

PURPOSE AND NEED and
PROPOSED ACTION
for the

**Reauthorization and Management of Livestock Grazing
on the Little Greys Cattle and Horse Allotment**

USDA Forest Service
Bridger-Teton National Forest
Greys River Ranger District
Lincoln County, Wyoming

March 25, 2008

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Background Information

The allotment encompasses approximately 16,325 acres of National Forest System lands, and is located within the south ½ of T37N – R117W and T37N – R116W, east ½ of T36N – R37N, west ½ of T36N – R116W (Figure 2). Dominant vegetation types in the allotment are riparian meadow and willow, moist meadow, silver sagebrush, grassland, mountain big sagebrush, aspen, and lodgepole pine.

The allotment is within DFC 1B and 12 of the Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF) Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Two pastures (Blind Trail and Stewart) are primarily in DFC 1B, three pastures (McCain, River, and Neck) are primarily in DFC 12, and one pasture (Steer Creek) is split between DFCs 1B and 12 (Figure 3, page 9). The management theme of DFC 1B is an area managed for commercial activities with many roads and moderate to occasional substantial emphasis on other resources.

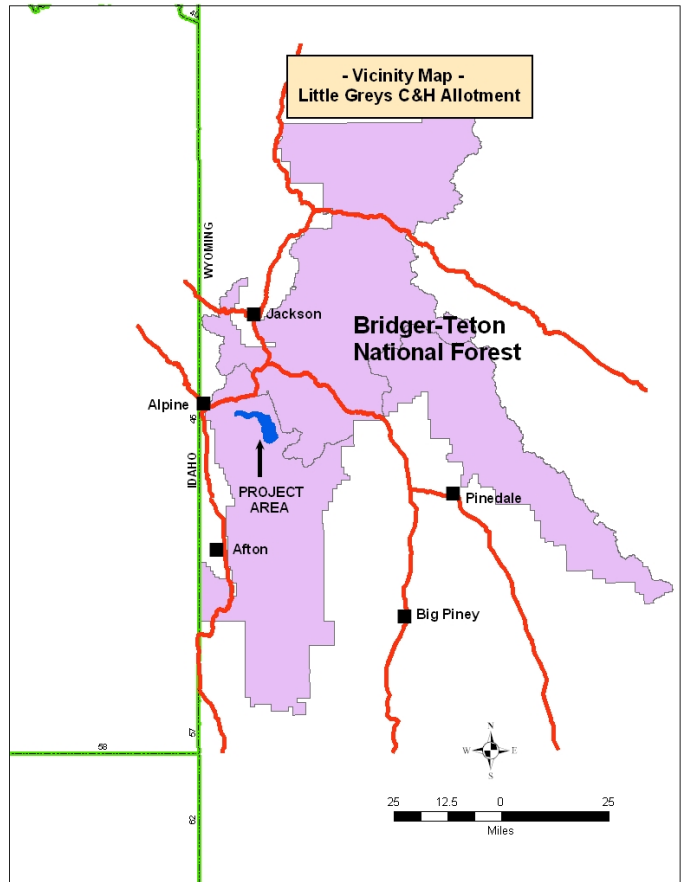
Management emphasizes scheduled wood-fiber production, livestock production, and on other commodity outputs. The management theme of DFC 12 is an area managed for high-quality wildlife habitat and escape cover, big-game hunting opportunities, and dispersed recreation activities. Management emphasizes the provision of important habitat for big-game as winter ranges, feeding areas, calving areas, and security areas.

