.
    - Vegetative cover (amount, spacing, life form).
    - Other covers (large woody debris, rock).
    - Natural springs, seeps and marsh areas are functioning properly when adequate vegetation is present to facilitate water retention, filtering, and release as indicated by plant species and cover appropriate to the site characteristics.

Water Quality Indicators:

- Chemical, physical and biological constituents do not exceed the State water quality Standards.

The above indicators shall be applied to the potential of the ecological site.

Determination:

X **Meeting the Standard**

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

☐ Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.

☐ Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard

☐ Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

Guidelines Conformance:

X **In conformance with the Guidelines**

☐ not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion: *Standard Achieved*

UPLANDS**:** Line Intercept Cover data collected at the Key Management Areas indicates that the major plant communities are composed of appropriate plant species to meet ecological diversity standards (See pie charts 1, 2 and 3, below). The allotment is transitioning from prescribed burns that took place in 1998 as described within the ecological site descriptions. At KMA-2 and KMA-3 there are plant species that were present but not included within the study plot. These included bitterbrush and needleandthread grass and bottlebrush squirreltail.

Key Area -1

Vegetation Type	Composition using Cover	Potential Vegetative Composition *
Grasses	32%	50%
Forbs	4%	5%
Shrubs	64%	45%

* Potential vegetative composition according to the ecological site description at KMA 1. (029XY008NV)

Key Area -2

Vegetation Type	Composition using Cover	Potential Vegetative Composition*
Grasses	66%	50%
Forbs	0%	10%
Shrubs	34%	40%

* Potential vegetative composition according to the ecological site description at KMA 2 (029XY102NV). Understory vegetative composition when the average overstory canopy is medium (20% to 35%). The forb component is missing due to the time of year the data were collected (March 2008).

Key Area -3

Vegetation Type	Composition using Cover	Potential Vegetative Composition*
Grasses	21%	60%
Forbs	1%	10%
Shrubs	77%	30%

* Potential vegetative composition according to the ecological site description at KMA-3 (029XY120NV). Understory vegetative composition when the average overstory canopy is medium (25% to 35%).

The forb component is missing due to the time of year the data were collected (March 2008).

Utilization data collected on the allotment during the evaluation period indicate use by livestock has been within acceptable limits of moderate use within the seedings. A majority of the use occurs within the crested wheatgrass seedings. Use outside of the seedings is light to moderate.

There are no riparian areas, on BLM managed lands, within the Enterprise Allotment.

Standard 3. Habitat and Biota:

As indicated by:

- Vegetation composition (relative abundance of species);
- Vegetation structure (life forms, cover, height, or age class);
- Vegetation distribution (patchiness, corridors);
- Vegetation productivity; and
- Vegetation nutritional value.

Determination:

X Meeting the Standard

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards

☐ Not Meeting the Standard, not making significant progress toward standard

Causal Factors

☐ Livestock are a contributing factor to not meeting the standard.

☐ Livestock are not a contributing factor to not meeting the standard

☐ Failure to meet the standard is related to other issues or conditions

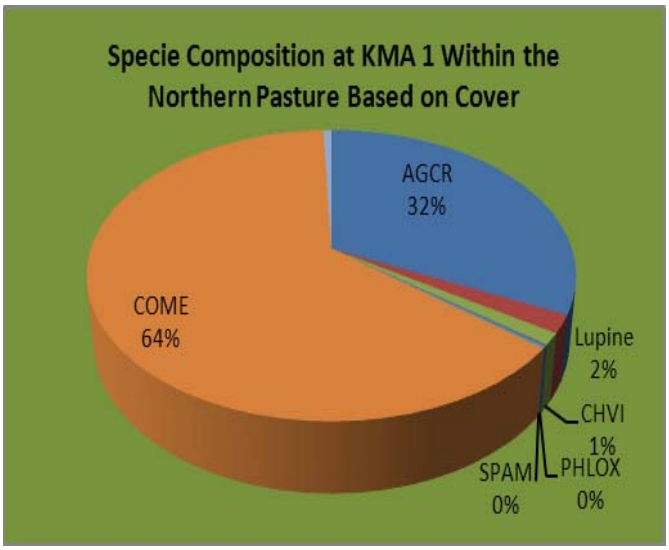
Guidelines Conformance:

