



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

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4110
(NV-241.3)

FEB 17 1993

CERTIFIED MAIL NO. P374309824
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear Interested Party:

Please find enclosed the **Little Owyhee Final Allotment Evaluation Summary and the Proposed Multiple Use Decision.**

The Bureau of Land Management entered into informal section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service, in their letter dated January 29, 1993, concurred with the Bureau's determination that the proposed decision for the Little Owyhee Allotment is not likely to adversely affect LCT. Thus, formal consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended, was not required for this action.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Bob Hopper at (702) 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Scott Bellis
Area Manager
Paradise-Denio Resource Area

Enclosures

Final Little Owyhee Allotment Evaluation Summary
Proposed Multiple Use Decision

*12,000 actual
7,000 proposed
36% reduction*

Final Little Owyhee
Allotment Evaluation Summary

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Little Owyhee Allotment (00036)
- B. Permittee - Nevada First Corporation
- C. Evaluation Period - October 1983 to 1991
- D. Selective Management Category I

II. INITIAL STOCKING LEVEL

A. Livestock Use

1. Grazing Preference (AUMs)

a.	Total Preference	47,463
b.	Suspended Preference	2,581
c.	Active Preference	44,882
*d.	Initial Stocking Rate	27,800

* As per (CRMP) Agreement and Land Use Plan Decision

2. Season of Use

Spring, Summer and Winter

Spring Use	03/01 to 06/30
Summer Use	07/01 to 08/30
Winter Use	12/01 to 02/28

3. Kind and Class of Livestock

Cattle (Cow/Calf)

4. Percent Federal Range

100% Public Land

5. Grazing System

In 1969 a grazing system was developed for the Little Owyhee Allotment and approved under the Little Owyhee Allotment Management Plan (AMP). In 1972 the AMP grazing system was revised. In February 1982 a Coordinated Resource Management Plan was adopted for the allotment. The grazing system agreed to in the CRMP plan adopted the same two use area, three pasture rest-rotation system developed in the revised AMP of 1972. The season of use for the pasture treatments in the spring and summer use areas were also changed. A Technical Review Team (TRT), which was created in 1987 recommended winter use (CRMP Objective #2) in the Fairbanks and Lake Creek Fields.

The Little Owyhee Allotment (CRMP) Plan recommended a stocking level (AUMs) and proportion as follows:

Livestock	27,800 AUMs (84.3%)
Wild Horses	3,578 AUMs (10.9%)
Wildlife	<u>1,593</u> AUMs (4.8%)
	32,971 AUMs

Within HMA

Livestock	*15,800 AUMs (79.9%)
Wild Horses	3,578 AUMs (15.2%)
Wildlife	<u>1,593</u> AUMs (4.9%)
	20,971 AUMs

* 15,800 AUMs (see pp. 3-4)

These stocking levels were arrived at from mutual agreement between CRMP members; however, the levels (AUMs) chosen were based on the results of vegetative inventories conducted by the Winnemucca and Elko districts, which indicated these levels to be available at the time of CRMP agreement. While the BLM does not, as policy, use one point in time inventories to set stocking rates, the CRMP group used this data as a focal point for agreement. These recommended levels were adopted by the BLM, via MFP III decision, as the initial stocking levels for the Little Owyhee grazing allotment (including the Little Owyhee WHMA). In essence, these levels constituted the thriving ecological balance between wild horses, livestock, and wildlife.

a. Current Grazing System

The current grazing system divides the allotment into three use areas; Spring, Summer and Winter. The Spring and Summer Use Areas are under a three pasture rest-rotation grazing system. The Spring Use Area consists of three large pastures and three treatments.

Treatment "A"	Early Spring use 03/01-06/30
Treatment "B"	Spring use 04/01-06/30
Treatment "C"	Rest

The pastures in the Spring use area and an example of the grazing system are as follows:

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Fairbanks Field	Rest	Early Use	Late Use
Twin Valley Field	Early Use	Late Use	Rest
Lake Creek Field	Late Use	Rest	Early Use

The current grazing system on the Summer Use Area consists of four pastures, the fourth pasture, Capitol Peak, was designed to be used every year after seedripeness. The Summer use area also calls for three treatments, those are as follows:

- Treatment "A" - 07/01 to 08/15
- Treatment "B" - 08/15 to 09/30
- Treatment "C" - Rest
- Treatment "D" - 08/15 to 09/30 (Capitol Peak)

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Calico Field	Early use	Late use	Rest
Rock Springs Field	Late use	Rest	Early use
Antelope Field	Rest	Early use	Late use
Capitol Peak Field	Late use	Late use	Late use

A Winter Use Area has been designated in Fairbanks and Lake Creek Pastures. The Winter Use Area treatment is 12/01 to 02/28. Specific use areas within the pastures will be based on monitoring data and areas which have been rested during the years scheduled use.

CRMP Grazing System

Table 1 Grazing Sequence and Schedule Under the CRMP Grazing System

Year one - (1982)

Field	Dates	# Head	AUM's
Twin Valley	04/01 - 06/01	1,900	3,800
Lake Creek	04/01 - 06/30	(0)	(0)
Fairbank	Rest	0	0
Calico	08/15 - 09/30	2,000	3,000
Capitol Peak	08/15 - 09/30	500	750
Rock Springs	07/01 - 08/15	4,000	6,000
	08/15 - 09/30	1,500	2,250
Antelope	Rest	0	0
Total AUMs livestock use			15,800
Total AUMs wild horse use			15,578

Years 2, 5, 8

Field	Dates	# Head	AUM's
Twin Valley	04/01 - 06/30	4,000	12,000
Lake Creek	Rest	0	0
Fairbank	04/01 - 06/01	1,900	3,800
Calico	07/01 - 08/15	4,000	6,000
	08/15 - 09/30	1,500	2,250
Capitol Peak	08/15 - 09/30	500	750
Rock Springs	Rest	0	0
Antelope	08/15 - 09/30	2,000	3,000
Total AUMs livestock use			27,800
Total AUMs wild horse use			3,578

Years 3, 6, 9

Twin Valley	Rest	0	0
Lake Creek	03/15 - 06/01*	1,900	4,750*
Fairbank	04/01 - 07/01	4,000	12,000
Calico	Rest	0	0
Capitol Peak	08/15 - 09/30	500	750
Rock Springs	08/15 - 09/30	2,000	3,000
Antelope	07/01 - 08/15	4,000	6,000
	08/15 - 09/30	1,500	2,250
Total AUMs livestock use			28,750
Total AUMs wild horse use			3,578

Years 4 & 7

Twin Valley	04/01 - 06/01	1,900	3,800
Lake Creek	04/01 - 06/30	4,000	12,000
Fairbank	Rest	0	0
Calico	08/15 - 09/30	2,000	3,000
Capitol Peak	08/15 - 09/30	500	750
Rock Springs	07/01 - 08/15	4,000	6,000
	08/15 - 09/30	1,500	2,250
Antelope	Rest	0	0
Total AUMs livestock use			27,800
Total AUMs wild horse use			3,578

* During years when "light use" (numbers) is taken in Lake Creek field, a turn-out date March 15 will be allowed if range conditions warrant.

B. Wild Horse Use

The Little Owyhee Allotment Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) recommended a wild horse herd of 200 wild horses. This was agreed as being in balance with livestock operations, wildlife demand, and resources available in the Little Owyhee spring range area.

The Little Owyhee Desert Herd Management Area (HMA) is situated entirely within the Little Owyhee Allotment and encompasses three pastures: Lake Creek, Fairbanks, and Twin Valley Springs.

Wild horses are being managed under the Little Owyhee Desert - Snowstorm Mountains Wild Horse Herd Management Area Plan which was approved 08/06/87.

C. Wildlife/Fish Use

1. Wildlife Species

a. Reasonable Numbers

Mule deer	-	288 AUMs
Antelope	-	1,233 AUMs
Bighorn Sheep	-	72 AUMs

b. Wildlife Use Areas:

Deer

Paradise Valley DY-1 (Deer Yearlong)	2,756 acres
Santa Rosa DY-10 (Deer Yearlong)	29,612 acres
Santa Rosa DW-2 (Deer Winter)	31,678 acres
Santa Rosa DS-1 (Deer Spring)	44,210 acres
Lake Creek DW-14 (Deer Winter)	23,867 acres
Snowstorms DY-23 (Deer Yearlong)	43,579 acres

Pronghorn

Santa Rosa PS-7 (Pronghorn Spring)	25,837 acres
Owyhee Desert PY-9 (Pronghorn Yearlong)	258,006 acres
Mahogany Ridge PS-8 (conc.) (Pronghorn Spring)	2,490 acres
Little Owyhee PS-10 (Pronghorn Spring)	21,608 acres
Maiden Butte PW-9 (conc.) (Pronghorn Winter)	17,847 acres
Evans Lake PW-10 (conc.) (Pronghorn Winter)	3,206 acres
Button Lake PW-11 (conc.) (Pronghorn Winter)	7,762 acres
Button Lake PS-11 (conc.) (Pronghorn Spring)	4,939 acres
Evans Lake PS-11 (conc.) (Pronghorn Spring)	8,322 acres
Bullhead PW-13 (conc.) (Pronghorn Winter)	7,469 acres
Owyhee Desert PY-9 (Elko Co) (Pronghorn Yearlong)	199,957 acres

Big Horn Sheep

Santa Rosa BY-4 (Bighorn Sheep Yearlong)	14,338 acres
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Sage grouse - There are 12 identified sage grouse strutting grounds on this allotment. Eight brooding areas are identified in conjunction with the strutting grounds. Three sage grouse wintering areas are also identified in the northern, central, and southeastern portions of the allotment. In general, the entire allotment has sage grouse habitat and supports one of the highest populations in northern Nevada.

2. Fish Use

- a. The North Fork of the Little Humboldt River (NFLHR) is the largest tributary stream to the Little Humboldt River System. The stream arises from the east side of Buckskin Mountain, in the Humboldt National Forest at an elevation of 8,000 feet. The mainstream is approximately 48.5 miles in length and terminates into Chimney Reservoir in Humboldt County, Nevada. The NFLHR flows through 8.0 miles of Forest Service land, 25.0 miles of BLM land, and 15.5 miles of privately owned lands.

Although the entire length of the river is considered fishable, the stream channel during periods of drought has a tendency to go dry in some locations.

Fishery

Brown trout, brook trout, and cutthroat trout were the only salmonid species found, with brown trout as the dominant fish (NDOW 1988).

The brown trout fishery was located on National Forest lands. Cutthroat trout populations still exist in the drainage, but their numbers and distribution have been steadily decreasing. Cutthroat were found at two locations in the very upper portion of the drainage on National Forest lands (NDOW 1988). This population occupied a stream length of about 1.5 miles, a reduction in cutthroat habitat of 98%¹. Although not documented, it is possible that the Humboldt cutthroat trout (Salmo clarki sp) may also migrate into the lower reaches of the North Fork. This cutthroat is thought to be endemic to the South Fork of the Little Humboldt River which also flows into Chimney Reservoir. Due to the present conditions of the river, the majority of the stream between the USFS/BLM boundary and Chimney Reservoir primarily support populations of suckers (Catostomids), dace (Rhinichthys sp, red shiners (Richardsonius), and carp Cyprinus).

The NFLHR has had fish plantings of rainbow trout and brown trout as early as 1914. The last plant of salmonids into the river was in 1992, when rainbows of unknown origin were stocked. Not surprisingly, a native species evaluation conducted by NDOW (1989) showed that the few remaining cutthroat in the NFLHR were hybrids.

According to NDOW stream survey reports, there are apparently no Lahontan cutthroat trout within the Little Owyhee Allotment. Potential LCT habitat within the allotment includes all 25 miles of BLM administered lands along the North Fork extending from Forks Ranch to Chimney Reservoir. It is believed that LCT were historically found throughout the entire NFLHR system (Personal Communication, Jim French, NDOW) with declines attributed to exotic fish introductions, degraded habitat, high water events, and drought.

¹A 1954 stream survey (NDOW 1988) indicated that cutthroat were found from the headwaters to the Forest Boundary.

The North Fork has been the primary source of water for livestock and wildlife in the area, resulting in livestock concentrating within the river and along its banks. Access to and from the river is extremely limited for livestock which also encouraged cattle to graze along the river once they descended down to the riparian zone. Current habitat conditions on BLM administered lands along the NFLHR are poor to fair, with the exception of a few isolated areas where livestock cannot gain access. It is anticipated that the proposed NFLHR riparian fence will control livestock access to the streambed and riparian areas and improve potential LCT habitat.

III. ALLOTMENT PROFILE

A. Description

The Little Owyhee Allotment is the largest grazing allotment in the Paradise-Denio Resource Area. The allotment has a total of 567,544 acres, of which 98% is public land and 2% is private land. The allotment is separated into spring and summer use areas. The spring use area has a total of 460,981 acres which represents 81% of the allotment. The spring use area constitutes the eastern and southern portion of the allotment. The summer use area is made up of four pastures in the northwest portion of the allotment. The vegetation in the summer use area is dominated by big and low sagebrush communities. The spring use area is dominated by shadscale, big and low sagebrush communities. In general, the elevation of the allotment increases in a westwardly direction ranging from 4,500 ft. to 7,500 ft. The allotment itself is located in northeastern Humboldt County, east of the Santa Rosa Range into Elko County, north of the Little Humboldt River to the Idaho and Oregon State lines.

B. Acreage:

1. Allotment

a.	Total acres	567,544
b.	Public acres	555,646
c.	Private acres	11,898

2. Pastures

The allotment is divided into two major use areas. The Spring Use Area consisting of three pastures (Lake Creek, Twin Valley and Fairbanks). The Summer Use Area is made up of four pastures (Rock Springs, Calico, Capitol Peak and Antelope). There are Winter Use Areas which are located in the Fairbanks and Lake Creek Pastures. The area of use in the Fairbanks Pasture is the lower elevation area which exists south of the rim in the Mud and Whiskey Springs area. The winter use area in the Lake Creek Pasture is in the vicinity of McCleary #1 and #2 wells.

The acreage by pasture is as follows:

Lake Creek	216,845
Twin Valley	142,347
Fairbanks	101,789
Calico	22,269
Antelope	35,941
Capitol Peak	16,306
Rock Springs	32,047

C. Other Information

1. Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP)

On February 12, 1982, a coordinated resource management plan (CRMP) was adopted which listed the major problems/issues for the Little Owyhee Allotment. It also developed objectives to manage and resolve these problems. The CRMP was accepted and adopted into the planning process through MFP III Decision.

As a part of this plan a voluntary reduction from 44,882 AUMs to 27,800 AUMs was taken by the permittee.