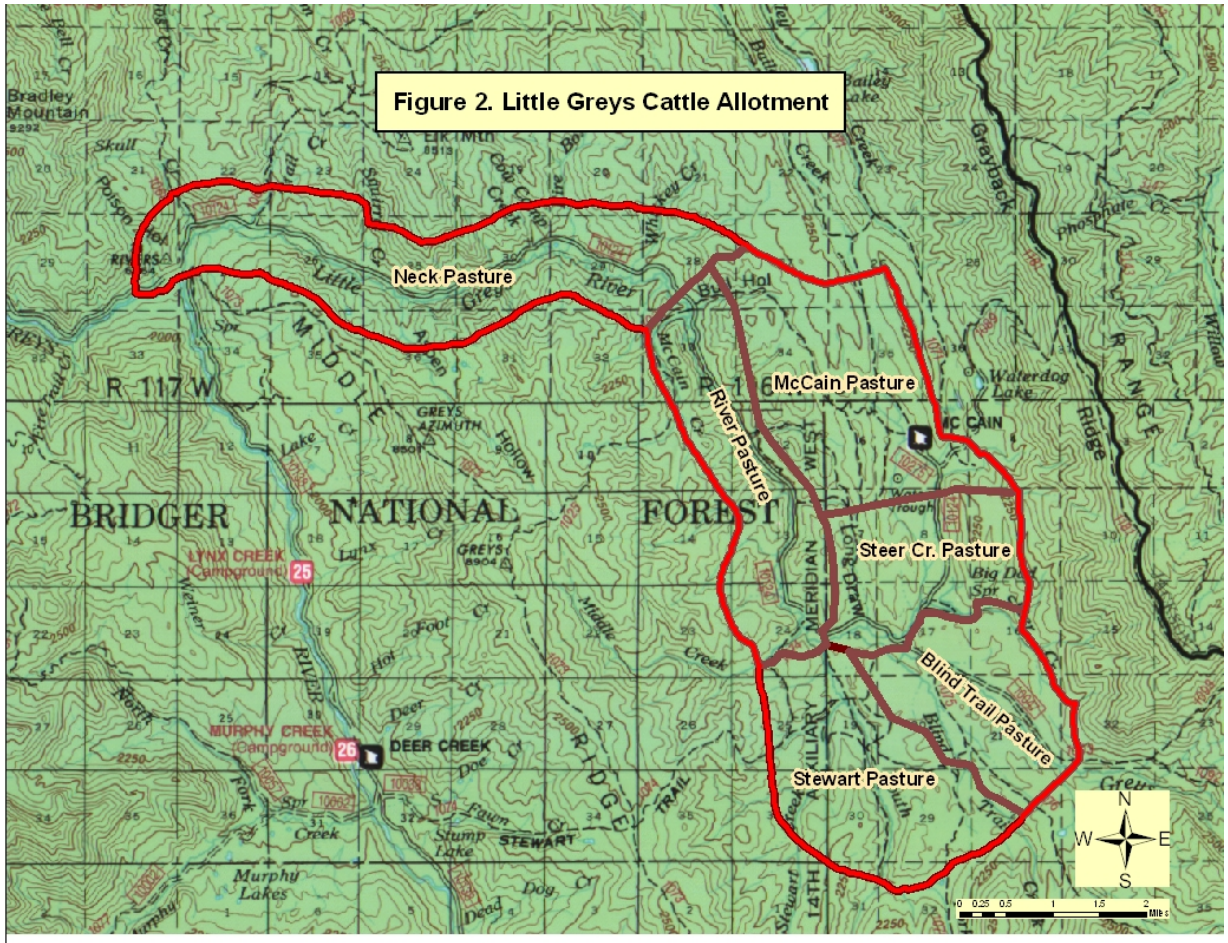
Purpose and Need

This proposal was initiated in response to Section 504 (a) of the 1995 Rescission Act (Public Law 104-19), which requires the Forest Service to establish and adhere to a schedule for completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and decisions on all allotments.

The purposes of and need for taking action are:

- To provide for the continuation of livestock grazing on the Little Greys C&H allotment in support of the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act, federal regulation (36 CFR 222 Subpart A, 222.2 (c)), and direction provided in the (Forest Plan): (1) Goal 1.1 — communities continue or gain greater prosperity; and (2) Objective 1.1(h) — provide forage for about 260,000 Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of livestock grazing annually. This is the primary purpose for reauthorizing livestock grazing on the allotment.
- To be in compliance with the 1995 Rescissions Act (Public Law 104-19).





- To update management direction in the allotment management plan (AMP) in a way that directs the livestock grazing program to be managed in a manner that allows resource conditions to remain at desired conditions or, where conditions are below desired conditions, allow resource conditions to adequately move toward — and ultimately meet — desired conditions defined by the Forest Plan, Forest Service Manual, and other direction.

The existing livestock grazing management program on the allotment has evolved over several decades in a direction that has allowed for upward trends in rangeland conditions. However, desired vegetative and soil conditions and allowable-use standards were not clearly defined in the existing AMP, which has limited the progress toward restoring riparian and rangeland functioning. While current permittees have made improvements in livestock grazing management, riparian and rangeland effects from a long history of livestock grazing in the allotment continue. Streambank stability in some drainages (e.g., portions of Blind Trail, South Fork, Stewart, and Middle creeks), herbaceous vegetation vigor and height throughout a majority of the four main pastures, and willow canopy cover in limited areas are still below what is needed for their recovery and for providing wildlife cover. Also, greatly extended fire-return intervals, for which livestock grazing and management has played a small role, also affects the mix of age classes and health of several of vegetation types. Therefore, there is a need to clearly define desired conditions, Best Management Practices, and allowable-use standards in an

updated AMP in order for this direction to be effectively implemented on the ground through Annual Operating Instructions (AOIs).

