



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445
(775) 623-1500
<http://www.nv.blm.gov/winnemucca>



In Reply Refer To:
(NV-022.12)
4130

SNOWSTORM

MAY 16 2001

Dear Interested Public:

The permittee for the **Bullhead Allotment** has requested a 30 day extension of livestock use in the Castle Ridge pasture.

A field check will be conducted to ensure that the utilization levels within the pasture would allow for attainment of the short term objectives which are outlined in the Bullhead Final Multiple Use Decision (FMUD) issued October 23, 1997. Should an extension of use be granted for the Castle Ridge pasture, it would be done in 2 week increments.

This request falls outside of the period of use for the Castle Ridge pasture. Therefore, we are soliciting your comments for this proposal. Comments should be submitted to the Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca Field Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445, no later than May 30, 2001.

If you have any questions, regarding this proposal, please contact Mandy DeForest at (775)623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Colin P. Christensen
Assistant Field Office Manager
Renewable Resources

Bullhead

Settlement *DRAT*

OK

- STP Agree on Order *Party*

- Wild Horse *monitor*
specific

- 1. Grazing Preference
 - a. Total 19,283 AUMs
 - b. Historical Suspended 7,233 AUMs
 - c. Total Number of AUM's of Specified Livestock Grazing 12,050 AUMs
 - d. Authorized 9,535 AUMs
 - e. Suspension 2,515 AUMs *

* The 2,515 AUMs held in suspension may be activated in the following ways during the re-evaluation period (grazing season 1999 through grazing year 2002).

(a) If the utilization level of the key upland and wetland riparian vegetative species is 40% or less at the time of the scheduled livestock removal date and as long as livestock grazing use will end on or before 06/15 in the First Creek Pasture and 08/31 in the Lower Kelly Pasture.

(b) If monitoring data indicates that allotment specific objectives can/will be met, AUMs in suspension may be activated during the grazing year and/or on an annual basis, prior to livestock turnout.

2. Season of Use

Spring Use	03/01 to 06/30
Summer Use	07/01 to 08/31
Winter Use	11/01 to 02/28

3. Kind and Class of Livestock - Cattle Cow/Calf

4. Percent Federal Range - 100%

5. Grazing System

The following grazing system is for the 1999 through 2002 grazing seasons.

ODD YEARS

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Season of Use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Castle Ridge	300	03/01 to 05/31	907
First Ck.	500	03/01 to 03/31	510
First Ck. East	1000	04/01 to 05/31	2005
Kinney East	750	06/01 to 07/06	888
N. Snowstorm	250	06/01 to 07/06	296
Upper Kelly (trail)	1000	07/07 to 07/13	230
S. Snowstorm	1000	07/14 to 07/27	460
Upper Kelly	1000	07/28 to 08/20	789
Lower Kelly	1000	08/21 to 08/31	362
Rabbit	211	11/01 to 02/28	832
Rabbit	211	03/01 to 03/31	215
Dry Hills	343	11/01 to 02/28	1353
Dry Hills	343	03/01 to 04/30	688
TOTAL			9535

EVEN YEARS

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Season of Use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Castle Ridge	300	03/01 to 05/31	907
First Ck.	500	03/01 to 03/31	510
First Ck. West	1000	04/01 to 05/31	2005
Kinney West	1000	06/01 to 06/20	658
Lower Kelly (trail)	1000	06/21 to 06/27	230
Upper Kelly	750	06/28 to 07/29	789
C. Snowstorm	250	06/28 to 07/29	263
Kinney East	1000	07/30 to 08/25	888
Lower Kelly	1000	08/26 to 08/31	197
Rabbit	211	11/01 to 02/28	832
Rabbit	211	03/01 to 03/31	215
Dry Hills	343	11/01 to 02/28	1353
Dry Hills	343	03/01 to 04/30	688
TOTAL			9535

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Salt and/or mineral blocks shall not be placed within one quarter (1/4) mile of springs, streams, meadows, riparian habitats or aspen stands.

The permittee is required to perform normal maintenance on the range improvements as per his signed cooperative agreements and section 4 permits prior to livestock turnout.