Another objective of the CRMP was to establish monitoring systems for all objectives. An allotment monitoring plan was issued in 1986. This plan listed key area objectives and established a schedule for monitoring. An analysis of these objectives is located in the Management Evaluation Section of this evaluation.

2. Technical Review Team

A Technical Review Team was created in 1987 to review, discuss and develop methods and practices that relate to achieving the Little Owyhee Allotment CRMP planning objectives. In 1987, the TRT recommended winter use (CRMP objective #2) in the Fairbanks and Lake Creek Fields. The system entailed using a two pasture flip-flop for winter use with 500 cows. The winter use area in the Fairbanks pasture is the lower elevation area which exists south of the rim in the Mud and Whiskey Springs area. The winter use area in the Lake Creek pasture is in the vicinity of McCleary #1 and #2 wells.

The TRT also recommended a modification to rest-rotation grazing system. The modification recognizes that water availability in the Little Owyhee Allotment varies on a yearly and seasonal basis. There are some areas that receive no use during the years of scheduled use due to unavailable water, and then with water available, the same area may be suitable for grazing in a rested year. The recommendation was to allow grazing use of these areas during a rested year, if two years of monitoring data indicated such. This recommendation was adopted.

3. Permit History

From 1983 through 1986 the Little Owyhee Allotment had two permittees, SECO and Charley Amos. SECO had an active preference of 30,782 AUMs but never ran over 15,000 AUMs. Charley Amos had an active preference of 14,100 AUMs. Both SECO and Charley Amos leased base properties from the Nevada First Corp. In 1987 SECO relinquished their lease from NFC, NFC transferred the 30,782 AUMs previously leased to SECO to Charley Amos. Also in 1987, Nevada First corporation entered into a limited partnership with other partners to form Circle A Ranches LP. Thus, Nevada First Corporation properties are deeded to Circle A Ranches LP. This does not affect existing leases.

In 1991, Charley Amos's lease expired and the grazing privileges of 44,882 AUMs were transferred to Circle A Ranches LP.

In 1992, all matters concerning Circle A Ranches LP were quit claimed and conveyed into Nevada First Corporation.

4. Range Improvements

Project planning has been initiated for the development of a fence along the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River to control grazing use of the stream and provide water gaps for livestock use. This project was recommended by CRMP group for the Little Owyhee Allotment. The project should be constructed in fiscal year '93 (Oct. 1992 - Sept. 1993).

The proposed NFLHR riparian fence will be designed to control livestock access to the streambed and riparian areas and to protect and enhance potential LCT habitat. The proposed action consists of constructing approximately 5 miles of non-continuous fence (encompassing about 12 miles of potential LCT habitat) which will tie into natural barriers along the North Fork. The portion of the river to be fenced would separate the Antelope Field of the Little Owyhee Allotment and Mud Springs Field of the William Stock Allotment which lie in north east Humboldt County (see attached map). No adjustment in active grazing preference is anticipated at this time as a result of this fence. Monitoring data is to be collected over the entirety of both allotments over a period of time, and if results show a need for adjustment, it would be made at that time.

The fence would consist of four strands of wire, steel posts, wooden or steel pipe "H" braces and would be built to antelope specifications (16", 22", 28", and 48", top three wires barbed and bottom wire smooth). There would be a total of 15 water gaps strategically located along the river to provide access to livestock for watering purposes. These water gaps will be fenced.

D. Objectives

1. AMP Objectives

- a. To provide the forage to meet the Class I demand for grazing use in this allotment which includes the following:

*Little Owyhee Unit	-	27,798 AUMs
*Taylor Unit	-	13,370 AUMs
*Paradise Unit	-	<u>6,295 AUMs</u>
Total		47,463 AUMs

* Grazing units are defined in the 1972 AMP.

- b. To increase the average density of vegetative cover on the allotment from 25% to 35%.
- c. To increase the percent composition of bluebunch wheatgrass in the summer area from 2% to 10% and in the spring area from 1% to 5%.
- d. Provide for an increase in plant vigor of the major forage species of bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurber's needlegrass.
- e. Provide pasture fences in locations which will provide for the natural drift of livestock resulting in uniform utilization of each pasture and designed to provide adequate stockwater in each area.
- f. Provide for the management of wild free roaming horses now established in the area and still meet the objectives of the other natural resources and livestock operator. This can be accomplished in the following manner.
- 1) By providing pastures large enough so as not to interfere with the normal roaming instinct of the horses.
 - 2) Provide pasture fences which will allow for the natural drift of the horses between their winter and summer range.
 - 3) Develop through the grazing system, additional forage to sustain a maximum herd of 500 wild and free roaming horses on a year long basis.
- g. To meet the following objectives of the Little Owyhee HMP using livestock as a tool.
- 1) Provide exclusive use for antelope and other wildlife on 25% of the area each year.
 - 2) Increase litter from 15% to 20%.
 - 3) Reduce barren areas from present 53% of the area to 20% of the area.

- 4) Provide exclusive use of meadows on one-fourth of the area for sage grouse in particular, and other wildlife species.
- 5) Extend the sage grouse range over the entire area by improving the habitat through rest rotation grazing.
- 6) Allow for non-use on one-half the area during the nesting period.
- 7) Increase the diversity of plant species to provide a greater variety of wildlife food, hereby allowing for a more diversified and healthier overall wildlife population.

2. Land Use Plan Objectives

a. Objective RM-1

To provide forage on a sustained yield basis through natural regeneration. Reverse the downward deterioration of public grazing lands by improving 1,000,000 acres in poor condition, and 400,000 acres in fair condition to good condition within 30 years.

- b. Maintain wild horse and burros on public lands, where there was wild horse or burro use as of December 15, 1971, and maintain a natural ecological balance on the public lands.

c. Objective WLA-1

Improve and maintain the condition of all the aquatic habitat of each stream, lake, or reservoir having the potential to support a sport fishery at a level conducive to the establishment and maintenance of a healthy fish community.

d. Objective WL-1

Improvement and maintenance of a sufficient quantity, quality and diversity of habitats for all species of wildlife in the planning area.

e. Objective W-1

Preservation and improvement of quality water necessary to support current and future use.

f. Objective W-2

Provision of adequate water to support public land uses.

g. Objective W-3

Reduction of soil loss and associated flood and sediment damage from public lands caused by accelerated erosion (man-induced) from wind and water.

h. Objective W-4

Preservation of threatened, endangered or ecologically unique plant specie and/or improvement of their habitats.

3. CRMP

- a. Establish proper long range stocking rates for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife.
- b. Establish proper initial stocking rates, seasons of use and pasture schedule for livestock.
- c. Establish a Wild Horse Management Plan
 - 1) Perpetuate a viable herd which is manageable and compatible with livestock operations, wildlife, and resources available.
 - 2) Preserve unique types of primitive mustang markings.
 - 3) Reduce internal barriers to herd migration within wild horse herd area.
- d. Maintain current trailing rights associated with the allotment.
- e. Improve condition of riparian habitats.
- f. Preserve wilderness characteristics of Wilderness Study Areas within allotment until final wilderness designations are made.
- g. Develop range improvement programs to:
 - 1) Repair and up-grade current improvements,
 - 2) increase range capacities to achieve objective #1,
 - 3) control pests and noxious weeds,
 - 4) control watershed problems,
 - 5) enhance and protect wildlife areas.
- h. Continue public access to allotment areas.
- i. Establish reasonable numbers for wildlife demand.
- j. Design grazing system to protect and enhance shrub, forb, winterfat, and meadow areas critical to wildlife populations.
- k. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds.
- l. Develop potential waterfowl habitats.
- m. Provide for mining activities compatible with other objectives of this plan.

- n. Coordination of planning process with Elko district BLM.
 - o. Align and develop base properties to complement this plan.
 - p. Protect significant cultural, archaeological or historic values.
 - q. Establish an on-going monitoring system for all objectives.
4. Rangeland Program Summary Objectives
- a. Increase available forage for livestock to sustain an active preference of 44,882 AUMs.
 - b. Improve range condition on the two seasonal use areas (Spring and Summer) by operating a three pasture rotation grazing system between 04/01 and 09/30.
 - c. Develop CRMP.
 - d. Revise AMP.
 - e. Ecological status will be determined for each key area using the double sampling technique as described in the National Range Handbook (SCS, 1976).
 - f. Manage range condition to allow big game to reach reasonable numbers. Estimated forage use required to achieve this is:

Deer	288 AUMs
Antelope	1,233 AUMs
Bighorn Sheep	72 AUMs
(If reestablishment occurs)	
 - g. Protect sage grouse strutting areas and associated brooding complexes.
 - h. Develop potential waterfowl habitats.
 - i. Fence Button lake if monitoring shows need.
 - j. Aspen, mahogany, mountain browse, riparian, and meadows are critical species or vegetative types. Specific management objectives will be designed and used for those species/types.
 - k. Improve the riparian and aquatic habitat to good or better overall condition to support a sport fishery on the North Fork Little Humboldt River and East Little Owyhee River.
 - l. Develop an HMP.

5. Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP)

a. Wild Horse Habitat Objectives

- 1) Maintain the forage use levels for all herbivores within the HMA at a level which does not exceed proper use of key forage plant species as identified by the Little Owyhee and Bullhead Monitoring Plan. By 1988, provide 3,578 AUMs of forage for wild horses in the Little Owyhee Desert HMA.
- 2) Provide for additional year-round water in the HMA.
- 3) Improve the free-roaming nature of the horses within the HMA by the installation of let down panels, and leaving gates open at critical times during migration.
- 4) Acquire data on the home ranges and distribution/movement patterns of the animals in the HMA to facilitate evaluation of effects of range improvement.
- 5) Determine to what extent, if any, horses move back and forth between the HMAs located in the Elko District.

b. Animal Objectives

- 1) Within the AMLs of 200 adult wild horses in the Little Owyhee Desert HMA allow the population to increase by +35 percent in both HMAs before another removal is considered. The +35 percent variance factor would allow the population to increase to 270 adult wild horses in the Little Owyhee HMA, before an additional reduction is considered.
- 2) Acquire data on the demographic characteristics of the wild horse population in the HMA to include information on sex ratios, age structures, young/adult ratios, and actual use. These parameters will be analyzed to determine natality, mortality, and rate of increase.
- 3) Genetically enhance the color patterns in the HMA.

6. Key Management Area Objectives
Table 1

KEY AREA NUMBER	KEY SPECIES ¹	ALLOWABLE USE LEVELS ²	INTERIM (5 YEARS)		SHORT TERM (10 YEARS)		LONG TERM (35 YEARS)	
			DESIRED ECOLOGICAL STATUS ³	FREQUENCY TREND ⁴	FREQUENCY TREND	ECOLOGICAL STATUS OBJECTIVES	FREQUENCY TREND	ECOLOGICAL STATUS OBJECTIVES
0101	CREPI	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain
	SITH ₂	40				Late Seral		Late Seral
	SIHY	40						
0102	CREPI	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain
	SIHY	40				Late Seral		Late Seral
	SITH ₂	40						
0103	SIHY	40	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>					
	SITH ₂	40						
0201	LUPIN	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain
	SIHY	40				Late Seral		Late Seral
	SITH ₂	40						
0202	CREPI	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid-Seral	Upward	Late Seral
	SIHY	40						
	SITH ₂	40						
0301	CREPI	40	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Late Seral	Upward	Maintain
	FEID	40						Late Seral
	SITH ₂	40						
0401	SIHY	40	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>					
0402	AGSP	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain
	CREPI	50						
	SIHY	40						
	SITH ₂	40						

¹ Plant abbreviation codes are used here. These codes are identified in the Plant List (See Appendix).
² Allowable use levels are the objectives established for utilization. They are derived from the Paradise-Denio Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (BLM 1981).
³ This is the Seral stage that would have the greatest value for all resources (livestock, wild horses, and wildlife).
⁴ Frequency identified as static or upward. If an important plant forage species appears on a study that previously was not recorded, then all monitoring objectives for that key area should be reevaluated.

KEY AREA NUMBER	KEY SPECIES ¹	USE LEVELS ²	INTERIM (5 YEARS)			SHORT TERM (10 YEARS)		LONG TERM (35 YEARS)	
			ALLOWABLE	DESIRED ECOLOGICAL STATUS ³	FREQUENCY TREND ⁴	FREQUENCY TREND	ECOLOGICAL STATUS OBJECTIVES	FREQUENCY TREND	ECOLOGICAL STATUS OBJECTIVES
0403	AGSP	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain	
	CREPI	50							Late Seral
	SIHY	40							
	STTH ₂	40							
0501	EULA ₂	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid Seral	Upward	Late Seral	
	ORHY	40							
	SIHY	40							
0502	ORHY	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid Seral	Upward	Late Seral	
	POSE	50							
	SIHY	40							
0503	SIHY	40	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>						
	STTH ₂	40							
0504	ORHY	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid Seral	Upward	Late Seral	
	POSE	50							
	SIHY	40							
0505	ORHY	50	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>						
	SIHY	40							
0506	EULA ₂	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid Seral	Upward	Late Seral	
	ORHY	50							
	SIHY	50							
0507	ORHY	50	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>						
	STTH ₂	40							
	SIHY	40							
0601	FEID	40	<u>Utilization Study Only</u>						
	STTH ₂	40							
0602	CREPI	50	Late Seral	Static	Upward	Mid Seral	Upward	Late Seral	
	ELCI	50							
	STTH ₂	40							
0603	CREPI	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain	
	SIHY	40							Late Seral
	STTH ₂	40							
0701	AGSP	50	Late Seral	Static	Static	Maintain	Static	Maintain	
	CREPI	50							Late Seral
	STTH ₂	40							

7. Allotment Specific Objectives

The allotment specific objectives tie the AMP, Land Use Plan, CRMP, Allotment Monitoring Plan, RPS and HMAP objectives together into quantified objectives for this allotment.

a. Short Term

- 1) Utilization of the key plant species on 594 acres of wetland riparian shall not exceed 50%. [1]
- 2) Utilization of key streambank riparian plant species along the East Little Owyhee River shall not exceed 50%. [1]
- 3) Utilization of key streambanks plant species along the North and South Forks of the Little Humboldt River shall not exceed 30%. [1]

[Short term objectives are used to monitor progress towards long term objectives.]

b. Long Term

- 1) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for livestock, with an initial stocking level of 27,800 AUMs. (RM 1, W-3; CRMP-a, CRMP-b; RPS-a)
- 2) Improve to and maintain the ecological status per key management area as determined in the Little Owyhee Monitoring Plan. (RM-1; CRMP-a; RPS-e,f)
- 3) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for big game, with an initial forage demand of 288 AUMs for mule deer, 1,233 AUMs for pronghorn and 72 AUMs for bighorn sheep. (WL-1, W-1, W-3, CRMP-a, CRMP-g, CRMP-i; RPS-f, g)

- a) Improve to and maintain 2,756 acres in Paradise Valley DY-1, 29,612 acres in Santa Rosa DY-10, 31,678 acres in Santa Rosa DW-2, and 44,210 acres in Santa Rosa

DS-1 in good or excellent mule deer habitat condition.