Desired Conditions

Desired conditions will be summarized in the AMP to clarify the link between allowable-use standards and the desired conditions they are meant to support. The following desired conditions, derived from Forest Plan direction, guidance in the Greys River Landscape Scale Assessment and Forest Service Handbook, and scientific information, are proposed for inclusion into the AMP. While livestock grazing and management can influence the extent to which these conditions are achieved, livestock grazing and management are not the only factors that influence their achievement. Furthermore, while historic livestock grazing may have originally contributed to the gap between some existing and desired conditions, some of the resulting ecological conditions (e.g., high sagebrush canopy cover) may currently limit recovery of some plant communities more than the current effects of livestock grazing. Desired conditions for resources within the allotments are as follows:

- Soils are in satisfactory condition, including suitable levels of litter and organic matter in the uppermost layer of soil and lack of excessive erosion, according to site potential, and absence of head-cutting.
- Streambanks and associated stream channels support the ability of streams to transport flows in a manner that stream channel integrity is maintained. This includes each stream being within 90% of its natural streambank stability (for streams supporting trout), and streambank vegetation being within 80% of what would occur naturally.
- Riparian areas and wet meadows are characterized by $\geq 90\%$ ground cover, plant communities are dominated by native species representative of site potential, distribution and canopy cover of willow are at or near site potential, and the height and density of herbaceous vegetation is sufficient to sustain riparian functioning, provide suitable wildlife cover in large portions of riparian acreage (DFC 12 areas), and provide suitable wildlife cover in small to moderate size patches in riparian areas (DFC 1B).
- Moist/dry meadows and silver sagebrush vegetation types are characterized by $\geq 90\%$ ground cover, plant communities are dominated by native species representative of site potential, and the height and density of herbaceous vegetation is sufficient to sustain functionality of these areas, provide suitable wildlife cover in large portions of these types (DFC 12 areas), and provide suitable wildlife cover in small to moderate size patches in these types (DFC 1B areas). However, while it is desirable for native species to again dominate areas where seeding of non-native species occurred, this may not be possible (seeding with non-native vegetation occurred in the 1940s and 1960s).
- Mountain big sagebrush type and mountain shrubland vegetation types are characterized by $\geq 70\%$ ground cover, rill and gully erosion are absent, plant communities are dominated by native species representative of site potential, the height and density of herbaceous vegetation is sufficient to sustain rangeland functionality, provide suitable wildlife cover in large portions of these types (DFC 12 areas), and provide suitable wildlife cover in small to moderate size patches in these types (DFC 1B areas). The proportion of the big sagebrush type in each age class reflects the natural range of variability (e.g., no more than 30-40% of the big sagebrush community has a sagebrush canopy cover greater than 25%).

- Aspen stands are characterized by $\geq 90\%$ ground cover, plant communities are dominated by native species representative of site potential, the height and density of herbaceous vegetation is sufficient to sustain functionality in aspen stands, provide suitable wildlife cover in large portions of aspen acreage (DFC 12 areas), and provide suitable wildlife cover in small to moderate size patches in aspen stands (DFC 1B areas). A sufficient number of aspen suckers survive to replace aspen overstory, and age classes (seral stages) are within the natural range of variability.
- Conifer forestlands are characterized by a mix of age classes (seral stages) within the natural range of variability.
- Noxious weeds comprise no more than a minor component of plant communities.

Current Management (No Action Alternative)

LIVESTOCK NUMBERS, SEASON OF USE, AND GRAZING SYSTEM

The following table summarizes current livestock numbers and season of use.

Allotment	Permitted Number of Livestock	Permitted Season of Use	Permitted Number of Days	Permitted AUMs
Little Greys	565 cattle	6/15-10/7	113	2,859

The Little Greys allotment contains six pastures (see map). These pastures are mostly unfenced, but several fences are maintained in key areas to prevent cattle from moving into adjoining pastures. Under current management, the allotment is grazed by livestock under a four-pasture deferred rotation system (one herd). Each of the four pastures (Blind Trail, Stewart, Steer Creek, and McCain) are grazed for 3-5 weeks every year, depending on the pasture and range readiness in any given year. The order in which pastures are grazed is rotated each year so plants are not grazed at the same time each year. Pastures that are grazed first one year are grazed last the following year.