X In conformance with the Guidelines

☐ Not in conformance with the Guidelines

Conclusion: *Meeting the Standard*

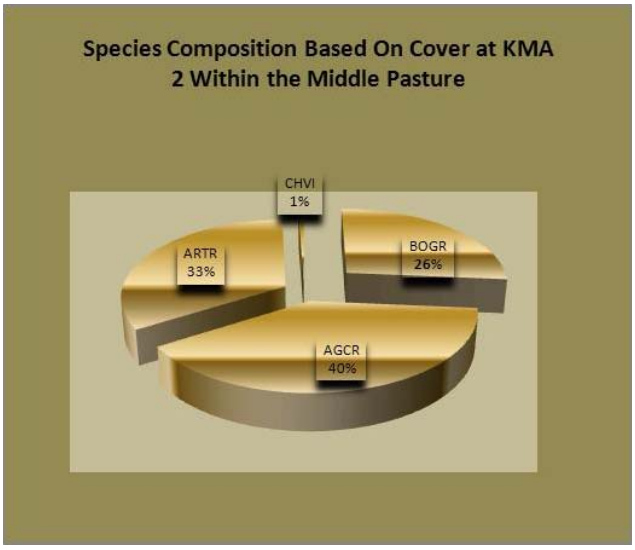
KMA-1



Pie Chart 1

One grass species - crested wheatgrass - accounted for 100% of the cover at KMA-1. Shrubs present were Mexican cliffrose, rabbitbrush and sagebrush. Forbs were phlox and, lupine. Also present but not within the study plot were globemallow and Palmer penstemon. KMA-1 is 64% shrubs, 4% forbs and 21% herbaceous component.

KMA-2



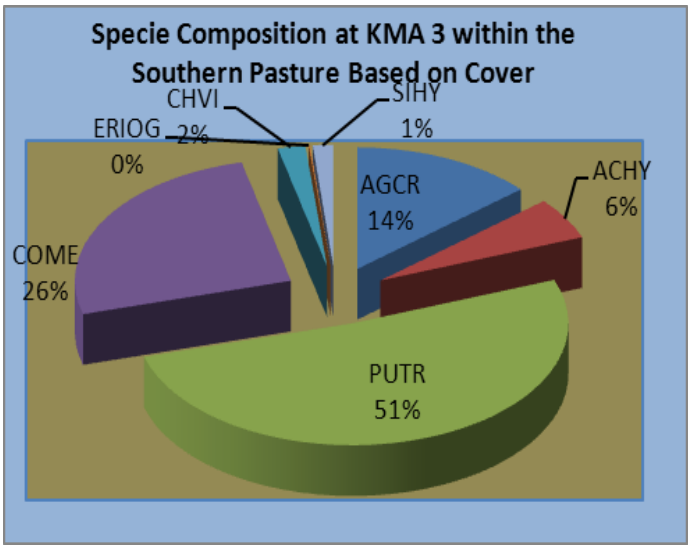
Pie Chart 2

Dominant Species at KMA-2, within the middle pasture, is sagebrush for the shrub component and blue grama and crested wheatgrass for the herbacious component.

Vegetation composition at KMA-2 is 34% shrubs with 66% herbaceous component and a small component of forbs. Vegetation potential according to the ecological site description is

50% grasses, 40% shrubs and 10% forbs when the average overstory canopy is medium (20% to 35%).

KMA-3



Pie Chart 3

Vegetation communities on the allotment are dominated by high altitude upland type species. The main shrub species within the southern pasture generally include sagebrush, bitterbrush, Mexican cliffrose and spiny hopsage. The herbaceous species include crested wheatgrass, blue grama, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, and small galleta.

KMA-3 is 79% shrubs which includes sagebrush, bitterbrush and cliffrose. The herbaceous component is about 21%, with Indian ricegrass being the predominant species within the monitoring plot. blue grama was present but outside of the monitored area. Vegetation potential according to the ecological site description is 60% grasses, 30% shrubs and 10% forbs when the average overstory canopy is medium (25 to 35%).

Dominant species outside of the crested wheatgrass seedings that have not been affected by recent fires are predominately pinyon/juniper woodlands with a diminishing understory of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, blue grama and sagebrush. These areas are in danger of crossing a threshold of a predominantly woody community with little to no understory. This would cause loss of bio-diversity and destabilized soils that would result in loss of vegetative resiliency when fire occurs. The ecological site descriptions states: "In the absence of wildfire or other naturally occurring disturbance the tree canopy on this site can become very dense. This stage is dominated by trees that reached maximal heights for the site. Upper crowns are typically irregularly flat topped or rounded. Understory vegetation is sparse to absent due to tree competition. Tree canopy cover is at a maximum for the site and is commonly greater than 45%."