The permittee's certified actual use report, by pasture, is due 15 days after the end of the authorized grazing period.

Any livestock owned or controlled by the permittee must be eartagged. The permittee must supply the BLM with a list of private eartags and numbers for the livestock that the permittee owns or controls. This list must be submitted prior to turnout along with copies of livestock use agreements.

Livestock will be actively trailed to and from the allotment and between pastures. One (1) week for trailing (between pastures) will be authorized.

The permittee is required to perform necessary riding (herding) to ensure compliance in the East and West First Creek Pastures and prior to fencing in the East and West Kinney Pastures.

Gathering of livestock from the pastures and/or allotment will be done by ground transportation only. Aircraft will not be used.

The grazing authorization with the schedule of use outlined in this amendment to the Final Multiple Use Decision, will be the only approved use and all other schedules, flexibilities and terms and conditions addressed in the 1982 Coordinated Resource Management Plan and the 1985 Allotment Management Plan are suspended until the plans are revised.

Upon request by the permittee, additional spring use, in the First Creek Pasture, may be approved by the authorized officer if the utilization is less than 45%, on upland habitats, at the time of the request. Request for additional spring use may not be made more than two (2) weeks prior to the end of the scheduled use. The additional spring use, if authorized, will not extend past 06/15.

During implementation of the grazing system, allowable use levels of 30% for streambank riparian on the public portion of Pole Creek and 50% utilization on public wetland riparian habitats will be enforced for all summer pastures (Upper Kelly, Lower Kelly, N. Snowstorm, C. Snowstorm, S. Snowstorm, E. Kinney). Mid point and end of season utilization monitoring will be conducted to ensure that allowable use levels are not exceeded. Utilization monitoring will also be conducted at the end of the growing season, on streambank riparian and wetland riparian habitats, to determine regrowth.

If livestock utilization levels on the public portion of Pole Creek reach 25%, or public wetland riparian utilization levels reach 45%, in any of the summer pastures, (Upper Kelly, Lower Kelly, N. Snowstorm, C. Snowstorm, S. Snowstorm, E. Kinney) the livestock operator will be given a seven (7) day notice in which to remove livestock from the pasture. The livestock will be moved to the next pasture that is scheduled for use if the 25% and/or

45% utilization levels are being reached. In the case of Lower Kelly Pasture, the livestock will be removed from the allotment until the winter turnout date.

If monitoring after the end of the grazing season, in the West Kinney Pasture and summer pastures (Upper Kelly, Lower Kelly, N. Snowstorm, C. Snowstorm, S. Snowstorm, E. Kinney), indicates that utilization objectives are not being met on upland, wetland riparian, and/or streambank riparian habitats, and livestock are determined to be the cause, appropriate corrective management action(s) will be taken the following grazing year. If BLM and the permittee can't agree as to what "appropriate" management action(s) should be, ten (10) days will be taken from the ending date of the season of use in the pasture which did not achieve the utilization objective(s). The above will be in consultation with the interested publics.

If the livestock operator implements other management actions which will reduce utilization and allow for attainment of the utilization objective, the ten (10) days that were lost will be returned the following year.

6. Structural Projects

The following projects are scheduled to be evaluated through the project planning process. Construction of projects is dependent upon funding, staffing, and project priorities.

1. Enclosures around selected springs and associated meadows on public land are recommended to eliminate use of these habitats by livestock/wild horses. Once fenced, limited livestock use could occur within the Enclosures. The sites to be fenced shall be selected in consultation, coordination and cooperation with all interested publics.
2. Gap fence the "rim" in the Kinney pasture to effectively separate East Kinney from West Kinney.
3. Re-develop Kelly Creek Spring
4. Approximately 1.5 miles of enclosure fence along Pole Creek (public) are recommended to inhibit livestock use.
5. Develop Castle Ridge Reservoir

The above mentioned fencing projects would be funded by BLM and the construction would be by the permittee with supervision by the BLM. BLM would be responsible for NEPA documentation.

RATIONALE:

It has been determined through monitoring that heavy use has occurred on upland, wetland riparian, and streambank riparian habitats.