The Neck pasture (where the cattle enter and exit the allotment) is split into two sub-pastures, each alternately grazed for up to one week in the spring one year and fall the next. The other pasture (River pasture) is grazed at the end of the season for up to one week, but it is not uncommon for cattle to just pass through this pasture on their way out in the fall.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

Existing structural improvements (e.g., fences, water developments) are shown on the enclosed map. They were located in part to take advantage of and augment topographic barriers to cattle movement. Maintenance of these structures is the responsibility of the permittee, as specified in the term grazing permit and AOIs. Existing structural improvements are to be reconstructed as necessary to retain their functionality.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The following Best Management Practices have been included in recent AOIs.

- Livestock are not allowed to enter the allotment or portion of the allotment until the soils are dry enough to prevent damage and key plant species are ready to withstand grazing (known as “range readiness”).

- Each year, actual use dates are dependent on forage utilization and resource conditions. The permittee is responsible for remaining aware of forage use levels relative to allowable-use standards. If the allowable-use is reached on key areas prior to the scheduled off-date, permittees are required to remove their livestock from the allotment earlier than scheduled. If actual use on the key areas is less than the allowable-use standards by the scheduled off-date, permittees may request approval to remain on the allotment for an additional period of time.
- Permittees should plan on spending as much time as necessary in moving your livestock away from meadows, sensitive or fragile areas. This is entirely to the benefit of permittees, as reaching the allowable-use or other resource condition standards results in early livestock removal from an allotment.
- Permittees are responsible to provide sufficient herding to ensure that all livestock remain within the allotment boundaries.
- Salt can be used to improve distribution of cattle into areas of light use and to lessen grazing impacts to key areas. In no case can salt be placed outside of the allotment boundaries. All salt is to be placed away from key areas and available water (e.g., no closer than ¼-mile of streams and wetlands).

ALLOWABLE-USE STANDARDS

The following allowable-use standard have been part of recent AOIs.

- A minimum 6-inch stubble height must be retained in riparian areas in each pasture, except in the Stewart Creek pasture where the minimum stubble height in riparian areas is 4 inches.

Other allowable-use standards outlined in the Forest Plan also apply, as specified in AOIs.

Proposed Action

The proposed action has two main components.

The first component is to reauthorize livestock grazing on the Little Greys C&H Allotment, in support of Goal 1.1 and Objective 1.1(h) of the Forest Plan, through the issuance of a 10-year term permit containing the parameters under which livestock grazing would be implemented.

The second component is to implement a revised AMP that directs livestock grazing and management to be carried out in a way that allows resource conditions to remain at desired conditions or, where conditions are below desired conditions, allow resource conditions to move steadily toward desired conditions. Authorizing and implementing livestock grazing is based on managing the effects of grazing on associated resources, not solely on managing forage production. While continuing to contribute to Goal 1.1 and Objective 1.1(h) to the greatest extent possible, the Greys River Ranger District in general proposes to:

1. Retain elements of the current livestock grazing management that are allowing watershed, rangeland, and wildlife habitat conditions to be sustained at desired conditions — where they are at desired conditions; and
2. Make adjustments to current livestock grazing management, as necessary, to promote a sustained upward trend in watershed, rangeland, and wildlife habitat conditions — where

existing conditions do not meet desired conditions — in order to restore resources to desired conditions.

Details on the second component are outlined below as Best Management Practices; allowable-use standards; allotment configuration adjustments; structural improvements; and livestock numbers, season of use, and the grazing system. The Best Management Practices, allowable-use standards, and other livestock grazing and management practices described in the following subsections were designed to allow resource-related objectives of the Forest Plan to be achieved and for desired conditions to be restored and sustained.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The following Best Management Practices were used to guide the development of allowable-use standards and to reevaluate livestock numbers, season of use, and grazing system.