- b) Improve to and maintain 2,490 acres in Mahogany Ridge PS-8, 25,837 acres in Santa Rosa PS-7 and 21,608 acres in Little Owyhee PS-10 to good condition. Improve to and maintain 457,963 acres in Owyhee Desert PY-9, 17,847 acres in Maiden Butte PW-9, 2,306 acres in Evans Lake PW-10,

7,762 acres in Button Lake PW-11, 4,939 acres in Button Lake PS-9, 8,322 acres in Evans Lake PS-11, and 7,469 acres in Bullhead PW-13 in fair or good pronghorn habitat condition.

- 4) Maintain and improve the free roaming behavior of wild horses by protecting and enhancing their home ranges. (WHB 1; CRMP-c; HMAP a-1, 2)
 - a) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide an initial level of 2,400 AUMs of forage on a sustained yield basis for 200 adult wild horses.
 - b) Maintain and improve wild horse habitat by assuring free access to water.
- 5) Improve to and maintain 594 acres of riparian and meadow habitat types in good condition. (WL 1, CRMP-3, g, j, l; RPS-h, j)
- 6) Improve to and maintain 21 acres of aspen habitat types in good condition. (WL 1; RPS-j)
- 7) Improve to and maintain 60 acres of mahogany habitat types in good condition. (WL 1; RPS-j)
- 8) Improve to or maintain the following stream habitat conditions on the North Fork and the South Forks of the Little Humboldt and the East Little Owyhee from 26% on the North Fork, unknown on the reach in the Little Owyhee Allotment on the South Fork and unknown on the East Little Owyhee to an overall optimum of 60% or above. (WLA 1, W 1; CRMP-e, l; RPS-h, j, k)
 - a) Streambank cover to 60% or above.
 - b) Streambank stability to 60% or above.
 - c) Maximum summer water temperature below 70° F.
 - d) Sedimentation below 10%.
- 9) Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and brooding areas. Maintain a minimum of 30% cover of sagebrush for nesting and winter use. (WL 1; CRMP-g, j, k; RPS-g, j)
- 10) Improve to or maintain the water quality of the North and South Fork Humboldt Rivers and the East Little Owyhee River to the State criteria set for the following beneficial uses: livestock drinking water, cold water aquatic life, wading and wildlife propagation and sport fishery. (WLA 1, W-2, W-3; RPS-j)

[1] Utilization levels will be used to evaluate and adjust management practices over a period of time.

E. Key Species Monitored

See Key Management Area Objectives - Table 1 pages 15 and 16.

F. Other Information

1. Wildfires

In July of 1984, 38,770 acres of the Fairbanks Field burned in the wildfire. The field was closed to grazing for two years but not grazed for three (1984, 1985 and 1986). Fire Rehabilitation efforts were not employed in the field and natural recovery was allowed. The absence of this pasture disrupted the three pasture rest-rotation system used in the Spring Use Area and slightly increased use on the two remaining fields.

2. In 1987, thirteen potential riparian and mountain browse key management areas were read. No utilization data had been collected on riparian or mountain browse prior to 1987. In 1989 the thirteen potential riparian and mountain browse key management areas were reread and evaluated as a key area. The permittee was notified but declined to participate in

the selection process. The permittee had no objection to the locations of these wildlife habitat study sites. The thirteen study sites will need to be incorporated into the Little Owyhee Monitoring Plans as per manual procedures.

3. Exclosures

Since 1977, six exclosures have been built on the summer pastures of this allotment, containing approximately 580 acres. Approximately 48 acres of riparian habitat is included within these exclosures.

IV. MANAGEMENT EVALUATION

A. Purpose

The purpose of the management evaluation is to assess if current management practices are meeting the allotment specific and Land Use Plan objectives and to identify management changes needed to meet objectives.

B. Summary of Studies Data

1. Actual Use

a. Livestocks (AUMS)

<u>Spring Use Pastures</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Fairbanks	1,342	Rested	Rested	Rested	3,354	*3,684	*3,601	**4,920
Lake Creek	Rested	6,537	4,584	5,286	1,638	*3,802	1,698	3,048
Twin Valley	<u>4,140</u>	<u>6,013</u>	<u>3,296</u>	<u>2,253</u>	<u>2,972</u>	<u>1,963</u>	<u>499</u>	<u>3,036</u>
Spring Use Totals	5,482	12,550	7,880	7,539	7,964	9,449	5,798	11,004

Summer Use Pastures

Antelope	5,100	Rested	2,167	1,572	302	Rested	234	1,559
Calico	1,071	1,826	Rested	Rested	299	Rested	1,708	890
Capitol Peak	204	Rested	2,155	1,366	987	729	829	2,105
Rock Springs	<u>Rested</u>	<u>2,622</u>	<u>2,307</u>	<u>1,366</u>	<u>1,080</u>	<u>269</u>	<u>842</u>	<u>175</u>
	6,375	4,448	6,629	4,304	2,668	998	3,613	4,729

Allotment Totals 11,875 16,998 14,509 11,843 13,469 10,447 9,411 17,954

* In 1988 winter use was taken as per TRT. This resulted in 707 AUMs for Lake Creek and 990 AUMs for Fairbanks fields. In 1989 winter was taken in Fairbanks pasture, which resulted in 1693 AUMs.

** Does not include 1990 winter use.

Average allotment livestock use over the last 7 years = 13,519 AUMs.

b. Wildlife (Existing Numbers)

The P-D EIS indicated that forage demand on this allotment for big game was 141 AUMs for mule deer and 735 AUMs for pronghorn. Forage demand for 1986 was determined to be 259 AUMs for deer and 837 AUMs for pronghorn. Survey methods to determine forage demand for big game differ for the two time periods, so data is not comparable. In general, population trends for mule deer have increased slightly in the Santa Rosa Range over the last 10 years, while pronghorn numbers have remained somewhat static.

Bighorn sheep use has been reported on this allotment in the last few years, but at this time has not been verified by BLM or NDOW.

c. Wild Horses

Five wild horse gathers have been conducted on the Little Owyhee Desert HMA since 1977. The numbers of wild horses removed during each gather is as follows:

Removal Data

<u>1977</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>Total</u>
1065	55	342	487	726	2,675

Census data collected for the period (1972-1990) is as follows:

Census data collected for the period (1972-1991) is as follows:

Census Data (Adult Animals)

<u>5/72*</u>	<u>1/73*</u>	<u>6/74**</u>	<u>6/75*</u>	<u>7/76*</u>	<u>3/77**</u>	<u>6/79**</u>	<u>10/80*</u>	<u>9/82*</u>	<u>9/84**</u>	<u>9/86**</u>	<u>7/89**</u>	<u>2/90**</u>	<u>1/91*</u>	<u>7/91*</u>
689	435	1106	1166	1519	1774	895	1243	1024	649	294	672	793	823	756

* Census conducted by fixed wing aircraft

** Census conducted by Bell-47 helicopter

Note: Prior to 1979, animals which were counted in the southern portion of the Lake Creek field were added to the Snowstorm HMA. Therefore these censuses are not comparable to those flown in 1979 and later.

Census data collected by pasture/field for the period (1979-1991) is as follows:

LITTLE OWYHEE HMA CENSUS DATA

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>(adults/foals)</u>	<u>PASTURE/FIELD</u>						
		<u>Fairbanks</u>	<u>Twin Valley</u>	<u>Lake Creek</u>	<u>Antelope</u>	<u>Calico</u>	<u>Rock Springs</u>	<u>Capitol</u>
<u>Peak</u> <u>(7/31)</u>	(756/100)	167/23	143/23	443/53	3/1	nf	nf	nf
1991 (1/31)	(823/0)	144/0	309/0	347/0	0 (1)	15/0	8/0	nf
1990 (2/15-20)	(793/18)	129/9	248/4	408/5	8/0	nf	nf	nf
1989 (7/19-25)	(672/147)	123/23	203/45	331/76	7/0 (1)	8/3 (1)	nf	nf
1986 (9/23-24)	(294/64)	58/11	74/18	154/33	3/0	5/2	0	0
1984 (9/25-29)	(649/184)	162/49	265/78	150/45	44/5	0	28/7	0
1982 (9/2,7,8)	(1024/80)	297/25	348/33	304/15	39/3	5/2	31/2	0
1980 (10/7-16)	(1243/237)	289/60	480/88	405/80	31/5	6/0	32/4	0
1979 (6/30-7/1)	(895/248)	217/46	349/103	182/85	24/6	3/2	21/6 (2)	nf

nf = not flown
 (1) = only east 1/3 flown
 (2) = only east 1/2 flown

Forage (AUMs) use by wild horses in the spring pastures for the Little Owyhee Allotment for the years 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1991 are as follows. A 14% per year increase factor was assumed for each pasture when census data was not available. The last removal occurred in 1985.

Fairbanks Pasture

<u>Census and Estimated Population Numbers</u>	<u>AUMs Consumed</u>
1987 - 91 adults (estimated)	1,092 AUMs
1988 - 106 adults (estimated)	1,272 AUMs
1989 - 123 adults (census)*	1,476 AUMs
1990 - 129 adults (census)**	1,548 AUMs
1991 - 156 adults (census)**^	1,866 AUMs
Total	7,254 AUMs

Twin Valley Springs

<u>Census and Estimated Population Numbers</u>	<u>AUMs Consumed</u>
1987 - 150 adults (estimated)	1,800 AUMs
1988 - 175 adults (estimated)	2,100 AUMs
1989 - 203 adults (census)*	2,436 AUMs
1990 - 248 adults (census)*	2,976 AUMs
1991 - 309 adults (census)**	3,708 AUMs
Total	13,020 AUMs

Lake Creek Field

<u>Census and Estimated Population Numbers</u>	<u>AUMs Consumed</u>
1987 - 261 adults (estimated)	3,132 AUMs
1988 - 303 adults (estimated)	3,636 AUMs
1989 - 331 adults (census)*	3,972 AUMs
1990 - 416 adults (census)*	4,992 AUMs
1991 - 347 adults (census)**	4,164 AUMs
Total	19,896 AUMs

- * Census conducted by a Bell-47 Helicopter
- ** Census conducted by a fixed-wing aircraft
- ^ Average of two counts in 1991

e. Actual Use - Wild Horses and Cattle

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Cattle AUMs</u>	<u>Wild Horse AUMs</u>	<u>Total AUMs</u>
<u>1987</u>	Fairbanks	3,354	1,092	4,446
	Lake Creek	1,638	3,132	4,770
	Twin Valley	2,972	1,800	4,772
	Total	7,964 AUMs	6,024 AUMs	13,988 AUMs
<u>1988</u>	Fairbanks	3,684	1,272	4,956
	Lake Creek	3,802	3,636	7,438
	Twin Valley	1,963	2,100	4,063
	Total	9,449 AUMs	7,008 AUMs	16,457 AUMs

Little Owyhee Allotment

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<u>1989</u>	Fairbanks	3,601	1,476	5,077
	Lake Creek	1,698	3,972	5,670
	Twin Valley	499	2,436	2,935
	Total	5,798 AUMs	7,884 AUMs	13,682 AUMs
<u>1990</u>	Fairbanks	4,920	1,548	6,468
	Lake Creek	3,048	4,992	8,040
	Twin Valley	3,036	2,976	6,012
	Total	11,004 AUMs	9,516 AUMs	20,520 AUMs

2. Climate

Precipitation
For
Paradise Valley (NOAA Station 1984-1991)
Precipitation in Inches

<u>Year</u>	<u>Departure From 30 Year Normal</u>	<u>*Growing Season</u>	<u>Yearly</u>
1984	3.53	6.58	12.69
1985	.40	3.07	8.76
1986	.79	2.84	9.95
1987	1.89	5.20	11.05
1988	.92	3.29	10.08
1989	.04	4.18	9.12
1990	--	4.47	7.03
1991	-.01	4.26	8.39

* Growing season is defined as March through August.

Precipitation
For
McDermitt (NOAA Station 1984-1991)
Precipitation in Inches

<u>Year</u>	<u>*Growing Season</u>	<u>Yearly</u>
1984	5.68	10.56
1985	2.63	6.11
1986	4.99	8.70
1987	5.12	7.91
1988	3.23	6.52
1989	2.70	5.77
1990	3.08	5.73
1991	6.22	9.96

Data not available for deviation from normal.

* Growing season is defined as March through August.

Little Owyhee Allotment

February 12, 1993

Data from Antelope Lake Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS), established 6/20/90

Located at 41° 41' N, 116° 46' E, Elko County, Elko BLM district
Approximately 1.5 miles east of Lake Creek allotment boundary fence

Year	Precipitation (in.)				Air Temperature (°F)				Wind Speed (MPH)			
	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Yr	Avg	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Yr	Avg	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Yr	
1990	0.5	0.3	0.8	Avg	69	33	52	8	9	8	8	
	(Growing Season 0.3)				High	85	46	66	Avg. Peak Gust	25	29	31 (12/18)
					Low	52	21	37	Max. Peak Gust	51	45	53 (7/8)
					Extremes							
					High (date)	100	(8/6)					
					Low (date)	-28	(12/22)					

Data for 1991 not yet available.

* Growing season is defined as March through August.

Little Owyhee Allotment

February 12, 1993

Table 2.

KEY MANAGEMENT AREA STUDIES DATA SUMMARY

Key Area	Utilization		Met	Frequency		Ecological Serai Stage Objective	Rationale
	Objective 5 yrs	10 yrs		Objective	Met		
Fairbanks							
0401	(Utilization Study Only)						
	SIHY 40%		No				AUI exceeded in 1990 - 48%
0402				Static Static		Late Serai	
	AGSP 50%		Yes		Yes		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		Yes		
	STTH ₂ 40%		Yes		Yes		
	CRAC ₂ 50%		No Data		Yes		
0403				Static Static		Late Serai	
	AGSP 50%		Yes		No Data		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		Yes		
	STTH ₂ 40%		Yes		Yes		
	CRAC ₂ 50%		No Data		No		
Lake Creek							
0501				Static Upward			
	EUI A ₂ 50%		No		Yes		
	ORHY 50%		No		No		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		No		
0502				Static Upward		Late Serai	
	ORHY 40%		Yes		Yes		
	POSE 50%		Yes		Yes		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		Yes		
0503	(Utilization Study Only)						
	SIHY 40%		Yes				
	STTH ₂ 40%		Yes				
0504				Static Upward		Late Serai	
	ORHY 50%		Yes		Yes		
	POSE 50%		Yes		Yes		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		No		
0505	(Utilization Study Only)						
	ORHY 50%		Yes				
	SIHY 40%		Yes				
	STTH ₂ 40%		Yes		Yes		
0506				Static Upward			
	EUI A ₂ 50%		Yes		Yes		
	ORHY 50%		Yes		Yes		
	SIHY 40%		Yes		No		
0507	(Utilization Study Only)						
	ORHY 50%		Yes				
	STTH ₂ 40%		Yes				
	SIHY 40%		Yes				

= Static in change

= Declining trend

= Improved trend

Table 2.