The invasive annual, cheatgrass, occurs in varying levels throughout the allotment but is most dominant along roads and areas disturbed by both livestock and wildlife.

Scotch thistle and hoary cress occur along some of the roads that run near the border of the Enterprise Allotment (Appendix IV of EA). The allotment will continue to be monitored for noxious weed species.

Utilization data shows the allotment has generally been grazed within the light to moderate range (21%-60% current year's growth) or less for the recent past years. The allotment is fenced into three pastures to allow for a rest rotation grazing system. The fencing ensures that use is predominantly within the crested wheat grass seedings.

Since 2004, precipitation has been average to above average, resulting in increased stature and recruitment of new plants (Table 5, Appendix B).

In working with the BLM, the permittees have reduced livestock numbers on the allotment over the last three years. The reduction in use is a result of prolonged drought within the region during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Actual use on the allotment has been 10% to 70% percent of permitted use over the last three years.

The allotment is maintaining a diverse functioning ecosystem. The presence of annual grasses should be maintained at a minimum to reduce the threat of wildfire within the allotment.

PART 2. ARE LIVESTOCK A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO NOT MEETING THE STANDARDS? SUMMARY REVIEW:

Standard #1: Soils

Conclusion: Standard met (achieved).

Both sites show no evidence of rill or gully formations. The soils appear stable and in place. The probability of soil movement is low due to the ability of deep-rooted species to hold the soil in place. Grazing within the allotment occurs from 5/1 to 10/31 predominantly within the existing crested wheatgrass seedings. Grazing is not an issue that would prevent attainment of the stated objectives for soil stability. Monitoring will continue to ensure proper species composition and diversity.

Standard #2: Ecosystem Components
Conclusion: Standard met (achieved).

Line Intercept Cover data collected at the Key Management sites indicates that the major plant communities are composed of appropriate plant species to meet ecological diversity standards (See pie charts 1 and 2 above). The allotment is transitioning from prescribed burns that took place in 1998 as described within the ecological site descriptions.

Standard #3: Habitat and Biota

Conclusion: Standard met (achieved).

Vegetation communities on the allotment are dominated by high altitude woodland type species. The main shrub species generally include sagebrush, bitterbrush, Cliffrose and spiny hopsage. The herbaceous species include blue grama, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, and small galleta.

Dominant species outside of the crested wheatgrass seedings that have not been affected by recent fires are predominately pinyon/juniper woodlands with a diminishing understory of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, blue grama and sagebrush. These areas are in danger of crossing a threshold of a predominantly woody community with little to no understory. This would cause loss of bio-diversity and destabilized soils that would result in loss of vegetative resiliency when fire occurs.

PART 3 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO CONFORM TO GUIDELINES AND ACHIEVE STANDARDS

Discussion:

Several management practices are recommended to conform to the Guidelines in order to continue meeting or make significant progress towards meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health. In general, livestock need to continue to be managed in a way to encourage even distribution throughout the allotment as well as continue with a rest rotation system.

Recommendations and terms and conditions for grazing use:

1. Maintain season of use as per the 1986 Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Enterprise Allotment. Up to 14 days extension (in accordance with § 4130.3-2) for grazing may be permitted on a case-by-case basis, and requires the approval of the authorized officer prior to use. Active use AUMs may not be exceeded during the season of use.

2. Salt and/or mineral supplements for livestock shall be located no closer than ¼ mile from water sources. Use of nutritional supplements (not forage) is encouraged to improve the ability of cattle to utilize forage in the winter months and to improve livestock distribution into areas previously slightly or occasionally grazed by livestock. Supplements are to be placed ½ mile from existing waters.

3 Allowable Use Levels on current year's growth of upland vegetation (grasses, forbs and shrubs) within the Enterprise Allotment - during the authorized grazing use period (May 1– October 31) - will not exceed 45%.

4. Wildlife escape ramps will be installed and maintained by the permittee at each trough used on the allotment (permanent or temporary).

