

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
RECOMMENDATION-ANALYSIS-DECISION

Name (MFP)
Bennett Hills-Timmerman Hill
Activity
Range Management
Overlay Reference
Step 1 No. 1 Step 3

CLOVER CREEK ALLOTMENT (0416)

RECOMMENDATION

RM 2.1

Determine carrying capacity for National Resource Lands and private and state lands offered for exchange of use license, and adjust stocking rates accordingly.

RATIONALE

The URA indicates that adequate forage is not available to satisfy the present Class I demand (see 1605.44A2c(5)(a)). Present policy provides that "Initial stocking rates... must not exceed the existing livestock grazing capacity...". (WO Instruction Memo 75-407).

Idaho's 5-year goals are to bring livestock use in line with existing grazing capacity for those areas in less than satisfactory condition as a result of excessive livestock use.

It is anticipated that the present forage production capacities can be interpolated from Soil and Vegetative data to be gathered during the summer of 1976 and succeeding years.

Multiple-Use Analysis

URA indicated stocking rates ^{might} ~~are~~ in excess of the carrying capacity. This recommendation would result in reduction of grazing use and would, therefore, have an adverse economic impact on the livestock operations. With proper management and/or land treatment part of this impact may be mitigated over the long-term,

This recommendation does not conflict with any other activity recommendations.

Supporting recommendations include the following: Watershed, W-1.2, 1.3, 3.3, 5.2; wildlife, WL 1.1, 3.1, 8.2 12.1; recreation 2.1; ~~range management RM 1 & 2.2 (0416)~~.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Accept the recommendations as stated above.

Reasons

1. The stocking rates must be reasonably close to the carrying capacity to implement a rotation-grazing system that will improve range condition.
2. Herbaceous vegetative cover left on site will reduce erosion and improve water quality.
3. Competition for forage with all wildlife species will be reduced and minimum cover requirements will be left for wildlife.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

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RECOMMENDATION

RM 1 & 2.2

Revise the present AMP as follows:

1. Adjust the grazing system to one that will provide for plant vigor, seed production, seed tresp, and seedling establishment of the key native forage species. (See 1605. 44B2c(2)(b) for minimum grazing treatment opportunity.)
2. Adjust grazing use so that not more than 50 percent of the Class I demand and exchange of use is utilized during the critical spring growing season.
3. Adjust license flexibility to meet manual requirements and specify as a minimum the normal operation maximum numbers allowed to graze and season of use, flexibility not to exceed five days before and after the normal operation dates.
4. Include both sheep and cattle in the grazing system.

RATIONALE

The present grazing system is not designed to propagate or provide for the physiological needs of the key native forage plants. A grazing system which provides for these treatments will increase the density and vigor of the native forage species and improve range conditions, and increase forage production to maximum potential. Approximately 1400 additional AUMs can be produced annually within a 15- 20 year period with proper management.

Presently 2/3 of the Class I demand are used during the critical spring growing season which overloads the forage producing capacity of the vegetation during that time. Adjusting some spring use to fall use will increase the opportunity for seed tresp requirements.

Flexibility allowed in the present AMP does not meet the manual requirement.

The impact of grazing on the vegetation is the same regardless of class of grazing animal. Dual use, where sheep graze in early spring, followed by late spring cattle use, causes heavy utilization of the vegetation and results in detrimental range conditions if not properly regulated.

Support

Improve and provide additional access in the allotment to facilitate use supervision and livestock movement.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Multiple-Use Analysis

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Revision of the present AMP, as recommended, would result in adjustment of spring use allowed from 2/3 of the qualified demand to 1/2 of the qualified demand, and possibly a reduction of grazing area during the spring season. This adjustment would most likely result in reduced use in the allotment and would, therefore, have an adverse economic impact on the range users. In addition, less flexibility in the grazing license would occur which could restrict the grazing operation. A long-term beneficial input would occur because the recommendations favor establishment of perennial grasses which will stabilize and increase forage production.

