

## Appendix B



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service

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### Ice Caves Cattle Allotment

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Mt. Adams Ranger District is in the process of identifying issues, concerns, and/or opportunities associated with domestic livestock grazing within the Ice Caves Cattle Allotment. As part of our public scoping process, we would like your comments on our current grazing program within the Ice Caves Cattle Allotment. Based on your comments, the interdisciplinary planning team will look at alternative ways to address your issues and concerns. The resulting alternatives, their respective environmental consequences, and any applicable mitigation measures will be published in an environmental analysis (EA). We expect to complete the EA and make it available for public review and comment in late summer/early fall of 2003. A final decision will be made in late fall 2003. This analysis will provide a basis for making an informed decision about the kind, number, and season of use that is consistent with the Gifford Pinchot National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

The Forest Service administers the grazing on National Forest System Lands under authority of the Organic Administration Act, Granger-Thye Act, Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act, and the National Forest Management Act. The Ice Caves Cattle Allotment contains 31,543 acres within its boundary. Generally, the grazing allotment is located north of South Prairie, West of the 6035 road, South of Dead Horse Meadows, and East of the Forest Boundary (Map #1).

Currently, 200 cow/calf pairs are permitted within the grazing season (June 15 to September 30 [3.5 months]). Utilization standards, such as stubble height, are established and managed through the Annual Operation Plan for the allotment. When thresholds for the degree of forage utilization are met, the Forest Service representative(s), with input from the permittee, have determined the necessary cattle movement. Cattle movement has included the redistribution of cattle within the allotment or, if deemed necessary for the protection of the soil, water, animal, and plant resources, removal of the domestic livestock from the allotment. Current direction also provides protection (mitigation measure) of a two-acre cultural resource site by excluding the cattle with natural vegetation barricades.

Ultimately, I will use the analysis to decide one of the following:

- Determine if the proposed project would cause significant impacts, which would require an environmental impact statement.
- Approve an alternative that will meet the objectives of the National Forest Management Act and Forest Service policy to permit grazing on national forest lands and establish management standards and mitigation measures for the grazing allotment that will assure compliance with the Standards and Guidelines of the LRMP.



- To not permit grazing on the Ice Caves Cattle Allotment because developed management standards and mitigation measures could not assure LRMP compliance.

The following list of preliminary issues have been developed by the Interdisciplinary Team:

- What management standards and/or mitigation measures are necessary to sustain Pale-Blue Eyed (*Sisyrinchium sarmentosum*) grass habitat (Washington State threatened species) and the Mardon Skipper (*Polites mardon*) butterfly habitat (Washington State endangered species)?
- What management standards and/or mitigation measures are necessary to minimize the introduction and spread of noxious weeds?
- What management standards and/or mitigation measures are necessary to avoid high use concentration areas, such as South Prairie, Cave Creek, and Lost Meadows?

We appreciate your interest in this proposal and although we will accept comments at any stage in the analysis, to be of most use in the development of the alternatives, we would like to have your written comments by May 12, 2003. Please submit your comments to Bruce Holmson, Ice Caves Allotment Project Leader, 2455 Hwy 141, Trout Lake, WA 98650 or by e-mail to [bholmson@fs.fed.us](mailto:bholmson@fs.fed.us). If you have questions or would like to discuss this proposal, you may contact Bruce Holmson by email or by phone: 509-395-3390. Thank you for your interest in the management of Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

GREGORY L. COX  
District Ranger

Enclosure (1)