KEY MANAGEMENT AREA STUDIES DATA SUMMARY

Key Area	Utilization		Frequency		Ecological Seral Stage Objective	Rationale
	Objective	Met	Objective	Met		
Twin Valley						
0701			Static Static		Late Seral	
	AGSP 50%	Yes		Yes		
	STTH ₂ 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1990 - 64%
	CRAC ₂ 50%	No Data		Yes		
0702			Static Upward		Late Seral	
	ORHY 50%	No		Yes		AIII exceeded in 1990 - 54%
	SIHY 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1990 - 62%
	CRAC ₂ 50%	No Data		Yes		
0703			Static Static		Late Seral	
	ORHY 50%	No		Yes		AIII exceeded in 1990 - 78%
	SIHY 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1990 - 48%
	STTH ₂ 40%	Yes		No Data		
	ERIOG	No Data		No		
Antelope						
0101			Static Static		Late Seral	
	STTH ₂ 40%	Yes		No		
	SIHY 40%	Yes		No		
	CREPIS 40%	No Data		Yes		
0102			Static Static		Late Seral	
	STTH ₂ 40%	Yes		No		
	SIHY 40%	Yes		No		
	CRAC ₂ 50%	No Data		No		
0103	(Utilization Study Only)					
	STTH ₂ 40%	No				AIII exceeded in 1990 - 58%
*0104	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CELE ₃ 50%	Yes				
*0105	(Utilization Study Only)					
	SALIX 50%	Yes				
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 70%
	PONE ₃ 50%	No		Yes		AIII exceeded in 1987 - 60%
*0106	(Utilization Study Only)					
	SALIX 50%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1987 - 92%
						1988 - 64%
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 78%
	PONE ₃ 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 76%
						1988 - 52%

* Tentative Key Area

Little Owyhee Allotment

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Table 2.

KEY MANAGEMENT AREA STUDIES DATA SUMMARY

Key Area	Utilization		Frequency		Ecological Serai Stage Objective	Rationale
	Objective	Met	Objective	Met		
Antelope						
*0107	(Utilization Study Only)					
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 83%
						1988 - 61%
	CAREX 40%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 85%
*0108	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 77%
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 66%
						1988 - 54%
Calico						
0201			Static Static		Late Serai	
	STTH, 40%	No		Yes		AIII exceeded in 1990
	SIHY, 40%	Yes		No		
	LUPIN 50%	Yes		Yes		
	CRAC, 50%	Yes		No Data		
0202			Static Upward		Late Serai	
	SIHY, 40%	Yes		No		
	STTH, 40%	Yes		Yes		
	CREPI 50%	No Data		Yes		
Capitol Peak						
0301			Static Upward		Late Serai	
	FEID, 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1985 - 55%
	STTH, 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1984 - 58%
						1985 - 40%
						1987 - 46%
	CREPI 50%	No Data		No		
*0302	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 64%
						1988 - 86%
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 62%
						1988 - 90%
*0303	(Utilization Study Only)					
	SALIX 30%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 79%
						1988 - 77%
	ROWO 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1988 - 55%
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 64%
						1988 - 71%
*0304	(Utilization Study Only)					
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1988 - 87%
						1989 - 72%
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 78%
						1988 - 79%
*0305	(Utilization Study Only)					
	PONE, 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 63%
						1988 - 85%
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 65%
						1988 - 83%

* Tentative Key Area

Table 2. KEY MANAGEMENT AREA STUDIES DATA SUMMARY

Key Area	Utilization		Frequency		Ecological Seral Stage Objective	Rationale
	Objective	Met	Objective	Met		
Rock Springs						
0601	(Utilization Study Only)					
	FEID ₂ 50%	Yes				
	STTH ₂ 40%	Yes				
0602			Static Upward		Late Seral	
	STTH ₂ 40%	Yes		Yes		
	ELCI ₂ 50%	Yes		No		
	CRAC ₂ 50%	Yes		Yes		
0603			Static Static		Late Seral	
	STTH ₂ 40%	No		No		AIII exceeded in 1985 - 42%
						1987 - 56%
						1988 - 50%
	SIHY 40%	Yes		No		
	CRAC ₂ 50%	Yes		No		
*0604	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CAREX 40%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 66%
	PONE ₃ 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 65%
						1988 - 51%
*0605	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 74%
						1988 - 70%
	PONE ₃ 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 63%
						1988 - 68%
*0606	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CAREX 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 54%
						1988 - 73%
	PONE ₃ 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1988 - 68%
						1989 - 57%
0607	(Utilization Study Only)					
	CELE ₃ 50%	No				AIII exceeded in 1987 - 54%
						1988 - 59%

* Ecological Status was determined in 1985, and has not been reevaluated since then. Frequency data indicates the need to reevaluate Ecological Status.

* Tentative Key Area

3. Use Pattern Mapping, Utilization and Trend Data Summary by Pasture. Slight use (0-20%), Light use (21-40%), Moderate use (41-60%), Heavy use (61-80%), Severe use (81-100%).
 - a. Fairbanks Pasture
 - 1) For the years 1985 to 1989 Use Pattern Mapping (UPM) data indicates the majority of use over the pasture ranged from slight to moderate use. For all years heavy use was less than 10% and associated with waters.
 - 2) Utilization conducted at the Key Management Areas (KMA's) for the years data was collected 1987 to 1990 indicates that the utilization objectives has been met at all but one key area (0401) for one year (1990).
 - 3) Analysis of trend data indicates that overall, trend frequency is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed. Ecological status has not been re-evaluated since the initial seral stage was determined.
 - b. Lake Creek Pasture
 - 1) For the years 1985 to 1989 UPM data indicates the majority of use over the pasture was slight to light. For all years, heavy use was less than 3% except in 1988, when heavy use was 14% and associated with waters sources. Water sources include Lake Creek Reservoir and the South Fork Little Humboldt River.
 - 2) Utilization studies conducted at the KMA's for the years 1984 to 1990 indicates that the utilization objectives have been met at 6 or 7 KMA's. Heavy use has occurred at KMA 0501 during 1989 and 1990. This KMA is located near Lake Creek Reservoir.
 - 3) Analysis of trend data indicates that overall, frequency trend is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed.
 - c. Twin Valley Springs
 - 1) Over the period that UPM has been conducted (1985-1989) data indicates the majority of use over the pasture was slight to light. Heavy use was less than 10% and was associated with waters sources.

- 2) Utilization studies conducted at the KMA's over the period 1983 to 1990 indicates that Allowable Use Levels (AUL's) were exceeded at all three key areas during 1990. Prior to 1990 utilization was below (AUL's) for all years data was collected. Stocking levels during 1990 were highest since 1987.
- 3) Analysis of trend data indicates that frequency trend is erratic in change and is not maintaining or moving towards achievement of this objective.

d. Antelope Pasture

- 1) For the years 1985 to 1989 UPM data indicates the majority of annual use over the pasture has been slight with areas of light and moderate also being mapped. Heavy use has been mapped on meadow/riparian vegetation during 1987 and 1989 at springs and along the Little Owyhee River and the North Fork Little Humboldt River.

- 2) Utilization conducted on the upland KMA's over the period (1983 to 1990) indicates utilization levels to be below AUL's for all years except 1990 where the AUL on one key species was exceeded. Utilization conducted on the riparian/meadow KMA's indicates utilization was above AULs at most KMA's during 1987 and 1988.

The pasture was rested from livestock use during 1988. The heavy use may have resulted from the tendency of wildlife, stray livestock and/or wild horses from outside the HMA to concentrate on the upland riparian and meadow zones.

- 3) Analysis of trend data indicates frequency is declining on four of the six key species on two KMA's. Progress is not being made toward achieving the trend objective in this pasture. The KMA's for trend are located on upland vegetative sites.

e. Calico Pasture

- 1) For the years 1986 to 1989 UPM data indicates the majority of annual use over the pasture has been slight use with areas of light and moderate use also occurring. Heavy use has been shown to occur for the period of (1986 to 1989) along the Calico Drainage and along Maiden Springs Pipeline.

- 2) Utilization studies conducted during 1988, 1989 and 1990 indicated the majority of use recorded was No Use. Use above AUL occurred only one year on (STTH2) where use was 58% on KMA 0201.

- 3) Analysis of trend data indicates that a majority of trend frequency is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed.

f. Capitol Peak Pasture

- 1) For the years 1985 to 1989 UPM data indicates the majority of annual use over the pasture has been slight use with light, moderate and heavy also occurring. Heavy use has been shown to occur primarily along the forks of Willow Creek, but also occurring along the forks of Calico Creek and at Lone Willow Springs.

- 2) Utilization data has been collected at the only upland site annually from 1983 to 1990. Data indicates utilization was above AUL's for the years 1984, 1985 and 1987.

Utilization conducted on the riparian/meadow KMA's indicates that for the three years data was collected, (1987, 1988, 1989) AULs were exceeded at all KMA's and the majority of use was heavy to severe.

- 3) Analysis of trend data at the only KMA 0301 indicates frequency of occurrence for (FEID) and (CRAC2) is below 10% for all years and has not shown a significant change greater than 10%. The key species (STTH2) is declining at this site. Overall trend is declining.

g. Rock Springs

- 1) For the years 1985 to 1989 UPM data indicates the majority of annual use over the pasture has been slight with areas of light, moderate and heavy also recorded. Heavy use has been shown to occur primarily along Piccolo Creek and also occurring at Rock Springs and along Willow Creek.

- 2) Utilization data has been collected on the upland KMAs annually from 1984 to 1990. Utilization was below AUL's at all upland KMAs for all years except 1987 and 1990 when use on (STTH2) at KMA 063 exceeded AULs.

Utilization data has been collected on the riparian/meadow KMA's for the years 1987, 1988, and 1989. AULs were exceeded at all KMA's during 1987 and 1988. During 1989 one KMA was read and AULs were exceeded for both key species.

- 3) Analysis of trend data indicates trend frequency is declining for all three key species at KMA 0603 and at KMA 0602 (STTH2) and (CRAC2) are static and (ELCI) is declining. Overall trend is declining at this pasture.

4. Range Survey Data

- a. In 1978 a range survey was conducted to provide baseline data for analysis purposes in the Paradise-Denio EIS. The survey, along with suitability criteria, indicated that 12,628 AUMs were available in 1978 for wild horses and livestock use for the Little Owyhee Allotment in Humboldt County.
- b. The Elko Resource Area RMP/EIS indicates that 15,246 AUMs were available in 1984 for livestock use for the Little Owyhee allotment in Elko County.
- c. A Phase I Watershed Inventory was conducted on the allotment in Humboldt County in the early 70's. The results of that survey are as follows:

<u>[1]Good Condition</u>	<u>[1]Fair Condition</u>	<u>[1]Poor Condition</u>
7,121 acres	92,572 acres	255,996 acres

[1] The range condition used in this inventory is livestock forage condition.

5. Ecological Status Inventory

In 1987 an Ecological Status Inventory was conducted on the allotment. The following is a summary of the ecological status in the Little Owyhee Proper (Humboldt County) and Little Owyhee administration area (Elko County). ESI categories are the following: Early seral (0-25%), Mid seral (26-50%), Late seral (51-75%) and Potential Natural Community (PNC) (76-100%).

Little Owyhee Allotment (Humboldt Co.)

<u>PNC</u>	<u>Late Seral</u>	<u>Mid Seral</u>	<u>Early Seral</u>
995 acres (0.3%)	104,749 acres (32%)	214,760 acres (65%)	8,986 acres (2.7%)

Little Owyhee Allotment (Elko Co.)

<u>PNC</u>	<u>Late Seral</u>	<u>Mid Seral</u>	<u>Early Seral</u>
-0-	84,880 acres (42%)	99,643 acres (50%)	15,199 acres (8%)

6. Wildlife Habitat Inventory

- a. Priority Species: Mule deer, sage grouse, trout, pronghorn
- b. Other Game Species: Chukar and Hungarian Partridge, California Quail.
- c. Special habitat features.

- 1) A special habitat features inventory was conducted in June and August, 1978. This inventory identified the location and acres of special habitats, listed observed plant and wildlife species, and documented ocular observations of the condition and utilization of these habitats. This information was analyzed in the Paradise-Denio EIS.
- 2) Riparian habitat - Rock Springs pasture: 88 acres. Capitol pasture: 142 acres. Antelope pasture: 189 acres including 98 acres along the N. Fk. Little Humboldt River. Calico pasture: 37 acres. Fairbanks pasture: 131 acres: Lake Creek pasture: 5 acres including 3 acres along the S. Fk. Little Humboldt River. Twin valley pasture: 2 acres.
- 3) The North Fork and South Fork of the Little Humboldt River have been proposed as a Lahontan cutthroat trout recovery stream for the Winnemucca District.
- 4) Button Lake - unique ecological site - 688 acres
- 5) Curleef mountain mahogany - 60 acres in the Rock Springs, Antelope, and Capitol pastures.

Utilization transects and condition summaries were conducted at the two Mahogany key management areas in 1987, 1988 and 1989. The condition summary conducted at study site #0607 (Rock Springs) concluded that this Mahogany stand is in unsatisfactory condition. The condition of study site #0104 (Antelope) was determined to be satisfactory in 1989. The small isolated mahogany stands scattered on the high plateau east of the Calico Mountains are currently not meeting this objective. However, the permittee has indicated that he would cooperatively work with BLM to fence off these small scattered stands.

Ceanothus - 18 acres in the Capitol pasture.

Aspen - 21 acres in the Capitol pasture.

Bitterbrush - Identified as a component in 2,404 acres of various ecological sites in the Fairbanks pasture and 130 acres in the Antelope and Capitol pastures.

Serviceberry - Identified as a component in 5 acres of various ecological sites in the Antelope and Capitol pastures.

Mountain Browse - 4,129 acres of ecological sites in the Antelope and Capitol pastures are identified as having snowberry, serviceberry, currant, and bitterbrush in the vegetative composition.

- 6) The Special Habitat inventory recorded the following in 1978:

Rock Springs pasture - Little to no cattle use was observed during the inventory. Spring and meadow areas showed moderate past use on 64 acres with condition being fair to good. Punching and trampling by livestock and some headcut problems were identified. One six acre meadow area was in good condition with little use and contained partially healed headcuts. Another meadow area of 1.5 acres had heavy use. Two reservoirs inspected had heavy use.