Prepared by:

/s/ Troy Grooms	8/5/2008
Troy Grooms - Rangeland Management Specialist	Date

Reviewed by:

/s/ Chris Mayer	8/6/2008
Chris Mayer -Lead Rangeland Management Specialist	Date

I concur:

/s/ Ron Clementsen	8/19/2008
Ron Clementsen Caliente Field Manager	Date

Specialists:

/s/ Alan Kunze	8/14/2008
Alan Kunze - Soil, Water Quality, Air Quality, Floodplains and Riparian	Date
/s/ Bonnie Million	8/5/2008
Bonnie Million - Invasive, Non-Native Species	Date
/s/ Lynn Wulf	8/5/2008
Cultural Resources	Date
/s/ Rick Baxter	8/14/2008
Rick Baxter Wildlife Biologist, Special Status Animals, Migratory Birds, Special Status Plants	Date
/s/ Melanie Peterson	8/6/2008
Melanie Peterson - Hazardous Materials	Date
/s/ Kyle Hansen for	8/8/2008
Ben Noyes – Wild Horse and Burros	Date
/s/ Dave Jacobson	8/8/2008
Dave Jacobson – Wilderness Values	
	8/6/2008
Elvis Wall - Native American Concerns/Tribal Coordination	Date

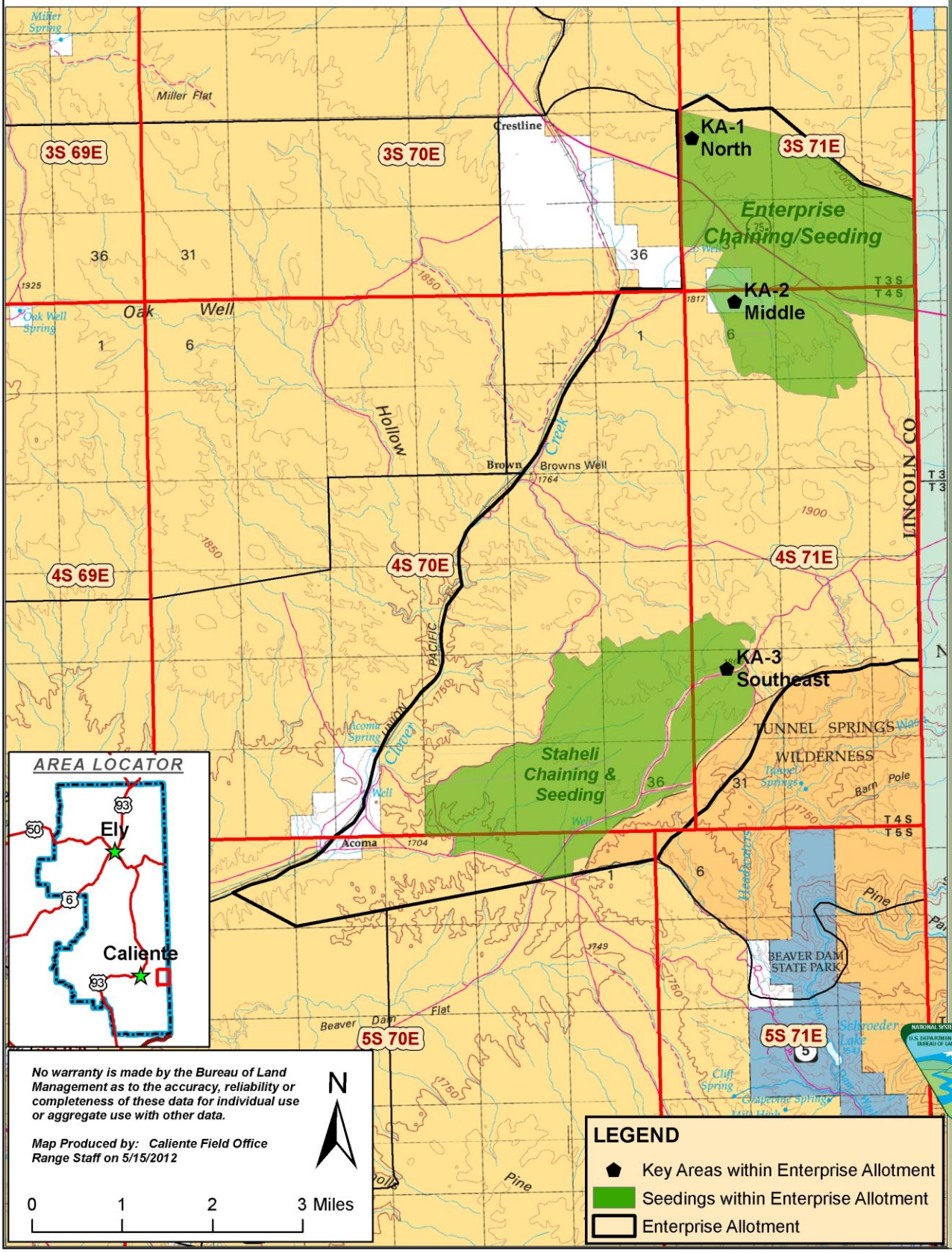
APPENDIX A

(Standards Determination Document)

MAPS

MAP #1

Location of the Three Key Areas and Seeding Treatments within the Enterprise Allotment (#11030).