- Entry onto the allotment or portions of the allotment is at a time when key plant species have sufficient growth and development to adequately provide for their vigor and when soils are dry enough to prevent damage from hoof action.
- Livestock are removed from each pasture and/or the allotment based on allowable-use standards designed to ensure the remaining herbaceous plant material is sufficient to provide for plant vigor, litter, soil protection, sediment trapping (in riparian zones), wildlife forage (e.g., leaves, seedheads, flowers), wildlife cover (e.g., for nesting and hiding), fine fuel for fire spread as needed for resource benefit, and to alleviate browsing on willows. Nesting of ground-nesting birds typically occurs late April through mid July.
- Deferred rotational grazing is employed to periodically and regularly (1) allow for the recovery and maintenance of greater leaf area during the season of rapid plant growth to enhance shoot and root growth, (2) allow the majority of seedheads to mature, set seed, and provide wildlife forage, (3) miss the hottest months of summer in riparian zones, (4) allow re-growth of herbaceous vegetation in riparian and upland habitats sufficient to increase residual cover for wildlife over levels attained when livestock grazing occurs later in the season, among other benefits.
- Proper stocking rates are maintained and livestock distribution is managed to protect riparian and meadow systems, and other sensitive and fragile areas. Given the harmful long-term effects that livestock grazing can cause in riparian zones, livestock grazing intensity needs to be managed at levels that maintain the composition, density, and vigor of desired plants and not damage or contribute to a loss/ reduction of riparian soils, streambanks, or water quality.
- Salt can be used to manage distribution of livestock, including higher use of areas where desirable and to lessen livestock grazing impacts on key areas. In no case can salt be placed outside of the allotment boundaries. All salt is to be placed away from key areas and available water (e.g., no closer than ¼-mile of streams and wetlands). Loose salt must be placed in containers.
- Recognizing that livestock grazing intensity is patchy, livestock need to be managed so the location of more-heavily grazed areas shift from year to year (e.g., through herding, temporary electric fencing) to provide for a sustainable yield of vegetation consistent with the need to improve and maintain soil and water quality.
- Adjusting allowable use and/or providing rest would be periodically needed to accommodate or support prescribed burning, wildland fire use, and possibly other

vegetation treatments designed to restore proper functioning conditions and age mixes in several vegetation types. Livestock typically should be kept off burned sites for at least one to two growing seasons, and one season of rest may be needed prior to prescribed burning to build adequate fuels.

ALLOWABLE-USE STANDARDS

One component of the Forage Utilization Standard in the Forest Plan was to prescribe allowable-use standards for individual allotments to achieve Forest Plan objectives and other resource objectives on those allotments. Allowable-use standards identify parameters and measures, stated as thresholds, for determining acceptable use by livestock in a given area. Any one of the following allowable-use standards would trigger a pasture move.

Riparian Areas and Wetlands — Four allowable-use standards would be implemented along the green line and other parts of the wet zone of riparian areas and wetlands. The intended purposes of the following allowable-use standards are to (1) allow the health and functionality of riparian areas to be restored and sustained by restoring/sustaining native streambank vegetation on streambanks, sustaining healthy roots of these plants, limiting trampling effects, and fostering the catchment of sediments; (2) limit browsing of willows in wet areas and allow damaged willow communities to recover; and (3) ensure that an adequate amount of suitable herbaceous wildlife cover is retained in a majority of riparian zones and wetlands.

- No more than 20% of the total streambank length within any given stream reach would be allowed to show signs of hoof action caused by large-herbivores during the current livestock grazing season.
- Minimum average 6-inch stubble height on Nebraska sedge, beaked sedge, water sedge, reedtop, bluejoint reedgrass, and other tall native riparian species.
- Minimum average 4-inch stubble height on all graminoids except those specified in the previous allowable-use standard.
- Minimum average 10-inch of stubble height on all graminoids, averaged across grazed and non-grazed areas within the Little Greys River riparian zone of the Neck and River pastures.

The intent of fourth allowable-use standard, above, is to sustain cattle grazing intensity at the existing light level along the Little Greys River riparian corridor, while providing for some flexibility in management. The Neck and River pastures are within DFC 12 (see Background Information section for summaries of DFCs).

Moist, Transitional Vegetation Types — Three allowable-use standards would be implemented in moist meadow, silver sagebrush, and moist willow vegetation types. The intended purposes of the following allowable-use standards would be to (1) allow plant health and rangeland functionality to be restored and sustained, including litter buildup and higher organic content in soils; (2) limit browsing of willows in moist areas and allow damaged willow communities to recover; and (3) allow an adequate amount of suitable wildlife forage to be retained.

- Minimum average 3-inch stubble height on non-native grasses, except smooth brome.
- Minimum average 4-inch stubble height on native graminoids.

- Minimum average 10-inch of stubble height on all graminoids, averaged across grazed and non-grazed areas within the Little Greys River riparian zone of the Neck and River pastures.

The intent of third allowable-use standard, above, is to sustain cattle grazing intensity at the existing light level along the Little Greys River riparian corridor, while providing for some flexibility in management. The Neck and River pastures are within DFC 12.

