

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR  
Soldier Meadows Allotment Evaluation  
EA#020-03-09**

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment (EA) NV-02-03-09, dated March 10, 2003. After consideration of the environmental effects as described in the EA, I have determined that a grazing management system which is a combination of the alternatives analyzed in the EA, subject to objectives and terms and conditions attached, will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required to be prepared as per Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act.

I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the approved Sonoma-Gerlach Management Framework Plan and is consistent with the plans and policies of neighboring local, county, state, tribal and federal agencies and governments. This finding and conclusion 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 Soldier Meadows Allotment is located on the western slopes of the Black Rock Mountain Range. The allotment is comprised of approximately 332,726 acres of public land and includes approximately 113,468 acres of Wilderness. The allotment is located within a rural area of Humboldt County, Nevada. On March 3, 2003 a Determination/Management Action Selection Report document was completed by BLM. This document determined that some allotment objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health (SRH) were not being achieved under existing livestock management.

Intensity:

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

The environmental assessment has considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of the various livestock management alternatives. With the exception of Alternative 1 – Existing System, all other alternatives would result in achieving site specific Allotment Objectives and SRH. Meeting allotment specific objectives and SRH would improve the quality of the human environment as described in the EA and is not considered a significant effect both in the short or long term.

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

The implementation of grazing management system selected would not affect public health or 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 project area includes portions of five wilderness areas. Five streams within the allotment are considered occupied or potential habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi*, LCT), a federally listed Threatened species. The allotment also contains habitats for desert dace (federally listed Threatened), basalt cinquefoil (federal Candidate), the elongate mud meadows springsnail (federal Candidate), and numerous BLM sensitive springsnail species. The analysis did not identify any significant impacts to Wilderness areas, the unique species or their habitats that occur on the allotment, historic or cultural resources, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and ecologically critical areas. Prime farmlands and wild and scenic rivers are not present within the allotment.

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

The effects of livestock grazing management practices are well known and documented and are not highly controversial and are employed to meet resource or management objectives

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

There are no known effects that would result from implementation of the grazing management system selected, analyzed in the EA, which are considered uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

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.*

Implementation of the grazing management system selected does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. Any future actions proposed for livestock management would be evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

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 action on-going in the cumulative impact assessment area would not result in cumulatively significant impacts.

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.*

The proposed action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical 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 EA has identified that no significant or adverse impacts would result to Lahontan cutthroat trout or desert dace. The grazing management system selected has undergone consultation and coordination with the USFWS and has been determined the activities will not likely adversely affect this species or their critical habitat.

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.

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**Les W. Boni, Assistant Field Manager**  
**Renewable Resources Division**

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**Date**