APPENDIX B

(Standards Determination Document)

DATA ANALYSIS – ENTERPRISE ALLOTMENT

Grazing authorizations were determined for each permittee for grazing years 1999-2007. The licensed use ranged from 0 to 436 AUMs, for each permittee, during this period. Whenever reduced grazing use occurred it was due to both, BLM and permittee initiative.

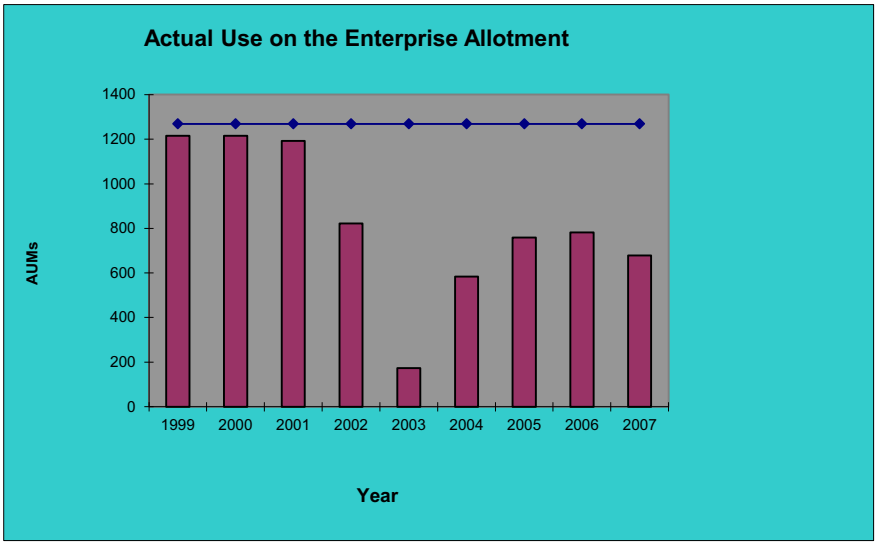
Table 1

Permittee	Allotment	Year	Period of Use	Permitted Use (AUMs)	Actual Use	Non-Use (AUMs)
Dannelly	Enterprise	1999	5/1-10/31	423	356	67
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	1999	5/1-10/31	423	436	**(13)**
Preston	Enterprise	1999	5/1-10/31	423	423	0
Dannelly	Enterprise	2000	5/1-10/31	423	397	26
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2000	5/1-10/31	423	423	0
Preston	Enterprise	2000	5/1-10/31	423	395	28
Dannelly	Enterprise	2001	5/1-10/31	423	407	16
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2001	5/1-10/31	423	380	43
Preston	Enterprise	2001	5/1-10/31	423	405	18
Dannelly	Enterprise	2002	5/1-10/31	423	151	272
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2002	5/1-10/31	423	248	175
Preston	Enterprise	2002	5/1-10/31	423	426	**(3)**
Dannelly	Enterprise	2003	5/1-10/31	423	0	423
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2003	5/1-10/31	423	173	173
Preston	Enterprise	2003	5/1-10/31	423	0	423
Dannelly	Enterprise	2004	5/1-10/31	423	290	133
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2004	5/1-10/31	423	255	168

Preston	Enterprise	2004	5/1-10/31	423	39	384
Dannelly	Enterprise	2005	5/1-10/31	423	0	423
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2005	5/1-10/31	423	374	49
Preston	Enterprise	2005	5/1-10/31	423	385	38
Dannelly	Enterprise	2006	5/1-10/31	423	0	423
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2006	5/1-10/31	423	366	57
Preston	Enterprise	2006	5/1-10/31	423	416	7
Dannelly	Enterprise	2007	5/1-10/31	423	0	423
Farnsworth Farms	Enterprise	2007	5/1-10/31	423	387	36
Preston	Enterprise	2007	5/1-10/31	423	292	131

***AUMs in parenthesis show areas where actual use exceeded active permitted use for the permittee, but not for the allotment.**