Capitol Peak pasture - Spring and associated riparian acres were documented to be receiving heavy use on 47 acres. Moderate use was observed on 21 acres of riparian habitat. Light use was identified on 14 acres of riparian habitat, although headcuts were identified on one of the meadows (10 acres) and aspen reproduction was occurring at one spring. One aspen stand was receiving moderate to heavy use by livestock and was in fair condition with little reproduction. One mahogany stand had no reproduction but good diversity of understory species. Two reservoirs were receiving heavy use.

Antelope pasture - Light or no cattle use was observed during the time of inventory. Five acres of meadow were observed to have had severe past use. Heavy past use had occurred on 12 acres of riparian habitat including that along the East Little Owyhee River. Moderate aspen reproduction was noted in one of these riparian areas but was also receiving heavy use. Willow was recorded as just about eliminated from another spring area, while aspen was deteriorated in another. Headcutting was documented as well. Moderate past use was observed on 48 acres of riparian habitat. Of this acreage, 8 acres was considered in good condition while 36 acres was in fair condition.

Headcutting was documented on one of these meadows. Sixteen acres of riparian habitat was classified in good condition and receiving light use. Two acres of riparian habitat was receiving moderate to heavy wild horse use in the eastern portion of the pasture. Two troughs in this area also had heavy wild horse use. The N. Fk. Little Humboldt River had received moderate use. One mahogany stand was in fair to good condition with light cattle use. Little reproduction was present and bitterbrush in the area was heavily browsed. Another mahogany stand had excellent reproduction but was receiving heavy use.

Calico pasture - Moderate to heavy use was occurring on 14 acres of riparian habitat. Six reservoirs inspected had water.

Fairbanks pasture - Little cattle use and moderate to heavy wild horse use was occurring in this pasture on 3 acres of riparian habitat and along the N. Fk. Little Humboldt River. Seven of 13 reservoirs inspected were dry.

Lake Creek pasture - Moderate wild horse use was observed around 14 reservoirs which were dry.

Twin Valley Springs pasture. No use was documented at Twin Valley Springs containing two acres of riparian habitat. Button Lake had heavy wild horse and pronghorn use and was considered to be in fair to good condition. Only three reservoirs out of 18 checked had water.

d. Habitat Evaluation

A habitat evaluation was conducted on the majority of this allotment based on wildlife use areas that have since been revised. Some use areas therefore do not have a rating but are considered to be similar to those which do. Nevada Manual Supplement 6630 procedures were used in the evaluations.

Mule deer habitat condition ranges from poor on burned areas to fair and good condition. The majority is in fair condition. Species diversity is the primary limiting factor in mule deer habitat. Based on current utilization levels (Slight to light) progress is being made toward increased species diversity on the burn areas due to increased opportunity for reestablishment of those species which are present in proportions well below their potentials in the subject range sites.

Major use areas and corresponding habitat condition is as follows:

- Santa Rosa DW-2 Fair mule deer habitat condition overall except on the 1984 Bullhead fire area where it is in poor mule deer habitat condition.
- Santa Rosa DS-1 Fair mule habitat condition
- Santa Rosa PS-7 Fair pronghorn habitat condition
- Owyhee Desert PY-9 Poor to fair pronghorn condition (primary limiting factors for poor condition are the lack of water and excessive shrub height).
- Little Owyhee PS-10 Fair pronghorn habitat condition
- Maiden Butte PW-9 Poor pronghorn habitat condition (primary limiting factor is lack of adequate water)
- Button Lake PW-11 Fair pronghorn habitat condition
- Button Lake PS-9 Fair pronghorn habitat condition

The Calico-Capitol Peak Bighorn Use Area (Santa Rosa BY-4) was evaluated as part of the draft Little Owyhee-Snowstorm HMP. The area is in good habitat condition for bighorn sheep.

- e. The sagebrush component for sage grouse nesting and winter use is presently in Later Seral Ecological Condition on ARTRW sites, i.e. sagebrush component provides satisfactory forage and cover.
7. Riparian/Fisheries Habitat
- a. Stream Survey Data

North Fork Little Humboldt River

<u>Year</u>	<u>% Overall Optimum</u>	<u>Bank Cover</u>	<u>Bank Stability</u>	<u>% Sedimentation</u>
1976	56	42	53	59
1978	50	33	46	47
1980	50	43	74	19
1982	49	35	44	44
1984	47	28	36	50
1986	33	25	31	62
1988	26	25	45	30

Stream survey data has been collected for the NFLHR utilizing the methodology employed by Duff and Cooper (1978)². The following maps (Figures 1 through 6) show locations of survey stations S-1, S-3, S-5, S-10, and S-16. Future monitoring of stream/riparian conditions along the NFLHR will employ Duff and Cooper's methodologies in addition to the "Key Forage Plant Utilization Method".

BLM data indicates that the percent Overall Habitat Condition has declined and is in a downward trend. Although the habitat condition has declined, fencing projects scheduled for construction will result in progress being made toward achievement of habitat condition objectives.

South Fork Little Humboldt River

All stations on this river are in the Bullhead Allotment. Approximately 1½ mile is on public land and the condition is poor to good (site inspection on 02/06/92 by Fishery Biologist).

b. Riparian Habitat Utilization Data

There are 594 acres of wetland riparian habitat in the Little Owyhee Allotment. Utilization of the key plant species on 594 acres of wetland riparian shall not exceed 50%. For this short-term objective refer to the allotment objectives under Section (III-7-a.)

Achievement of this objective is measured at the following Tentative Key Management Areas:

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Key Management Areas</u>
Antelope	0105, 0106, 0107, 0108
Capitol Peak	0302, 0303, 0304, 0305
Rock Springs	0604, 0605, 0606

UPM data is also used along with KMA data to determine achievement of the objective. The following is an analysis of utilization data on Riparian Habitat.

1) Antelope Pasture

Utilization studies conducted at the KMAs indicates that utilization was above the AUL of 50% at the four riparian KMAs during 1987 and 1988. Data was collected for these two years.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the KMAs represent the total riparian acreage in the pasture which is 189 acres.

²Duff, Donald A., and James L. Cooper. 1978. Techniques for Conducting Stream Habitat Surveys on National Resource Land. U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management. Technical Note 283.

UPM data indicates heavy use has occurred during 1987 and 1989 on riparian vegetation along the Little Owyhee River, the North Fork Little Humboldt River and at Spring locations.

2) Capitol Peak Pasture

Utilization studies conducted at the KMAs indicates that utilization was above the AUL of 50% at the four riparian KMAs, during 1987, 1988 and 1989. Data was collected for these three years at the riparian KMA.

UPM data indicates heavy use has been shown to occur for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989 primarily along the forks of Willow Creek but also along the forks of Calico Creek and at Lone Willow Springs.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the KMAs represent the total riparian acreage in the pasture which is 142 acres.

3) Rock Springs Pasture

Utilization data has been collected on the riparian KMAs for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989. AULs were exceeded at all three KMAs during 1987 and 1988. During 1989 one KMA was read and AULs were exceeded for both Key Species.

UPM data indicates Heavy use has occurred for the years 1985 to 1989 primarily along Piccolo Creek and also at Rock Springs and along Willow Creek.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the KMAs represent the total riparian acreage in the pasture which is 88 acres.

4) Calico Pasture

There are no KMAs established on riparian habitat UPM data indicates heavy use has occurred for the period (1986-1989) along the Calico Drainage and Maiden Springs Pipeline.

For the purpose of this evaluation the UPM data represents a portion of the 37 acres on the pasture.

5) Lake Creek, Twin Valley Springs and Fairbanks Pastures

There are no KMAs established on riparian habitat in these three pastures. UPM indicates heavy use has been associated with developed water sources in addition to the South Fork Little Humboldt River. The riparian acreage in Fairbanks Pasture, is 131 acres; Lake Creek Pasture, 5 acres; Twin Valley Springs Pasture, 2 acres.

c. Riparian Habitat Ecological Status Data

Achievement of this objective is measured at the following Key Management Areas.

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Key Management Area</u>
Antelope	0108
Capitol Peak	0304, 0305
Rock Springs	0604

An initial Ecological status was determined at these KMAs during the 1988 Riparian Inventory. The Ecological Status determination indicated several acres were in Late Seral. The results of the 1988 Riparian Inventory is as follows:

1988 Riparian Inventory and Status

Pasture	MDW	MDW	MDW	MDW	RIV	RIV	RIV	RIV	RIP	RIP	RIP	RIP
	(Acres) Not Checked	Not Met	Met	Total	Not Checked	Not Met	Met	Total	Not Checked	Not Met	Met	Total
Rock Springs			51.0	51.0	37.0			37.0	37.0	0.0	51.0	88.0
Capitol Peak			110.0	110.0				32.0	32.0	0.0	110.0	142.0
Antelope	102.4	3.6	15.0	121.0	68.0			68.0	170.4	3.6	15.0	189.0
Calico	37.0			37.0				0.0	37.0	0.0	0.0	37.0
Fairbanks				0.0	131.0			131.0	131.0	0.0	0.0	131.0
Lake Creek	3.0			3.0	2.0			2.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
Twin Valley				0.0	2.0			2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Acres	142.4	3.6	176.0	322.0	272.0	0.0	0.0	272.0	414.4	3.6	176.0	594.0

The results of the inventory indicate that all 51 acres in Rock Springs Pasture and all 110 acres in Capitol Peak Pasture are in Late Seral. This initial inventory indicates all riparian acres in Rock Springs and Capitol Peak are at the desired Ecological Status.

In Antelope Pasture 18.6 acres of the 121 total acres were inventoried. Fifteen (15) acres are in Late Seral and are at the desired Ecological Status. The remaining 3.6 acres are not in Late Seral and are below the desired Ecological Status. The remaining 414.4 acres riparian were not checked.

The Ecological Status Inventory conducted in 1987 revealed that the 594 acres of riparian habitat were at Mid Seral. Ecological Status in one of the parameters used to determine overall achievement of objectives for riparian functionality. No other data has been collected to measure riparian functionality.

d. Riparian Habitat Trend Data

Trend data has not been collected.

8. Wild Horse and Burro Habitat

Utilization studies data indicates that the utilization objectives for wild horse habitat have consistently been met throughout the HMA to include the Lake Creek, Twin Valley Springs and Fairbanks pastures.

Over the period UPM has been conducted (1985-1989) heavy use has been less than 10% on the three pastures and has been associated with waters.

For the Fairbanks and Lake Creek Pastures, analysis of trend data indicates that overall trend is static in change and progress is being made toward achieving the objective.

For the Twin Valley Springs Pasture trend is erratic in change and is not maintaining or moving toward achievement of the objective.

Range studies indicate that overall progress is being made toward maintaining or achieving habitat objectives within the HMA.

The primary limiting factor within the HMA (Fairbanks, Twin Valley, and Lake Cree) is a lack of adequate water, particularly during the summer months.

From July 1 to December 6, 1991, water sources were identified within the HMA of this allotment, with intensive documentation including photography beginning in October. Water sources were defined as livestock reservoirs, springs, wells, natural depressions, small waterholes, troughs and reservoirs served by permittee-operated pipelines, and miscellaneous sources such as streams. The total number of such sources observed to date is 102. More may be discovered in the future.

In October 1991, 76 water sources were inspected and nearly half were photographed. Sixteen, or 21%, contained water. In November (including early December for western Fairbanks field), 98 water sources were identified and photographed--66 which were also observed in October and 33 additional. Forty-eight, or (49%), contained water. The following table shows water sources by pasture.

	Fairbanks			Twin Valley			Lake Creek		
	# sources	# water	%	# sources	# water	%	# sources	# water	%
Oct 91	21	7	33	28	3	11	26	6	23
Nov 91	26	15	58	37	14	38	35	20	57

Of 66 sources inspected in both October and November, 15 contained water both months, 31 did not contain water both months, and 20 contained water in November but not in October. However, most sources that contained water in November had small amounts only (i.e. the reservoirs were by no means full, as shown in the photo documentation). The metal tanks along the Corral Lake and Maiden Springs pipelines, and at the McCleary and Corral Lake wells also held small amounts of water. Some reservoirs containing water in Fairbanks on 12/6 were frozen over.

Many of the sources inspected in October were also observed between July and September. Almost all were dry with the exceptions of Cathcart, Willow Springs, Lake Creek and Jackrabbit reservoirs, and the break in the Maiden Springs pipeline. The only one to contain water during this period but not in October was Lake Creek reservoir, which held water July 31 but was dry by September 5.

The only permanent water sources appear to be the South Fork of the Little Humboldt River (Rodear Flat area), Milligan Creek at the extreme southern end of Twin Valley pasture, Twin Valley Springs, the Cathcart and Willow Spring reservoirs in far northern Lake Creek field, and Chukar and Little Mud springs in the Fairbanks field. At this point it is not possible to say if the other water containing reservoirs in Fairbanks had water year round, as the area was first entered in late September. Furthermore, the Milligan Creek area and portions of Rodear Flat are on private land and may be closed to horse use in the future. Likewise, the Maiden Springs pipeline break may well be repaired in the near future.

Due to increased precipitation in late October and November, there were numerous puddles of varying sizes along most of the roads. Some of these, particularly along the gas pipeline and 4 Mile-8 Mile reservoir area, were being used by wild horses. As the winter progresses this type of water source is expected to become more frequent, resulting in adequate water during this time. Water sources will continue to be monitored during the winter, spring and summer of 1991-92 in an attempt to determine the seasons of greatest availability and when sources start going dry.

The pasture fences between Lake Creek and Twin Valley Springs may restrict the free roaming behavior of wild horses during the season of use by livestock March 15-July 01. However, as per CRMP Objective #3 Action 9, all gates on division fences between Lake Creek, Twin Valley and Fairbanks pastures shall be opened from July 01 to March 15 to facilitate free roaming migration of the base herd within the spring range area.

Wild horses currently have free access to water.

9. Water Quality Sampling

Water quality data was collected on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River between 1976 and 1982, and by NDOW in 1988. Most of the data was collected along the Little Owyhee and William Stock Allotment boundary. Some samples were taken only within the Little Owyhee Allotment much farther downstream.

In February and September, 1976, dissolved oxygen (D.O.), pH, and temperature data were collected and all met State standards. During August 1977 all the necessary water quality parameters were sampled and analyzed at four different locations along the stream. The 1977 stream temperature taken farthest downstream were too high for a trout water. Water quality samples were taken during May, July and September, 1979 at three different locations along the stream. One third of the temperatures and pHs exceeded Class B water quality standards. Turbidity was too high at two locations for fish during May. The other water quality parameters were at acceptable levels.