Additionally, the following allowable-use standard would be implemented in the McCain pasture and the western half of the Steer Creek pasture (both in DFC 12) when they are grazed first in the 4-pasture rotation system in any given year. The intended purpose would be to retain cover for ground-nesting migratory birds in moist meadow, silver sagebrush, and willow communities during the nesting period.

- Minimum average 8-inch stubble height on redtop and other native graminoids in key moist meadows and willow stands where plant communities or understories are dominated by native plant species.

Upland Rangelands — Two allowable-use standards would be implemented in grassland, big sagebrush, mountain shrubland, and aspen vegetation types. The intended purposes of the following allowable-use standards would be to (1) allow plant health and rangeland functionality to be restored and sustained, including litter buildup and higher organic content in soils; (2) limit browsing of aspen; (3) allow an adequate amount of suitable wildlife forage to be retained; and (4) allow suitable herbaceous wildlife cover to be retained in native plant communities.

- Minimum average 3-inch stubble height on non-native grasses, except smooth brome.
- Minimum average 6-inch stubble height on bluebunch wheatgrass and 4.5-inch stubble height on Idaho fescue and needlegrasses. This standard would be phased in over a period of three years.

All Allowable-Use Standards — For all allowable-use standards listed above, except the one addressing bank shearing, stubble height would be measured at the end of the livestock grazing season and would not include monitoring of graminoids growing under the canopies of shrubs. Average stubble height would be calculated by area within pastures, and only in areas that have been grazed by cattle during the summer in which measurements are taken, unless otherwise noted above. Areas to be monitored will be identified prior to the onset of each season.

Allowable-use standards may be adjusted, as needed, to better meet Forest Plan objectives and desired conditions. Exclosures would be erected in several places to better determine site potentials and to help refine allowable-use standards. For example, the 4-inch allowable-use standard under the Moist, Transitional Vegetation Types would be evaluated annually for the next three years, and it would be adjusted as needed to support its intended purposes.