Table 2



Line Intercept Cover

Cover data were collected in 2008 at three Key Management Areas (KMAs).
Line Intercept Cover Data Analysis*

Table 3

KMA-1			
Key Area Information		Species	Composition By Species Based On Cover
Range site: 029XY008NV		Crested Wheatgrass	32%
Desirable Cover For Site: N/A		Mexican Cliffrose	64%
Percent Cover Measured 2007: **17.27%**		Rabbitbrush	1%
		Lupine	1%
		Phlox	1%
COVER BY GROUPS		Globemallow	1%
SHRUBS	64		
GRASSES	32		
FORBS	4		
KMA-2			
		Sagebrush	33%
Range site: 029XY102NV		Rabbitbrush	1%
Desirable Cover For Site: N/A		Blue Grama	26%
Percent Cover Measured 2007: **30.44%**		Crested Wheatgrass	40%
		Forbs	Present
COVER BY GROUPS			
SHRUBS	34		
GRASSES	66		
FORBS	P		
KMA-3			
Range site: 029XY126NV		Bitterbrush	50%
Desirable Cover For Site: N/A		Cliffrose	25%
Percent Cover Measured 2007: **31.6%**		Rabbitbrush	2%
		Crested Wheatgrass	14%
		Indian ricegrass	5%
COVER BY GROUPS		Bottlebrush Squirreltail	2%
SHRUBS	77	Buckwheat	1%
GRASSES	21		
FORBS	1		

Table 4

Key Area	Percent Cover	Species Composition Based on Cover		
		Shrubs	Grasses	Forbs
KMA-1	17.27%	64%	32%	4%
KMA-2	10.3%	34%	66%	T%
KMA-3	31.6%	77%	21%	1%

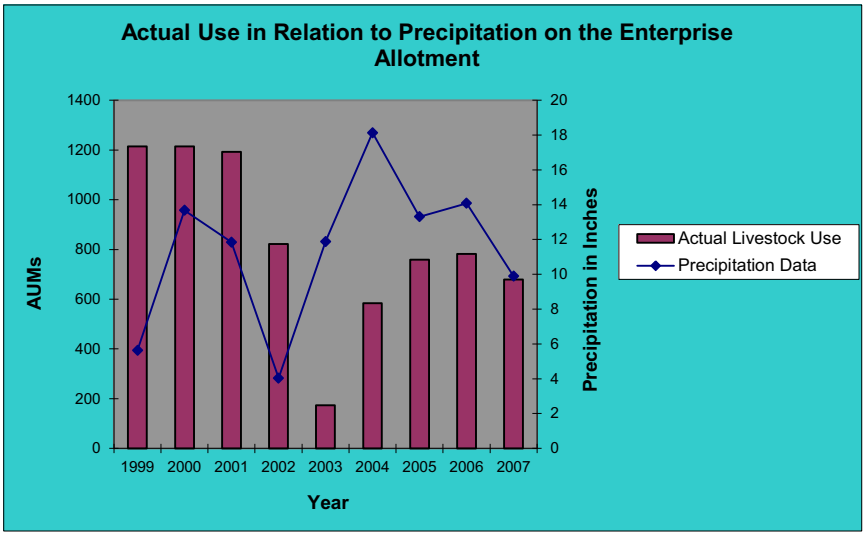
Utilization

Utilization was last measured using the key forage plant method during March of 2008. Overall use levels for the vast majority of the allotment, that has been measured, shows moderate to heavy utilization within the crested wheatgrass seedings and light to moderate outside of the seedings. The majority of the utilization takes place within the crested wheatgrass seedings.

Precipitation Data

The precipitation data comes from the rain can on the Enterprise Allotment. Data is collected monthly (whenever possible) by the staff of the Caliente BLM Field Station.

Table 5



APPENDIX III

(EA)

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

10. 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 are consistent with multiple-use objectives. Such deviations will require an application and written authorization from the authorized officer prior to grazing use.

11. The authorized officer is requiring that an actual use report (Form 4130-5) be submitted within 15 days after completing your annual grazing use.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. The permittee is responsible for all maintenance of assigned range improvements including wildlife escape ramps for both permanent and temporary water troughs.

16. 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.

17. Livestock will be moved to another authorized pasture (where applicable) 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.