Hach Kit tests for D.O., alkalinity, and TDS were taken in September, 1980 near Greeley Crossing and all met Class B water quality standards. Stream temperature was also taken and it was suitable.

Two sites were sampled along the William Stock and Little Owyhee allotment boundaries during May, July and September, 1982. Both of the July temperatures exceeded state standards and the fecal coliform in September at the lower site was 500. Half of the water samples were more turbid than what is recommended for fish. All other parameters were at acceptable levels, except for D.O. which was not tested.

Water quality data was collected by NDOW in 1988 from stations along the NFLHR that are within the Little Owyhee Allotment (For a description of station locations, see the NDOW 1988 stream survey report). Stations 025, 130, 280, 420, 500, 560, 680, and 730 gave the following results:

	<u>Station 025</u>	<u>Station 130</u>	<u>Station 280</u>	<u>Station 420</u>	<u>Station 500</u>
pH	7.9	9.0	8.5	9.0	9.5
Alkalinity (mg/l)	119.7	153.9	136.8	102.6	136.8
Sulphate (mg/l)	<50.0	<50.0	<50.0	<50.0	60.0

	<u>Station 560</u>	<u>Station 680</u>	<u>Station 730</u>
pH	7.8	7.9	8.5
Alkalinity (mg/l)	119.7	119.7	102.6
Sulphate (mg/l)	<50.0	<50.0	<50.0

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. Key Management Area Objectives

Achievement of the Key Management Area (KMA) objectives will be analyzed under short-term. Refer to Table 1 (pp. 15 & 16) for the KMA Objectives. Analysis of the KMA objectives shall be made on a pasture basis.

1. Fairbanks Pasture

The utilization objectives indicated by both UPM and KMA data have been consistently met throughout the pasture except around waters where use by livestock and wild horses has been heavy and during 1990 when the AUL on (SIHY) was exceeded at KMA 0401.

Analysis of trend data indicates that overall trend frequency is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed.

2. Lake Creek Pasture

The utilization objectives indicated by both UPM and KMA data have been consistently met throughout the pasture except around waters where use by livestock and wild horses has been heavy. During 1989 and 1990 heavy use by cattle and wild horses occurred at KMA 0501 located near Lake Creek Reservoir.

Analysis of trend data indicates that overall trend frequency is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed.

3. Twin Valley Springs Pasture

The utilization objectives indicated by both UPM and KMA data have been consistently met throughout the pasture except around waters where use by livestock and wild horses has been heavy and during 1990 when AULs were exceeded at all three KMAs due to a higher stocking rate .

Analysis of trend data indicates that overall trend frequency is erratic in change and is not maintaining or moving toward achievement of this objective.

4. Antelope Pasture

The utilization objectives indicated by both UPM and KMA data have not been met. Heavy use by cattle has been primarily associated with meadow/riparian vegetation at springs and along the Little Owyhee River and the North Fork Little Humboldt River. UPM conducted on the uplands indicates the majority of annual use to be slight for the period 1985 to 1989. Heavy use by cattle occurred on meadow/riparian KMAs in 1987 and also during 1988 when the pasture was rested.

Analysis of trend data indicates a declining trend frequency, and that progress is not being made toward achieving the trend objective for this pasture.

5. Calico Pasture

The UPM data indicates this objective has not been met. Heavy use by cattle and some wild horses has been associated with meadow, riparian and upland vegetation along the Maiden Springs and pipeline and Calico Drainage. However, the majority of use over the pasture has been slight for the period (1986-1989).

The utilization objectives indicated by KMA data on upland sites have been met. Analysis of trend data indicates overall trend frequency is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective can not be assessed.

6. Capitol Peak

The KMA utilization and UPM data indicate this objective has not been met. Heavy use by cattle has been primarily associated with the riparian and meadow vegetation along the forks of Willow Creek, along Calico Creek and at Lone Willow Springs. The KMA utilization indicates that for the years data was collected at the riparian/meadow KMAs, (1987, 1988, 1989) AULs were exceeded and the majority of use by cattle was heavy to severe.

UPM conducted on the uplands indicates the majority of annual use to be slight. At the one and only upland KMA utilizations has been above AULs.

Analysis of trend data indicates that overall trend frequency is declining and movement toward the objective is not being met.

7. Rock Springs Pasture

UPM data indicates that the upland utilization objectives have consistently been met over the period 1985-1989.

However, for this same period heavy use by cattle and some wild horses has occurred on the riparian/meadow vegetation primarily along Piccolo Creek and also at Rock Springs and along Willow Creek.

KMA utilization data indicates AULs were exceeded at all KMAs for the three years 1987, 1988 and 1989 at the riparian/meadow KMAs. At the upland KMAs utilization overall was below AULs for the period 1984-1990.

Analysis of trend data indicates overall a declining trend and progress not being made toward achieving the objective.

B. Short Term

Refer to allotment objectives by number under Section (III.7.a)

1. The utilization objectives indicated by both UPM and KMA data have not been met for all the summer pastures due to heavy to severe use by cattle.

For the spring pastures, Lake Creek, Twin Valley and Fairbanks, UPM indicates heavy use by cattle and wild horses has been associated with water sources. KMAs or key species have not been established or selected in the spring pastures to measure achievement of this objective.

2. Key Management Areas and Key Species have not been established or selected.
3. Key Management Areas and Key Species have not been established or selected.

C. Long Term

1. Analysis of trend data in Fairbanks, Lake Creek and Calico Pastures is static in change and movement toward or away from the objective cannot be assessed. Trend is declining in Antelope, Capitol Peak and Rock Springs Pastures. Trend in Twin Valley Springs Pasture is erratic in change and is not maintaining or moving toward achievement of this objective.

Analysis of short term objective in relation to the upland habitat on the Spring Pastures indicates that as a majority the AUL objectives have been met except at water sources where heavy use by cattle and livestock has occurred and where that use has been less than 10%.

The AUL has not been achieved in the Summer Pastures where heavy use by cattle has been primarily associated with riparian vegetation.

2. Baseline Ecological Status has not been collected since initial establishment of the KMAs.
3. The majority of mule deer habitat is in fair condition. This does not meet the objectives of good to excellent conditions.

Based on the big game habitat evaluation the following pronghorn use areas are meeting or making progress towards meeting this objective:

Little Owyhee	PS-10
Button Lake	PW-11
Button Lake	PS-9
*Santa Rosa	PS-7

*Based on the 1989 NDOW Status and Hunting Season Recommendations the Santa Rosa PS-7 use area in the vicinity of Goosey Lake Flat has declining habitat conditions.

Based on the habitat evaluation, the following pronghorn use area is currently not meeting this objective.

Maiden Butte	PW-11
Owyhee Desert	PY-9

4. Baseline trend data and utilization and UPM data indicate that progress is being made toward maintaining or achieving habitat objectives within the HMA.

Access to water is not restricted.

The objective has been met.
5. Key Management area utilization and UPM data indicates this objective has not been met. Progress is not being made toward achieving this objective primarily in the summer pasture but also in the spring pastures. Heavy to severe use by cattle and wildhorses has occurred.

The Ecological Status Inventory conducted in 1987 revealed that the 594 acres of riparian habitat were in mid seral.

The 1988 Riparian Inventory indicates that 176 acres were in Late Seral Ecological Status which have met the objective. There were 3.6 acres checked that did not meet objectives. The remaining 414.4 acres were not checked. Baseline trend data has not been collected on riparian habitats to evaluate achievement of this objective.
6. Baseline (ESI) and trend data has not been collected on aspen habitat types to evaluate achievement of this objective.
7. Based on utilization and condition data, progress is not being made toward achieving this objective. Use by livestock on mahogany habitat types has been heavy. Objective is not being met.
8. Stream Survey data, UPM data and utilization studies indicate progress is not being made towards achievement of this objective on the North and South Fork Little of the Humboldt River where use by cattle and wild horses has been heavy to severe.
9. Baseline data is not completely available to evaluate the achievement of this objective. However, available information indicates that this objective is met on a large portion of the allotment except in the burned areas (Fairbanks pasture) and riparian habitat in the summer pastures where use by cattle has been heavy.
10. This objective is not being met on the North Fork of the Humboldt River where use by cattle has been heavy. Temperatures and pH exceed Class B standards particularly at the site farthest downstream. Management on the William Stock may be partially responsible, but water quality declines farther downstream on the Little Owyhee Allotment. There is inadequate streambank vegetation to shade the stream and the rest of the watershed has limited vegetative

cover due to grazing by cattle and wildlife.

Baseline data is not available to evaluate the achievement of this objective for the East Little Owyhee and South Fork Little Humboldt Rivers.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

A. Technical

1. Change the current CRMP three pasture rest-rotation grazing system on the spring pastures to a system where all three pastures will be used from 03/01 to 05/14. Use will be based on available water in these pastures with the stipulation that a specific area will not be utilized more than two consecutive years, the third year that area will be rested.
2. Continue winter use as per TRT recommendation.
3. Change the grazing system from the current CRMP deferred three pasture rest-rotation system, with the use of Capitol Peak every year after seedripeness, to a two pasture flip-flop between Rock Springs and Antelope. Capitol Peak would continue to have deferred use after seedripeness, late every year. Calico would be used to facilitate the livestock operation. There would be flexibility in the proposed grazing system based on water availability and plant phenology. The CRMP grazing system and the recommended grazing system are as follows:

CRMP Grazing System

Treatment "A" - 07/01 to 08/15
Treatment "B" - 08/15 to 09/30
Treatment "C" - Rest
Treatment "D" - 08/15 to 09/30 (Capitol Peak)

Recommended Grazing System

Treatment "A" - 05/15 to 06/03
Treatment "B" - 06/04 to 06/24
Treatment "C" - 06/25 to 07/15 (Capitol Peak)

Calico will be used to facilitate the livestock operation.

4. Fence key wetland riparian habitat in the summer pasture as proposed by permittee to eliminate the current conflicts which exist in the summer pastures.
5. Implement a proportionate share adjustment for livestock and wild horses based on CRMP.
6. Water availability is the limiting factor in the spring/winter pastures. Any further increase in stocking levels should be based on the availability of waters.
7. Continue to achieve stocking levels as identified in the CRMP plan.

8. Corridor fence the Upper and Lower Gorge Area of the North Fork Little Humboldt River as recommended by CRMP.

Reconstruct portions of the existing boundary fence to compliment the new fence. This fencing would eliminate or greatly reduce the current conflicts which exist on the allotment due to utilization exceeding 30% on portions of the river.

Fence riparian areas at Twin Valley Springs, and 131 acres identified in Fairbanks field.

Corridor fence, with water gaps primarily for wild horses, approximately 2 1/2 miles of the South Fork Little Humboldt River from Rodear Flat NW to private land.

9. Develop alternative sites for wells with pipelines in the spring pastures and construct a pipeline system off of Corral Lake Well.

B. Monitoring Needs

1. Continue to implement the rangeland monitoring program on the Little Owyhee Allotment.
2. Continue to identify and establish key areas and collect baseline data on upland and riparian sites.
3. Establish monitoring studies on riparian areas, 21 acres of Aspen Habitat and for Sage Grouse Habitat.
4. Continue Wildlife Habitat Inventory and Riparian/Fisheries Habitat Studies.
5. Initiate utilization studies to differentiate use by livestock and wild horses.
6. Develop ecological site descriptions for riparian areas and determine ecological status for wet meadows and stream riparian areas.

Determine desired seral stages for key areas where ecological condition has been determined.

Redefine/quantify long term objective (3) with ecological status condition as information becomes available.

7. Continue with intensive wild horse habitat and monitoring studies. Collect data to determine population estimates, population trend, population characteristics, population dynamics, seasonal movement patterns, and population analysis.
8. Incorporate above provisions into activity plans, including an Allotment Management Plan, Habitat Management Plan, and a Herd Management Area Plan.

VII. Consultation

- A. Consultation of this evaluation is listed chronologically as follows:
- 08/05/91 Initial draft Little Owyhee Allotment Evaluation sent out to RPS mailing list
 - 09/12/91 Comments received from United States Fish and Wildlife Service
 - 09/26/91 Comments received from Northeast Nevada Trout Unlimited
 - 09/26/92 Comments received from Nevada Jim's Outdoor Sports
 - 09/30/91 Comments received from permittee
 - 10/01/92 Comments received from Sierra Club
 - 10/07/91 Comments received from Nevada Department of Wildlife
 - 12/13/91 Second draft Little Owyhee Allotment Evaluation sent out to RPS mailing list
 - 01/14/92 Comments received from Commission For The Preservation of Wild Horses
 - 01/15/92 Comments received from the Sierra Club
 - 01/23/92 Comments received from United States Fish and Wildlife Service
 - 01/24/92 Comments received from Animal Protection Institute of America
 - 01/29/92 Comments received from United States Fish and Wildlife Service
 - 01/30/91 Comments received from the permittee
 - 05/15/92 Letter sent out to Interested Parties with notification of meeting to discuss management action section/proposed decision
 - 05/27/92 Meeting held with interested parties discussing management on the Little Owyhee Allotment
 - 12/04/92 Copy of Final Allotment Evaluation, proposed Multiple Use Decision, and Biological Assessment sent to USFWS
 - 12/07/92 USFWS received Final Allotment Evaluation, Proposed Decision and Biological Assessment
 - 02/01/93 Comments received from USFWS stating formal section 7 consultation is not required for the proposed decision

B. Summary of Comments

First Draft

Comments Received From United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Comment: This letter identified the procedures for compliance with Section 7 consultations and the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Response: The Paradise-Denio Resource Area has prepared a Biological Assessment and will enter into informal Section 7 consultation when the Proposed Decision is issued. Once a Biological Opinion has been received from USFWS a Final Decision will be issued.

Comments Received from Northeast Nevada Trout Unlimited

Comment: Federal Guidelines on Endangered Species, Lahontan cutthroat trout, are not being fully implemented on this allotment.

Response: The Paradise-Denio Resource Area is following procedures under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Informal Section 7 consultation commences when the Proposed Decision and Biological Assessment is issued and the Final Decision will include the Biological Opinion prepared by the USFWS.

Comment: The Bureau's own Riparian Policy is also not being followed as evidenced by the utilization data.

Response: Through the allotment evaluation process, evaluation of the allotment specific short term utilization objectives indicates that the riparian objectives are not being met. An interdisciplinary approach is being taken to resolve the non attainment of all short and long term objectives. This includes modification of the grazing system to reduce impacts during the hot season when riparian habitat is impacted the most.

Comment: Failure to follow the negotiated and accepted Wild Horse Management Plan developed under CRMP has further impacted riparian areas.