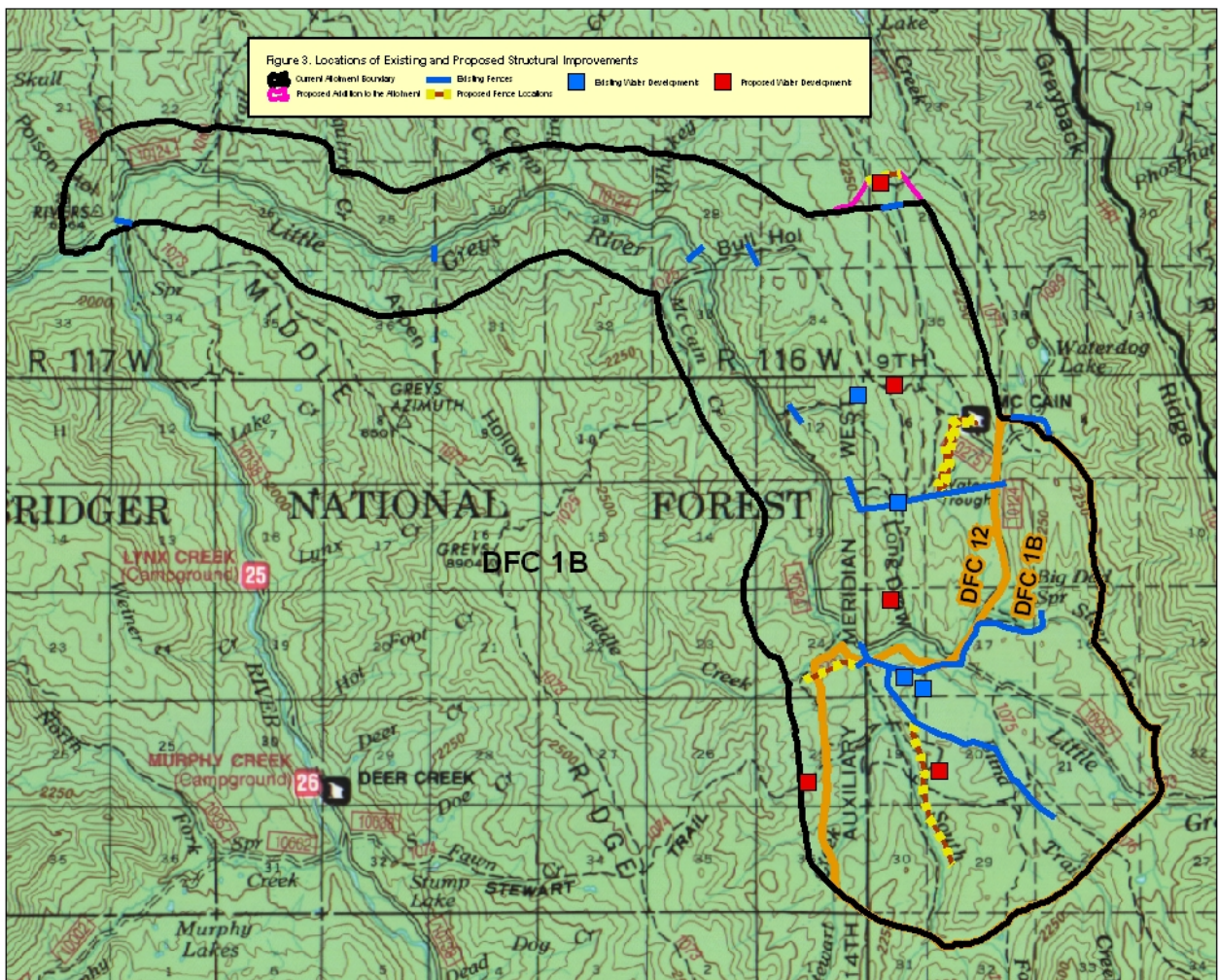
ALLOTMENT CONFIGURATION

In the northeastern corner of the allotment (West Bailey Creek area), the allotment boundary would be moved from the south end of the meadow to the north end of the meadow, as shown in the enclosed map. This would encompass another water source in this part of the allotment, which would help increase the distribution of cattle. The adjustment to the boundary would add approximately 90 acres to the Little Greys River C&H allotment. This area currently is within the Bailey Creek sheep and goat (S&G) allotment.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

The enclosed map identifies five additional fences (electric, low impact) and six additional water developments that would be considered for construction as needed to supplement herding effort to manage cattle distribution in order to make use of forage while meeting allowable-use standards (see enclosed map). Additional structural improvement may be needed in the future, but any necessary environmental analysis would be completed prior to their installment.

- All additional fences would be low-impact, single-strand, high-tensile, let down electric fences strung between 3-inch diameter wooden posts spaced approximately 30-50 feet apart. Wires would be dropped to the ground at the end of each livestock grazing season. Individual proposed electric fences are as follows:
 - East side of South Fork Little Greys River — This addition would hook into an existing fence, which would control cattle movement along an established east-west corridor in the Stewart Pasture which in turn should help limit overuse of the lower South Fork.
 - Extension of fence from the mouth of South Fork along south side of Middle Creek — This fence would prevent cattle from congregating in the Middle Creek area.
 - East to west across Blind Trail canyon — The potential of constructing this fence is being evaluated to hinder cattle movement above the allotment up Blind Trail Creek.



- Both sides of Steer Creek from Steer Creek division fence northward — this addition would help control cattle grazing along a portion of Steer Creek and one of the springs that feeds Steer Creek. Either a water gap would be created or water would be piped to a water trough.
- North end of meadow north of existing West Bailey fence — this addition along the proposed boundary adjustment would prevent cattle from moving into the Snake River drainage. The existing West Bailey drift fence would remain in place as a way to help control cattle movement in this area.
- Each water development would consist of a spring-box, pipe from the spring-box to a water trough, and an overflow pipe leading back to the spring or creek. Cattle would be fenced out of the springs, and the spring-boxes and troughs would be located away from springs and creeks.
 - Lower Stewart spring development
 - Upper Stewart spring development
 - Lower Broad Hollow spring development
 - Upper Bull Hollow Road spring development
 - Steer Creek in vicinity of proposed new electric fence — either pipe water into trough or create a water gap, the latter of which may require hardening of the stream channel.
 - West Bailey Creek spring development (in the proposed boundary adjustment)

Existing structural improvements (e.g., fences, water developments) are shown on the enclosed map. Maintenance of these structures would continue to be the responsibility of the permittee. Existing structural improvements would be reconstructed as necessary to retain their functionality.

LIVESTOCK NUMBERS, SEASON OF USE, AND GRAZING SYSTEM

Permitted livestock numbers would be maintained at 565 cattle.