18. The placement of mineral or salt supplements will be a minimum distance of 1/2 mile from known water sources, riparian areas, winterfat dominated sites, sensitive sites, populations of special status plant species, and cultural resource sites. Mineral and salt supplements will also be one mile from active sage-grouse leks. Placing supplemental feed (i.e. hay, grain, pellets, etc.) on public lands without authorization is prohibited.

APPENDIX IV

(EA)

WEED RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS

Term Grazing Permit Renewal
for Authorization Numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002
on the
Enterprise Allotment (#11030)

On January 6, 2012, a Noxious & Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for the Enterprise Allotment in Lincoln County, Nevada in preparation for the permit renewal process scheduled during 2012.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Caliente Field Office, proposes to fully process and issue new term grazing permits for authorization numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment (#11030). The allotment, which encompasses 21,585 acres of BLM managed lands, is located 23 miles east of Caliente, Nevada in Clover Mountains.

The Proposed Action is to maintain the current Active Use of all three permittees with grazing authorizations being based on annual forage availability.

The Proposed Action would also add other terms and conditions to the permits that would aid in achieving/maintaining the Mojave-Southern Great Basin Standards. No other changes to any of the permits would be made.

The following table displays the current Term Grazing Permits for Authorization Numbers 2703629, 2703578 and 275002 on the Enterprise Allotment.

ALLOTMENT		Authorization Num.	LIVESTOCK		GRAZING PERIOD		** % Public Land	AUMs		
Name	Number		* Number	Kind	Begin	End		Active Use	Hist. Susp. Use	Total Use
Enterprise	11030	#2703629	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	421	291	712
		#2703578	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709
		#2705002	70	C	5/01	10/31	100	420	289	709

* These numbers are approximate
** This is for billing purposes only.

The following Term and Condition (BMP) would also be added to the Term Grazing Permit:

1. Allowable Use Levels on current year's growth of upland vegetation (grasses, forbs and shrubs) within the Enterprise Allotment - during the authorized grazing use period (May 1–October 31) - will not exceed 45%.

In relation to grazing, there would be no additional terms and conditions needed management practices to conform to guidelines either to make progress toward or to maintain achievement of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

The issuance of the term permit would be for a period of 10 years.

No field weed surveys were completed for this project. Instead, the Ely District weed inventory data were consulted. The following species are found within the boundaries of the Enterprise allotment:

Lepidium draba	Hoary cress
Onopordum acanthium	Scotch thistle

The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to the Enterprise allotment:

Cirsium vulgare	Bull thistle
Conium maculatum	Poison hemlock
Lepidium draba	Hoary cress
Linaria dalmatica	Dalmatian toadflax
Onopordum acanthium	Scotch thistle
Tamarix spp.	Salt cedar

The Enterprise allotment has never been completely inventoried and was last partially inventoried for noxious weeds in 2008. It should be noted that the Enterprise allotment runs along the boundary with Utah and no weed inventory data for Utah is available. While not officially documented the following non-native invasive weeds probably occur in or around the allotment: cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), 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 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.

However, the proposed action would also increase the human presence in the area and the likelihood of weed detection.

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 High (8) at the present time. If new weed infestations establish within the allotment this could have an adverse impact those native plant communities since the allotment is currently considered to be mostly weed-free. In addition, 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.