Wildlife (WL 1.1, 8.2, 12.1, 3.1), and Watershed (W 1.3) identify the need to retain 40 percent to 50 percent of the herbaceous vegetation. This conflicts with the recommendation because utilization in the heavy use pastures of the grazing system would likely be greater than 60 percent. Wildlife (WL 6.2, 9.1 13.1) and Watershed (W 3.3) identify the need to exclude livestock grazing on wet meadows, springs, streams, and canals. This would reduce availability of high quality forage and restrict access to water, which would contribute to the livestock distribution problems. Lands (L 3.1A) proposes disposal of Class I and II lands found to be consistent with classification criteria. Such an action would result in loss of most productive area and important spring range in the allotment, and would disrupt the proposed grazing system. Minerals (M 1.2) proposes ^{lead} ~~leading~~, with minimal restrictions, the Geothermal resource. This could restrict livestock grazing because development would prohibit use of up to 1/3 of the land surface under lease.

The recommendation conflicts to a minor degree with the following activity recommendations: WL 1.4, 2.1, 8.1; R 1.1, 2.1; and L 6.2, 6.4. These conflicting proposals should be addressed at the time the existing Clover Creek AMP is revised to insure all resource values are given proper consideration.

Supporting recommendations include the following: WL 5.1, 6.3, 8.3, 9.2, 12.2; W 1.2, 3.2, 5.2; R 2.1; RM 2.4 (0416), ~~2.1 (0416)~~.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Modify the recommendation to include the following provisions in addition to those stated above:

1. Do not exceed 60 percent utilization of herbaceous vegetation in any pasture where grazing occurs.

Adequate herbaceous vegetation should be left to provide adequate forage and cover for all wildlife, including deer, elk, and upland game birds, and to provide litter to protect the soil from the erosive forces of nature.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Multiple-Use Recommendations continued

Reasons continued

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2. Protect wet meadows, springs, streams, and canals from intensive livestock use which normally occurs as follows:

Springs: Coordinate protection with wildlife needs. Where significant wildlife values are identified, fence spring source area to exclude livestock and make water available to livestock outside the enclosure.

Wet Meadows: After revision of the grazing system fence wet meadows to exclude livestock only where it is demonstrated after one ^{or two} grazing cycles that significant wildlife habitat is being destroyed by livestock grazing.

Streams & canals: Fence streams and canals where major, critical waterfowl nesting areas are identified. Provide water gaps no farther than 1/2 mile apart.

- 3- Fence Clover Creek channel as designated on Watershed Overlay No. 1 to exclude livestock use. Provide water gaps no further than 1/2 mile apart.
- 4- Allow disposal of lands within Class I and II irrigation potential classification.

- 5 Allow mineral leasing.

Support needs: Accept the recommendations as stated above. Acquire easement on private lands.

Note: Attach additional maps, legends

(Instructions on reverse)

It is not anticipated that this restriction will seriously impact grazing since livestock gains normally begin to decline after 60 per cent of the forage has been utilized.

Livestock congregating on spring source areas denude vegetation essential to sage grouse broods and other wildlife species.

It is anticipated that damage caused by livestock grazing will be mitigated by implementation of a proper grazing system.

Grazing livestock utilize and destroy riparian vegetation needed for waterfowl nesting habitat, and fisherman's habitat.

This area is located on a major livestock driveway and will receive continual use each year. The proposed grazing system will not give the area adequate rest and protection to enhance watershed and wildlife values.

Livestock grazing is the primary resource affected with all other resources affected to a minor degree. Conversion of this area to agriculture would provide greater economic stability to the locale than presently produced by the existing resource use.

Restriction of livestock grazing by geothermal development is improbable, but if it occurs it should be allowed because of the greater value generated to the local and regional economy by mineral development.

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RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

RM 1 & 2.3

Remove competing brush species on approximately 4,000 acres and remove brush and seed approximately 4,900 acres of National Resource Land to release and establish desirable perennial forage species.

These treatments combined with management, are needed to meet the objectives within a reasonable time-frame of 10- 15 years. Approximately 780 additional AUMs will be produced annually from the treatment.