Due to the lack of adequate stock water on the uplands, in the Castle Ridge Pasture, the present AMP spring grazing system has never been followed. Consistent patterns of rest-rotation and periods of use in other pastures has not been applied to the Bullhead Allotment.

Under the previous system, utilization and distribution patterns have showed heavy use around wetland riparian habitats within the summer pastures. The new management action, with the allowable use levels on streambank riparian and wetland riparian habitats, should allow for attainment of the allotment specific objectives.

The management action will eliminate the present two pasture spring rest rotation system. Early spring use (03/01 to 05/31) will be made in the Castle Ridge Pasture every year. This pasture is short of water during late spring and summer.

Using this pasture in early spring will allow for better distribution of livestock on uplands during the cool part of the year.

Use in this pasture every year will not have an adverse impact on the vegetative resource because with the livestock removal date of 05/31, regrowth will occur which will allow plants to store food reserves in their root system for the next growing season.

Spring use will also be made in the First Creek Pasture. The entire First Creek Pasture will continue to be used every year from 03/01 to 03/31. Spring Creek, which flows through the center of this pasture, would be used to separate East First Creek from West First Creek. The season of use for the East First Creek and West First Creek pastures would be 04/01 to 05/31. In the year that West First Creek will be used, East First Creek rested. The following year East First Creek will be used and West First Creek will be rested. This rest will allow for an increase in plant vigor and seedling establishment. Riding of these pastures is essential to maintain the integrity of this system. This will require a commitment by the permittee to ensure that the livestock are in the authorized areas.

Additional spring use, if authorized, will allow the summer season of use to be adjusted. However, livestock grazing will end on 08/31.

The "rim" in Kinney Pasture splits the pasture. Small areas and gaps between rims will have to be fenced for complete effectiveness in separating East and West Kinney. West Kinney Pasture is dominated by cheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass and livestock will maximize the use on the green palatable vegetation at this time of year (06/01 to 06/20). East Kinney Pasture is a higher elevational pasture and better suited for use during and after the month of June.

The selected management action will also change the grazing system from the three (3) pasture rest-rotation system on the summer pastures to a five (6) pasture grazing system. Under this system, most summer pastures will be used every year. On odd years, the rotation will be clock-wise and on even years the rotation will be counter clockwise (see pasture schedules under grazing system). Allowable use levels of 30% for streambank riparian on the public portion of Pole Creek and 50% for public portions of wetland riparian habitats will be enforced for all summer pastures (East Kinney, Upper Kelly, N. Snowstorm, C. Snowstorm, & S. Snowstorm). These allowable use levels will dictate livestock removal. To determine removal dates from the summer pastures, mid-point utilization studies will be conducted by BLM and permittee. Additional studies may be required before and after the mid-point inspection. When/if streambank riparian utilization levels on Pole Creek reach 25% or wetland riparian utilization levels reach 45%, the livestock operator will be given and seven (7) day notice in which to remove livestock from the pasture. The purpose of the notice to remove is so that the utilization objectives will be attained and not exceeded.

In the Snowstorm Pasture, Winter's Ridge and Snowstorm Creek split the pasture into three parts. The northern portion of this pasture is more suited for late spring/early summer use because it would allow for better distribution of cattle on the uplands. The scheduled odd year use in this pasture (N. Snowstorm), would be limited to 250 head. The remaining livestock (750) would be in the Kinney East Pasture. The livestock removal date in early July would be beneficial to the streambank riparian habitats of First and Snowstorm Creeks because of regrowth potential, which in turn will improve the water quality and fisheries of these habitats. On even years the Central Snowstorm Pasture will be used with 250 head and the remaining livestock (750) would be in Upper Kelly Pasture while the North and South Snowstorm Pasture will be rested. The following year North and South Snowstorm will be used and Central Snowstorm rested. This rest will allow for an increase in plant vigor and seedling establishment plus give the riparian areas a recovery period.

Winter and early spring use will be taken in the Dry Hills and Rabbit Pastures. The winter utilization will be taken when plants are dormant, thus the vegetative resource will not be adversely impacted. The 03/31 and 04/30 removal dates, from these pastures, will allow for growth of the vegetative resource during the spring and summer growing season.