Response: In 1985, 726 horses were removed. In 1986 a census flight identified that 359 horses remained on the allotment. In 1988, a proposed removal was made but due to an IBLA decision was postponed. The IBLA decision required that all horse removals be based on monitoring data. In August 1991 the first draft allotment evaluation was issued. Due to some errors in data presentation a second draft was issued in December 1991. The evaluation evaluated monitoring data for wild horse use. The Bureau is following the guidelines established in this decision by IBLA and implementing wildhorse management through a multiple use decision.

Comment: The elimination of a viable cold water fishery on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River from the Forest Boundary downstream to Chimney Dam Reservoir is a matter of grave concern. This was a historic wild trout trophy fishery with high utilization that has been destroyed by over-grazing of the public lands. Water temperatures and quality do not meet the standards for a quality trout water under the current management regime. This is current violation of the Bureaus' own "Recreation 2000" and "Fish and Wildlife 2000" plans.

Response: Data from the Nevada Department of Wildlife indicates that as far back as 1955 Lahontan cutthroat trout were found only on USFS lands. In comparison of the 1954 and 1988 stream survey's, the stream length on USFS lands that the Lahontan cutthroat trout occupied has been reduced 98%. This stream has been historically planted and was last planted in May 1992. Over grazing may be contributing to water quality problems, however, low water flows according to the 1988 NDOW reported is the limiting factor for this system. Project planning is ongoing to create an enclosure which will eliminate livestock use along the river except at water gaps. Proposed construction is scheduled for 1993.

Comment: The Bureau is in violation of its own "Recreation 2000" and "Fish and Wildlife 2000".

Response: Through the allotment evaluation process, the Bureau has identified problems associated with both riparian and fisheries habitats. The selected management action will address these problems by reducing stocking levels, shortening the season of use in summer pastures and through project development, eliminate livestock impacts to the North Fork of Little Humboldt River, by building an enclosure, which is scheduled for construction in 1994. The selected management action will maintain and improve wildlife habitat as called for in the Bureau's strategic plans identified above as well as provide for T & E habitat in the North Fork. Additional recreational opportunity is provided annually by the Nevada Department of Wildlife by providing a put and take fishery on lands administered by the BLM and USFS.

Comments received by Nevada Jim's Outdoor Sports

Comment: The BLM has failed to follow the negotiated and environmentally sound allocation of AUM's to Feral Horses.

Response: See comment submitted by Northeast Nevada Trout Unlimited.

Comment: The enclosures on the North and South Forks of the Little Humboldt River are notable only for the amount of trespass they receive.

Response: An enclosure is in the planning process for the North Fork and has not been constructed as yet. The enclosure on the South Fork is not within the Little Owyhee Allotment, rather the Bullhead Allotment.

Comment: Angler days use has dropped on the North and South Forks due to poor riparian condition and loss of fisheries. This is not consistent with the National Recreational Fisheries Policy objective to "Promote and effect the conservation and enhancement of fish stocks and their habitats."

Response: See response to comment by Northeast Nevada Trout Unlimited.

Comment: The Bureau's own " Fish and Wildlife 2000" plan is also being ignored as well as the " Recreation 2000 Plan".

Response: See response to Northeast Nevada Trout Unlimited.

Comment: The problem stems from an unrealistic suggestion that a usable 44,000 AUM's exist on this allotment.

Response: The adjudicated active preference for the Little Owyhee Allotment is 44,882 AUMs. As per the CRMP agreement 27,800 AUM's will be the upper limit for livestock use. The permittee has run significantly less AUMs due to the lack of available water and the droughty conditions.

Comment: The only thing that can be done to attempt to bring this allotment into compliance with the laws, regulations and policies, is to drastically reduce the stocking levels. A 50% cut in stocking levels with end of season monitoring and further adjustments in succeeding years until trend data shows definite upwards progress.

Response: When monitoring shows active use is causing an unacceptable level or pattern of utilization or exceeds the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring, the authorized officer shall reduce active use if necessary to maintain or improve rangeland productivity unless a change in management practices would achieve the objectives. Changes in active use in excess of 10 percent shall be implemented over a 5 year period, unless after consultation with the affected permittees or lessees and other affected interests, an agreement is reached to implement the increase or decrease in less than 5 years. The adjustments would occur in the first, third and fifth year. Prior to the third and fifth year adjustments, monitoring data will be reevaluated to determine if further adjustments are warranted. The reduction is implemented through decision or agreement.

Comment: The alternative to this type of fast adjustment based upon monitoring is to totally pull all livestock off of the allotment until the entire allotment is in good or better condition.

Response: To totally remove livestock because of an emergency situation, the authorized officer must determine that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on public land require temporary protection because of conditions such as drought, fire, flood or insect infestations, after consultation with affected permittees or lessees and other affected interests, action shall be taken to close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or to modify authorized grazing use. Notices of closure and decisions requiring modification of authorized grazing use shall be issued as final decisions which are placed in full force and effect. The selected management action will effect a change in management practices that will result in achievement of management objectives.

Comments received from the permittee

Comment: Discard the current CRMP rest-rotation system for the spring pastures because of water availability. Use fences and fence the primary water sources to allow rest within the pasture as monitoring shows.

Response: The selected management action will eliminate the rest rotation system. See the management action section for the specific guidelines for spring use. The only areas that may be fenced are riparian habitats in vicinity of water sources on the public land portions of the spring pastures. The recommended season of use is 3/1 to 5/14 in the spring. Winter use not to exceed 3000 AUMs in the Lake Creek and Fairbanks pasture; as per the TRT group recommendation winter use will consist of a flip-flop between these two pastures. Water developments, specifically for wild horses are part of the management action. Existing water developments on private land may possibly be extended though section 4 permits depending on acquisition of water

rights.

Comment: Cross fencing and water development in the future could greatly enhance the performance of these spring pastures by stimulating distribution based on monitoring data. Season of use 3/1 to 6/30.

Response: See previous response. No cross fencing is being considered at this time primarily due to the impediment of the free roaming nature of the wild horses. This would be in conflict with Bureau policy and the Wildhorse and Burro Act of a 1971.

Comment: Allow winter use in the Fairbanks and Lake Creek pastures. Period of use should be 10/1 to 2/28. Monitoring data alone should dictate the amount of AUMs. Winter use should be encouraged on the allotment to allow the permittee the ability to use his 27,800 AUM's and more without causing the conflicts such use would cause in summer pastures.

Response: The recommendation section has scheduled winter use but as per the 1987 TRT recommendation 11/01 to 2/28 utilizing a flip-flop rotation between these pastures. Monitoring data will be utilized to determine the AUMs authorized. However, the starting point will be 3000 AUM's. The Bureau does not know what the impacts are at this stocking levels given the current population of wild horses.

Comment: Discard any rest rotation with the summer pastures. Defer pasture rotation between Rock Springs and Antelope early 5/1 and late 7/1 and flip-flop annually. Calico pasture can be used to relieve pressure and allow permittee ability to manage this system. These pastures have early and late summer use areas; monitoring is the only practical way to use these pastures.

Response: The recommendation section identified a deferred system with a flip-flop between Rock Springs and Antelope, however, the season of use prescribed is May 15 to July 15. Capitol Peak would be used every year from 6/25 to 7/15, and Calico would be used to facilitate the livestock operation. This system provides for use after seed ripe each year for all pastures. When a pasture is scheduled for use livestock will be permitted use of the entire pasture. Allowing livestock use at latter dates in higher elevation areas generally results in livestock drift problems which may result in non attainment of the management

objectives. Monitoring data will help in the determination of stocking rates and management actions to alleviate any identified problems.

Comment: The conflict in the summer pastures is the wetland riparian habitat. Fence it and use it as a management tool to meet objectives.

Response: The recommended action identifies the need for fencing wetland riparian habitats to eliminate conflicts in the summer pastures.

Comment: Key areas are not representative as they are adjacent to water; Why not leave gates open between pastures when water is available in another pasture. BLM and permittee need to continue to develop water.

Response: The monitoring section in the recommendation section identifies the need for additional key areas. Leaving gates open between pastures results in inaccurate actual use data as livestock would have equal access to both pastures. The water issue is identified in item # 9.

Comment: Monitoring data after horses are removed should dictate stocking levels on the allotment.

Response: Even after horses are removed the remaining 10 year and older animals must be provided for. The Bureau will continue to manage for Multiple Use. Water will be the limiting factor especially in the spring pastures, therefore a combination of water availability and monitoring should be utilized to determine stocking rates especially around permanently available water source on public land.

Comment: BLM should survey and provide materials for range improvement projects. The BLM needs to be more active in completing identified range improvement projects.

Response: Unless the permittee provides labor or materials, the BLM generally completes the survey and design and contracts for construction on all range improvements. Due to funding and priority some range improvements are not completed in the normal three year planning cycle.

Comment: Horse increase does not occur until livestock has reached 44,882.

Response: Livestock and wildhorse increases will be based on monitoring data as water is currently the limiting factor especially in the spring and summer pastures.

Comments received from the Sierra Club

Comment: Table 2 on pages 15-16 show no key riparian species, yet Table 3 pages 25-28 do show key riparian species in apparently different areas.

Response: Table 2 identifies the Key Management Area objectives for established Key Areas whereas Table 3 summarizes the study data for all key areas and utilization studies. Some of the utilization studies are for riparian habitat but haven't been through the key area selection process to make them official key management areas. This will be completed as soon as possible.

Comment: The evaluation of the short term objectives on pp. 45-46 states that no key management areas or key species have been selected for riparian areas along the East Little Owyhee River or the North and South Forks of the Little Humboldt River. Yet Tables 4 and 5 show key management areas and key species within each of the pastures.

Response: Key management areas have not been selected for riparian habitat in these areas. Utilization studies are identified in these areas. The key area selection process for the utilization study areas once completed will determine if these areas are in fact representative and key species and objectives will be identified for each area.

Comment: I couldn't find bitterbrush listed in any of the tables, yet it must be a key species for judging whether objectives on deer habitat are being met.

Response: On page 35 of the evaluation, the special habitat features identifies bitterbrush in 2,404 acres in various ecological sites in the Fairbanks pasture and 130 acres in the Antelope pasture. It is also included in mountain browse sites which consists of various browse species and encompasses 4,129 acres in various ecological sites. No specific studies have been established for mountain browse species in general.

Comment: Since no maps were provided for the pastures or key areas it is impossible to understand the relevance of what monitoring data is provided.

Response: These maps were inadvertently omitted with the draft evaluation. These were included with the second draft allotment evaluation.

Comment: I could find no recommendation to fence Button Lake. There are no dates for riparian protection projects and no interim management recommendations for livestock numbers or management until such fencing is built.

Response: Button Lake was targeted to be fenced, however, due to the large expenditure of funds for this project, a small enclosure was constructed to determine changes in the vegetative resource in this area. Observations by the resource area wildlife biologist indicate that no significant changes have occurred in species composition with the current management system. Therefore at this time Button Lake will not be fenced. The second final allotment evaluation selected management action section will identify the interim management for livestock grazing until the riparian areas are fenced in the summer pastures. The project planning process in the Winnemucca District is a three year process. However, funding and higher priority projects such as Threatened and Endangered species, will shift schedules of other planned projects. The allotment evaluation identifies problems areas and management actions and projects to resolve those problems.

Comment: Recommendation #4 appears in conflict with recommendation # 3.

Response: These are conflicting recommendations.

Comment: Recommendations responding to the lack of meeting management objectives in the summer pastures and Twin Valley Springs pasture are not responsive to the identified problems.

Response: The grazing system recommends changing from the CRMP deferred grazing system to a two pasture flip-flop between Rock Springs and the Antelope pasture. Calico is used every year as a holding pasture, which provides a significant regrowth period for riparian habitats. Capital Peak is utilized late every year 6/25 to 7/15. Whereas with the CRMP system, use was scheduled every year 8/15 to 9/30, which provided very little if any opportunity for regrowth in riparian areas, where the proposed system will.

Comment: What does recommendation # 5 mean.

Response: When reviewing the actual use, utilization data, carrying capacity and acreage of Lake Creek and Twin Valley Springs, it was apparent that Twin Valley Springs pasture was being stocked above its capacity therefore 3830 AUM's was determined to be the capacity for this pasture. Lake Creek is larger and therefore has a greater capacity as identified in recommendation 5.

Comment: Where are the recommendations to protect the special habitat features identified on pp. 34-37 and listed as long term objectives on pp. 18 and 19.

Response: The allowable use levels identified for each key management area provide for protection and enhancement of the special habitat features identified for upland and riparian habitats.

Comment: What is the carrying capacity, how was it determined and is it based on monitoring data.

Response: The carrying capacity was determined during the adjudication in 1964. In 1982 the CRMP process was completed with the horse level at 200 and maximum livestock use of 27,800 AUM's. This will be refined when monitoring data shows and supports a different capacity.

Comment: Why does the Bureau consider a CRMP recommendation on wildhorse numbers the "Thriving Ecological Balance" required by law.

Response: The CRMP recommendation is a number which was determined in the coordinated management plan. However, the thriving ecological balance for the Little Owyhee Allotment may be above or below it. Monitoring data, water availability and actual use data will be utilized to determine the AML for this HMA.

Comment: Why does the data on wild horse numbers on p. 21 show little changes in population in 1989, 1990 and 1991.

Response: On page 22 of the allotment evaluation is a table of census data. Horse numbers increased each year for all pastures except Lake Creek. Its uncertain as to why the changes occurred.

Comment: Are the winter use areas in the spring pastures; are overgrazing problems the result of winter or spring use and what is the impact of livestock winter use on wintering wildlife.

Response: The winter use areas are in the spring pastures. The spring use areas is where problems have occurred with heavy use by livestock and wild horses. Livestock are not impacting wintering wildlife.

Comment: A statement on p. 7 indicates that grazing use is routinely allowed on rested pastures. What is the purpose of a grazing system if it is routinely violated. See pg 20. It appears that no rest was effected in 3 pastures and only one year rest in another one all contrary to the grazing system which is supposed to be in effect.

Response: The CRMP grazing system has not been followed since its inception as some range improvement projects, horse gathers and drought conditions have resulted in changes. The use on rested pastures is in areas where runoff provides the only available water. Therefore when water is available these areas are utilized to rest those areas where permanently available water is present in wells and pipelines. Additionally, the permittee can control livestock use by turning water

on and off.

Comment: Why is there such a discrepancy between the livestock forage condition on p. 33 and the ecological status on pp.33 and 34.

Response: The Phase I Watershed Inventory was conducted utilizing an ocular method to determine production only. Whereas Ecological Status Inventory utilized both ocular and clipping to determine status. This methodology takes into account site potential where the watershed inventory does not.

Comments received from NDOW

Comment: The Draft Little Owyhee-Snowstorm Habitat Management Plan the Aquatic Habitat Management Plan- North fork, Little Humboldt River were prepared since the land use plan. These documents set goals and objectives for this allotment.