Multiple-Use Analysis

The recommendation would result in an increase in forage production. The increase would partially offset expected losses in allowable grazing use resulting from the adjustments recommended in Range Management RM 1.1 (0416) (adjust stocking rate to grazing capacity). Thus a positive economic impact would occur. Where wildlife values are involved the Idaho Fish & Game Dept. will be consulted in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between that agency and the Bureau.

This recommendation is in conflict with the Recreation ^{U.I.} R 4.2, 4.3, 14.6, and 14.15, and Minerals ~~2.4~~ ^{2.4} which would restrict or constrain layout and/or method of land treatment, ~~as recommended~~. The recreation recommendations deal primarily with visual impact of land treatments and the effect the recommended treatments might have on archaeological sites. The minerals ^{proposal deals with} ~~proposal deals with~~ the restriction on land treatments should development of potential geothermal resources take place.

The recommendation conflicts with Wildlife (WL ~~2.8~~ 7.1) and Lands (L 3.1A) which would prohibit any land treatment. The wildlife recommendations would prohibit brush control on ~~deer~~ sage grouse wintering areas within the allotment as proposed. The lands recommendation proposes disposal of some lands which have been identified for land treatment.

The recommendation conflicts to a minor degree with the following activity recommendations: WL 2.8, 5.2, 9.2, 11.1; L 6.2, 6.4; R 1.1, 2.1. These conflicting proposals will be addressed prior to implementation of land treatments to insure resource values involved are adequately considered.

Supporting activity recommendations include the following: WL 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 6.1, 12.2; W 1.4, 1.5, 5.2; R 13.1.

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Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Accept and modify the recommendation to subject brush removal and seeding proposals to the following constraints before projects are started.

1. Revise the allotment management plan and implement a sound and acceptable grazing system.

Sound management is needed to assure success of revegetation projects and to protect the investment made in the project.

Disruption of livestock use can be minimized by planning treatments within grazing pastures and in accord with the grazing sequence.

2. Coordinate all land treatment proposals with wildlife, watershed, and recreation activities to assure all multiple-use conflicts are mitigated. Criteria to be used in mitigating conflicts are found in Appendix I (MFP Step II).

BLM policy

On-site information is not adequate to identify specific conflicts and resulting impacts at this time. This requires that no projects be started until on-site inspections can be made and impacts of the project on the multiple-use values are determined and mitigated.

3. Allow coordinated land treatment on sage grouse winter range.

Projects which alter the vegetation have long-term impacts and must be coordinated so as not to destroy other resource values.

The need to produce livestock forage to minimize the economic impact of the anticipated reduction in stocking rate (RM 2.1 (0416)) is considered to be as important as the need for increased sage grouse populations. Proposed brush treatments should be closely coordinated to allow only brush removal that is not critical to sage grouse winter habitat.

4. Propose no land treatments on lands that have class I and II irrigation potential pending outcome of classification.

Range improvement investment should not be made on lands that may be disposed of for agricultural purposes.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Multiple Use Recommendations
(continued)

Reasons

5. Allow leasing of minerals (geothermal resources) with no constraints on land treatment projects.

Present information is insufficient to determine impacts of geothermal development on land treatment. Any mineral development at this time appears to be improbable.

6. Prohibit land treatment projects on known archaeological sites

Bureau policy requires protection of cultural resources.

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CLOVER CREEK ALLOTMENT (0416)

RECOMMENDATION

RATIONALE

RM 2.4

Establish administrative stock driveways, not to exceed 1/2 mile in width, as follows:

1. From freeway overpass north of Bliss to Bray Lake. Open to trailing year-long.

2. From Bray Lake to Crist Cabin. Open to trailing 5/15 to 12/31.

3. From freeway overpass to Camas Prairie via the Hill City-Bliss road. Open to trailing year-long.

Large numbers of livestock trail through this allotment from the Bliss area and from south of the Snake River enroute to the Camas Prairie and points north.

This is the main route for sheep herds trailing from the Bruneau desert to the North Gooding and Macon Flat Allotments, and points north.

This trail is used under the same circumstances as 1. above. Trail should be closed 1/1 to 5/15 because of late forage growing conditions in higher ranges in the North Gooding Allotment.