The following measures related to season-of-use would be implemented to facilitate adherence to the Best Management Practices and allowable-use standards outlined on previous pages:

- The season of use would be reduced by 20 days, from 113 days down to 93 days, with a turnout date no earlier than June 15. This would reduce the amount of time spent in any given pasture (of the four main pastures) from the current 3-5 weeks down to about 2-4 weeks.
- If it is determined that additional cattle grazing could be accommodated in any given year without exceeding allowable-use standards in any pasture, the season-of-use could be extended, up to a total of 113 days upon the discretion of the District Ranger, but only to the point where allowable-use standards could still be successfully met.
- If any of the allowable-use standards are not met in any pasture in 2 or more out of 5 years, five days would be taken off the 113-day season-of-use. Subsequently, if allowable-use standards are met for 3 consecutive years in each pasture, the 5 days would be restored to the season of use.

The number of pastures and the deferred rotation system under the proposed action would be similar to current management, as described on pages 3 and 4. The rotation system would ensure

that, for the four main pastures, the pasture used first in one year would be used last the following year.

MONITORING

Permittees would be responsible for monitoring vegetation and streambank conditions throughout the livestock grazing season so cattle can be moved prior to exceeding allowable-use standards. The Forest Service would provide refresher training as needed. Monitoring to assess the allowable-use standards in riparian areas could occur in any portion of riparian areas, but would avoid fence lines and road crossings. The Forest Service would monitor at the end of each livestock grazing season to determine whether allowable-use standards were met in each pasture, and permittees would be invited to participate in this monitoring.

Effectiveness monitoring would also be carried out at regular time intervals to track progress toward meeting Forest Plan objectives and desired conditions. Results of effectiveness monitoring over the long term would be used to adjust allowable-use standards as needed to meet Forest Plan objectives and desired conditions.

RESTORATION ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VEGETATION TREATMENTS

Given the provisions of the proposed action (e.g., Best Management Practices, allowable-use standards), no additional restoration activities, with respect to effects of livestock grazing and management on riparian and rangeland functionality and wildlife habitat suitability, would be needed. From the standpoint of livestock grazing and management, it is anticipated that no additional restoration activities — beyond what is already built into the proposed action — would be needed to address wildlife habitat suitability issues affected by livestock grazing.

There also is a need to restore ecological conditions that are not directly being limited by current livestock grazing, but that currently limit rangeland productivity, a balanced mix of vegetation age classes, and recovery of aspen and wetland communities. This primarily involves a need for converting late-seral communities (i.e., old age classes) to early-seral communities through fire, mechanical treatment, or other vegetation treatments, but also recognizes the importance of beavers in the recovery of riparian areas and provision of wetland habitat. While effects of specific vegetation treatment projects will not be analyzed in the EA, the EA and forthcoming AMP will identify the need for these projects and may identify future vegetation treatment projects that are needed. Environmental analysis of these projects would need to be completed prior to their implementation. Again, while this would benefit livestock production and ecological conditions, this is separate and distinct from livestock grazing management, which is the topic of AMPs.

Preliminary Assessment of Effects of Proposed Action (Summary)

We anticipate the proposed action would have the following environmental effects related to the need for action and compared to the effects of current management (baseline conditions):

- Adherence to the proposed streambank trampling standard and stubble height standards in riparian areas would ensure that streambank stability, with respect to potential livestock grazing effects, is maintained within acceptable levels, ultimately allowing desired conditions to be met. Adherence to these standards would also result in reduced browsing and mechanical damage to willows, increased overall health in willow communities, and would ensure that wildlife cover is retained in many wet meadow and willow habitats. The proposed standards, in conjunction with other situations (e.g., beaver

ponds) may also contribute toward the recovery of plant species diversity in areas where species diversity is currently highly altered. It is recognized that the majority of willow acreage on the allotment is already in satisfactory condition.

- Adherence to the proposed stubble height standards in moist meadows and other moist transitional areas would allow plant vigor to recover, soils to increase in organic content, diversity of desirable native plants to increase, and a greater amount of wildlife cover to be retained. Another effect would be a larger amount of fine fuels remaining available for fire spread.
- Adherence to the proposed stubble height standards in big sagebrush areas would allow plant vigor to recover, litter cover to increase, incidences of erosion to decline, and a greater amount of wildlife cover to be retained. Another effect would be a larger amount of fine fuels remaining available for fire spread, and adherence to the standards may also contribute toward the recovery of plant species diversity.
- Recognizing, in AMPs, that adjustments in livestock grazing management would occasionally need to be made — to accommodate prescribed burning, wildland fire use, and possibly other vegetation treatments — would, along with pre- and post-rest as necessary, be conducive to restoring a healthy mix of age classes in sagebrush, mountain shrubland, and forest vegetation types.