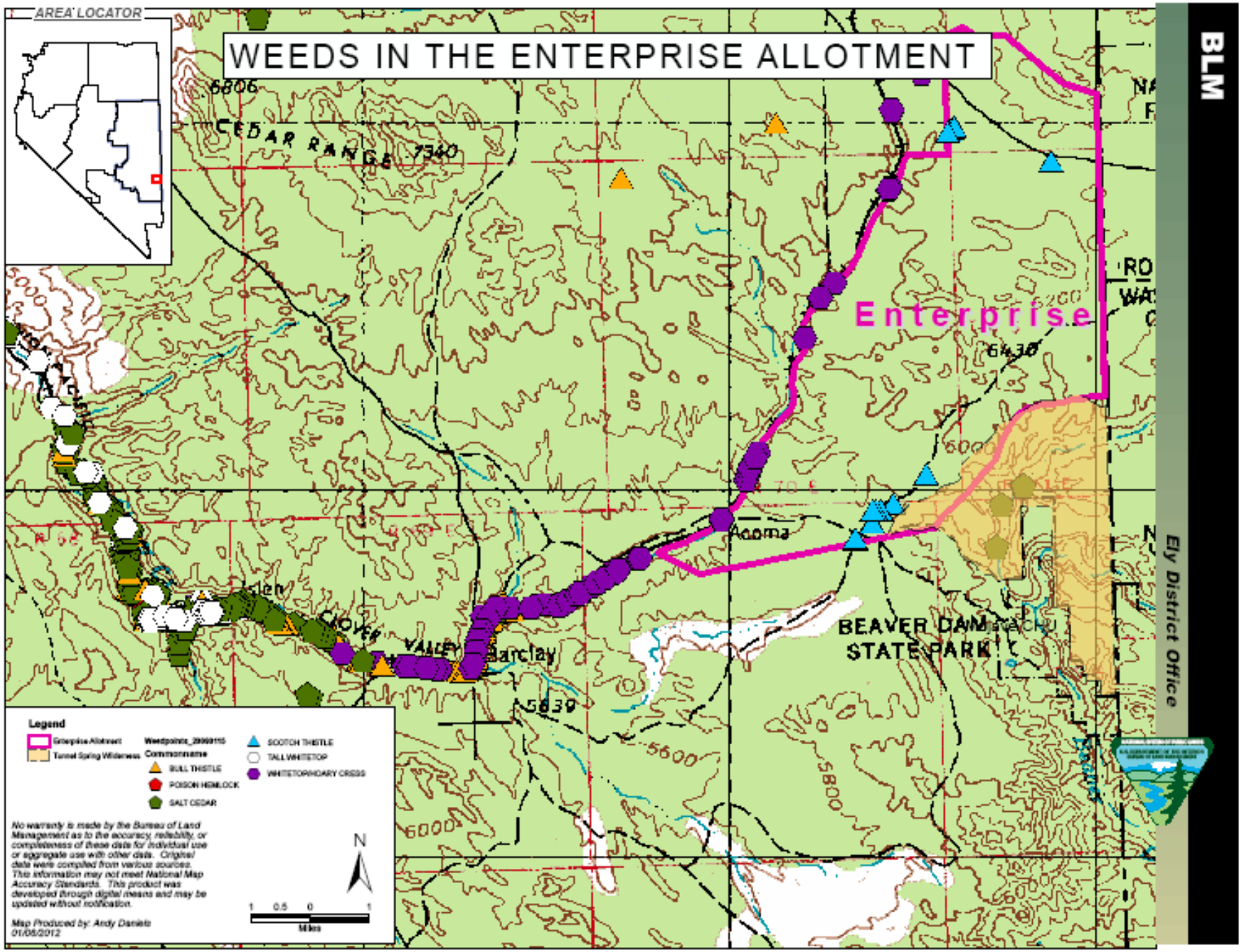
For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (32). This indicates that the project can proceed as planned as long as the following measures are followed:

- 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 allotment 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.
- 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 Field Office.
- 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.
- 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: Cameron Boyce 1/25/2012

Cameron Boyce
Natural Resource Specialist

Date


AREA LOCATOR
WEEDS IN THE ENTERPRISE ALLOTMENT
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Ely District Office
Enterprise
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6438
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Baker
Clover
Valley
Barclay
5839
5600
5800
6000
BEAVER DAM
STATE PARK
Legend
Grouplus Allotment
Tunnel Spring Wilderness
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Commonname
BULL THISTLE
POISON HEMLOCK
SALT CEDAR
SCOTCH THISTLE
TALL WHITETOP
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. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.
Map Produced by: Andy Daniels
01/05/2012
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APPENDIX V
(EA)

WILDLIFE SPECIES LIST

Enterprise TPR Wildlife & Plants 1/23/12

According to the Ely RMP and the Nevada Natural Heritage Database, the following species may occur within the project area. Highlighted species are BLM sensitive species in Nevada.

Mammals/Avian

Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
Elk (*Cervus elaphus*) general habitat
Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) crucial summer and general habitat

The project area is within hunt unit 242.

The project area is the Enterprise allotment.
The project area is located within the Beaver Dam Wash (#215) and Clover Creek North (#212N) watersheds.

The following data reflect survey blocks and/or incidental sightings of bird species within the project area from the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada (Floyd et al. 2007). These data represent birds that were confirmed, probably, or possibly breeding within the project area. These data are not comprehensive, and additional species not listed here may be present within the project area.

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)
Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)
Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*)
Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*)
Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)
Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*)
Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerine*)
Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)
Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*)
Gray Vireo (*Vireo vicinior*)
House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)
House Wren *(Troglodytes aedon)*
Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)
Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*)
Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)
Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)
Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)
Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*)
Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)
Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)
Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)
Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)
Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)
Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*)

Works Cited

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