This is the main route for livestock trailing to the Camas Prairie from the Bliss area.

Establishment of stock driveways will give better administrative control over trailing livestock and will reduce unauthorized trailing and abuse of the forage resource. This will result in a decrease of forage utilization in the allotment and improvement of range conditions.

Support Needs:

Maintain, improve, and construct access for all driveways.

Access should be maintained on all trails so that sheep camps can travel with the herds thereby minimizing delays in trailing. Roads also make it easier to move the livestock.

Multiple-Use Analysis

The recommendation could affect the Gooding and Camas County road departments because the Bliss-Hill City road is under their jurisdiction. If the stock driveway were officially established to parallel and include that road, livestock using the trail would constitute a potential safety hazard to motorists. Since the road is presently being used by trailing livestock, the safety hazard would not increase significantly. An adverse economic impact on the users would occur because a

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Multiple-Use Analysis (cont)

necessary reduction in licensed use would occur to account for forage lost to the driveway withdrawal.

The recommendation is in conflict with wildlife, WL 13.1, and watershed, W 3.3 recommendations which would exclude livestock from the upper reaches of Clover Creek and Monument Gulch Creek. The stock driveway would include the upper parts of these streams. The recommendation would also conflict with watershed, W 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, and 5.2; and range management, RM 1 & 2.4, which propose establishment and maintenance of a herbaceous vegetative cover on portions of the areas to be traversed by the stock driveways. It is unlikely that the desired vegetative cover could be maintained on those portions of the driveway. Lands, L 3.1A which proposes disposal of irrigable Class I and Class II lands would conflict with establishment of the stock driveway, should they meet classification criteria. Some of the tracts would be traversed by the driveway.

The recommendation is supported by the following activity recommendations: RM 1.1 and 2.2 (Clover Creek Allotment) which proposes intensive management in the allotment. The stock driveway would assist in implementing the desired management, RM 2.3 (Davis Mountain Allotment) which proposes an administrative stock driveway which would connect with one of the recommended routes in the Clover Creek Allotment. Establishment of the driveways is supported by other activity recommendations which deal with the need for proper vegetation management because control of trailing livestock would improve, thus lessening adverse impact on vegetation outside trail routes.

The recommendation conflicts to a minor degree with the following activity recommendations: WL 1.1, 8.2, 8.3, 12.1; W 1.3. Although they will not be discussed in this narrative, they should be considered if the existing AMP is revised.

Multiple-Use Recommendations

Reasons

Accept the recommendations as stated above and modify to include the following:

Generally, benefits to administrative management are considered to be more important than the anticipated moderate amount of damage caused to the vegetative resources as a result of the livestock trails.

1. Fence the stream channels and meadows of Clover Creek in the vicinity of the Shearing Corrals to protect wildlife and watershed values.

No feasible alternative exists to reroute the trail. Fencing will provide reasonable protection for other resource values.

2. Allow disposal of lands with Class I and II irrigation potential classification without reservation

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

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Multiple-Use Analysis (cont)

for the stock driveway. Reserve public access to remaining National Resource Lands to facilitate need for a stock driveway.

Access to National Resource Lands for trailing livestock can be provided by public access reservations if lands are disposed of.

Support Needs:

Maintain access for stock driveways, reserve rights-of-way for public access prior to land disposal.

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CLOVER CREEK ALLOTMENT

Recommendation

R.M. 2.5
Adjust Allotment boundary to exclude the
area north of the shearing corral.

Rationale

This part of the allotment forms a
"panhandle" in which livestock congregate
and heavily utilize the vegetation. The
present grazing system does not adequately
protect the forage plants. Including this
area with the adjoining Davis Mountain
Allotment will relieve congregating effect
of livestock because of similarity of
vegetation and topography.

Note: Attach additional sheets, if needed

(Instructions on reverse)

CLOVER CREEK ALLOTMENT

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Boundary adjustments (Bliss Point and south)

Grazing system proposed by association
doesn't appear to meet requirements of RM 1 & 2.2