Response: These plans have not been signed and therefore the objectives for this allotment are identified in the short and long term objectives on pages 17-20.

Comment: The Little Owyhee HMP has numerous objectives. Was this plan finalized and are the dates for projects binding to the Bureau.

Response: The HMP has not been finalized therefore the projects completion date that are identified will be modified when the HMP is finalized.

Comment: Big game water developments were proposed to mitigate livestock conflicts and improve distribution of antelope. These projects should be identified.

Response: Potential sites for pronghorn guzzlers have been selected. The guzzlers are in the Bureau planning process and is being coordinated with NDOW.

Comment: The study areas are not identified on an allotment map. Key species for riparian and mountain browse communities are not listed.

Response: A map of the study areas was inadvertently omitted when the draft evaluation was sent out for comment and review. Key areas have not been selected for riparian and browse communities. Some tentative sites currently have utilization studies established. The key area selection process will be initiated as funding and manpower permits.

Comment: Mountain browse or shrub species should be listed as key species and allowable use levels should be addressed in a short term objective.

Response: The short term upland objective accounts for shrub species and utilization levels. The key area selection process will be refined to include browse species as time, funding and manpower permits.

Comment: Without CRMP recommended water developments for big game, antelope are not meeting their population potentials.

Response: Tanks and guzzlers identified in the CRMP process are in the planning process for the Little Owyhee Allotment. These projects will be implemented when time, funding, priorities and manpower permit.

Comment: Key browse species are not listed in the key management area studies.

Response: In review of the key management area write-ups mountain mahogany, snowberry and serviceberry are browse species identified. However, snowberry and serviceberry represent very small percentages of the range site in which they occur. Consequently, these species are not identified as key species. Additional studies will be established for browse species.

Your recommendations are appreciated and will be considered in the final allotment evaluation and selected management action.

Second draft

Comments received from Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses

Comment: On page 20 you quote 1990 wild horse use as 11,208 AUM's when on page 21 you quote 1991 wild horse use as 9,876 AUM's. Without a removal from the HMA how can you lose 1,332 AUM's.

Response: On page 20 all columns were off set to the right therefore the 1990 AUM's for horse use in the spring pastures should be according to the table 11,004. However, this number is incorrect as census data on page 21 indicates 811 horses or 9828 AUM's. In 1a above under actual use wild horse use is identified as 11,208 AUM's. This is based on 1990 proportions. The census data was reviewed and the number of horses for 1991 should be 856. The final evaluation will present the corrected tables.

Comment: On pg. 2 you stated that as per CRMP agreement 3578 AUM's would be allowed on the Little Owyhee allotment for horse use. This is 7.6% of the AUM's identified for the whole area. The HMA is not the entire allotment and it is useless to allocate the horses 7.6% of an area they can not use.

Response: The horse use discussed in the CRMP was for use in the HMA and not in the allotment. This represents 7.6% of the AUM's utilized on a yearly basis for the allotment. The final evaluation will determine the AML for the HMA based on monitoring information, water availability etc. In reviewing the monitoring and actual use data horse use has been significantly above the CRMP level.

Comment: Use pattern maps for 1989 indicate that livestock and horse use is meeting objectives. Livestock use only indicates a higher degree of utilization. Why then is it recommended that horses be removed as monitoring data does not appear to support any removal.

Response: The draft evaluation identifies a proportionate share adjustment based on the CRMP, which is a starting point. However, monitoring data will determine stocking rates to meet management objectives. Any adjustment will be based on a proportional basis for both livestock and horses in the spring use pastures in the HMA and for livestock only in the summer pastures.

The following comments by WHOA were received in conjunction with the Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses.

Comment: We are concerned about the way you have documented horse numbers and how there are reported adults and foals. Mares and foals have been counted as one as have cows and calves. Please correct this in your final AE or adjust livestock numbers to reflect a cow and calf as two animals.

Response: The census numbers in the draft evaluation on page 21 included all animals, ie adults, foals, rather than adult animals only as identified in the final allotment evaluation which clearly specify the breakdown of adults and foals found in each pasture since 1979. The final allotment evaluation will identify horse numbers as being either adults, foals or both.

Comments received from the Sierra Club-Toyiabe Chapter

Comment: When was the habitat evaluation discussed on p. 37 done and by whom.

Response: Data used for the habitat evaluation was collected between 1983 and 1985 by several BLM wildlife management biologists. It was compiled in 1986 during the writing of the Draft Little Owyhee/Snowstorms Habitat Management Plan by Carl Corey, then Wildlife Management Biologist for the Paradise-Denio Resource Area.

Comment: What plants were monitored as part of the riparian habitat utilization studies discussed on p. 39. Was any other riparian monitoring done; for instance, streambank stability, cover, condition of plant communities etc.

Response: Table 3 on pages 25 to 28 identifies the species monitored at the utilization study sites. On page 38 the stream survey data is displayed. The 1988 data was omitted. Ecological site inventory was completed in 1987 for this allotment. Page 33 presents the condition class of the plant community by seral stage.

Comment: What are MDW, MHW RIV, and RIP listed on page 41.

Response: These are abbreviations as follows:

MDW- meadow, RIP- riparian, RIV- riverine, MHW- is not listed in this table.

Comment: What is the basis for the statement that " all 51 acres in Rock Springs and all 110 acres in Capital Peak are in late seral" when the table shows 110 acres in Capital Peak do not meet MDW, 32 acres in Capital Peak were not checked for RIV and 32 acres were not checked for RIP and 37 acres in Rock Springs were not checked for RIV and 37 acres not checked for RIP. Why were 0 acres checked in Fairbanks and Twin Valley.

Response: The late seral condition reflects the present state of a range site in relations to its potential natural community. It is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions, and amounts of plants in a plant community resemble that of the potential natural community. Late seral relates to good condition in the old condition classification system. The table indicates riparian inventory status and whether or not the desired ecological status has been

achieved. The checked status refers to the amount of acreage that was observed and met/not met refers to whether the key management area objective for a specific seral stage was met or not met. Some pastures have not had the ecological condition checked to determine if the seral state objective has been met. Time, funding and manpower determine the amount of inventory completed. The significance of this inventory helps in grazing prescriptions to meet vegetative objectives.

Comment: Why has the Bureau conducted no water quality monitoring in this allotment by use area since 1982.

Response: Time, funding and manpower constraints limit the amount of water quality data that is collected. Some water quality data was collected by NDOW in 1988 during a stream survey. However this data consists of a one point in time survey.

Comment: Since the Bureau appears incapable or unwilling to implement the land use plan on the Little Owyhee Allotment over the last ten years, we request that alternatives be developed for management of this allotment, including at least these two: no grazing by livestock and wildhorses until land use plan vegetation and riparian objectives are met and livestock grazing on a prescriptive basis only.

Response: These alternatives have already been analyzed in the 1982 Paradise-Denio Grazing Environmental Impact Statement.

Comments received from the Animal Protection Institute of America

Comment: We think you've confused starting points to begin monitoring with the ecological balance. Ecological balance has to do with the seral stage at which you're managing the area--e.g. the most diverse or late seral.

Response: The Bureau does not necessarily manage for late seral condition. Rather the Bureau is in the process of implementing the Desired Plant Community Concept. This is defined as the plant community which provides the vegetation attributes required for meeting or exceeding LUP or RMP vegetation objectives. This must be within the ecological site's capability to produce these attributes through natural succession, management action, or both.

Comments received from the Reno Field Office US Fish and Wildlife Service

Comment: A map showing the location of all riparian, meadow, and wetland areas should be included in the final evaluation. All riparian sites should be identified by location, acreage, and vegetation type. The document should clearly display the baseline data that have been collected at each site and any information on existing condition and trend.

Response: This information is available in the resource area office and is available for review upon request.

Comment: The draft evaluation identifies a number of long term objectives dealing with riparian resources. We have the following comments: #5 Improve to and maintain 594 acres of riparian and meadow habitat in good condition. Does this include all riparian and meadow habitats within the allotment. #6 Improve to or maintain 21 acres of aspen habitat types in good condition. The evaluation should delineate and map these 21 acres and discuss the acreage and condition of all other aspen stands occurring within the allotment. #8 Improve to or maintain the following stream habitat conditions on the North Fork and South Forks of the Little Humboldt and the East Little Owyhee from 47% on the North Fork, 54% on the south Fork and unknown on the East Little Owyhee to an overall optimum of 60% or above. We recommend that this objective be restated to apply to each reach along the streams and that the objective for habitat conditions not be averaged over the entire stream length. The evaluation should provide a summary of past stream survey data for each identified stream reach.

Response: The acreage identified for riparian and meadow habitat includes the total for the allotment on public lands. Data is available in the resource area identifying the location of aspen within the allotment. As stream channels are classified and ecological site inventory of riparian areas completed specific objectives will be developed.

Comment: According to the Phase I Watershed Inventory conducted in the early 1970's, 72 percent of this allotment is in poor condition.

Response: This is an inventory based on forage condition. On page 33 the ecological inventory identifies 2.7% of the allotment in Humboldt County in early seral condition and 8% in Elko County.

Comment: The recommendation for the spring pasture is to increase the stocking rate. The proposal must include protection for the riparian areas. All proposed fencing projects need to include a time table for accomplishment and a pre and post management system.

Response: The selected management action will present a grazing management system in both spring and summer pastures that will provide for attainment of short and long term objectives. Some of the recommendations identified in the second draft evaluation will be revised or possibly eliminated. All range improvement projects are included within a planning cycle however, time, funding and priorities may dictate completion dates. Where projects are proposed, if appropriate, interim management systems will be identified as well as post management after project completion.

Comment: Fairbanks pasture- on page 34 the evaluation states that there are 4 acres of riparian vegetation in this pasture; however on page 41 it state that there are 131 acres of riparian habitat. The final evaluation needs to identify the number of acres in this pasture and if more than 4 the 4 acres identified to be fence exist, what the management will be on the remaining acres.

Response: On page 36 of the allotment evaluation displays the special habitat inventory conducted in 1978. This identifies 3 acres occurring along the North Fork Little Humboldt River. There was apparently a transcription error for these acres. The correct number of acres is 131 as identified on page 41.

Comment: Lake Creek Pasture - five acres were identified as having heavy use. The evaluation does not include any recommendation for resolving this conflict.

Response: The select management action does include management which will provide for meeting the riparian objectives in the spring pastures by scheduling early use and providing for a regrowth period.

Comment: The evaluation states that riparian areas in Twin Valley Springs will be fenced. It is unclear whether this will protect all the riparian vegetation within this pasture.

Response: The draft evaluation identifies on page 41 2 acres of riparian habitat in this pasture. The fencing will protect all riparian habitat.

Comment: Summer pastures- The draft evaluation recommends fencing key wetland riparian areas in these pastures as proposed by the permittee. This recommendation needs to be expanded to clearly state which areas will be fenced, establish dates for accomplishment, discuss how fenced sites will be managed before and after completion of fencing, and also to discuss management of all riparian areas not proposed for fencing.

Response: All riparian areas will be fenced off. Time, funding and priorities will dictate project completion. An interim management system has been designed until project completion. The fenced area at this time will be an enclosure only. However, management may change for the larger areas (N.Fork Little Humboldt River) as conditions improve within the riparian habitat. A stream survey will be conducted in 1992 or 1993 to determine if additional fencing is required downstream of Greeley Crossing.

Comment: Antelope pasture- Page 34 states that there are 234 acres of riparian habitat; however on page 39 it states there are 189 acres. Riparian key management areas received heavy use even in 1988 when this pasture was rested. A discussion needs to be included which explains whether this is due to trespass livestock from adjacent pastures or wild horses.

Response: On page 30 of the draft evaluation a discussion in d. 2 explains the use in the rested pasture. The correct acreage is 189 acres. The 234 acres was a figure estimated for use in the Little Owyhee/Snowstorm HMP.

Comment: Heavy use has occurred within the meadow and riparian vegetation along Calico drainage and Maiden Springs and pipeline. Key management areas need to be established for the 37 acres of identified riparian plant communities within this pasture.

Response: The management action selection report and final allotment evaluation identify the need for additional key management areas in this allotment. The key area selection process will be initiated upon completion of the decision process.

Response: Heavy use is occurring in the riparian and meadow vegetation within these pastures (Capitol Peak/Rock Springs). Utilization levels for the upland sites have also been exceeded. It is critical that adequate monitoring be established in these pastures to insure that the proposed management system resolves these conflicts.

Response: The final evaluation and management action selection report identify the need for additional monitoring in the summer pastures.

Comment: The evaluation states that the Upper and Lower Gorge Area of the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River will be fenced. There is also a proposal to corridor fence with water gaps approximately 2½ miles of the South Fork of the Little Humboldt River. It is unclear how many miles of these streams will be fenced and how many miles of them will remain unfenced. The same concerns listed above regarding fencing proposals apply to these projects. We are also concerned about proposals to fence some riparian areas while leaving some sites unprotected. The evaluation should discuss the possibility and consequences of shifting use to unfenced areas and the management that will be applied to reduce degradation of these areas.

Response: The Environmental Analysis for the fence project details how many miles will be involved. The South Fork of the Little Humboldt River will not be fenced at this time. Conditions do not warrant fencing at this time. The EA is available for review in the District Office.

Approximately 23 miles of the North Fork will remain unfenced from Greeley Crossing downstream to Chimney Reservoir. A stream survey will be conducted in either 1992 or 1993 to determine what condition riparian/stream habitat is in and whether this reach requires fencing.

The intent of fencing off sections of the North Fork is to prevent livestock from concentrating in the riparian areas after they have watered. The riparian zone and subsequently the stream habitat deteriorates rapidly (especially during drought years). The objective of the fencing is to allow livestock access to water and then return to the uplands away from the stream, thus protecting a majority of the stream.

Comment: A number of the objectives included in this evaluation were carried over from earlier management documents, yet there are still no monitoring stations established or baseline data collected to determine whether or not a number of these objectives are being met. A number of pastures do not have key management areas or key species selected. The evaluation should set a time table for their designation and should address how and when they will be monitored. It is crucial that baseline data be collected in order to determine if the proposed grazing system is meeting the selected objectives.

Response: Page 51 of the draft evaluation identifies monitoring needs. The key area selection process requires significant coordination, consultation and cooperation. Time funding and manpower dictate the amount of progress on a yearly basis. The Bureau fully intends to have key areas established on all grazing allotments.

Comment: The monitoring needs section should state that 1) mid-season utilization surveys will be conducted, and 2) when utilization limits have been reached, livestock will be removed. It should also provide for any necessary changes in the selected grazing strategy if it is determined that management objectives are not being met under the proposed grazing system. This is especially critical for the summer pastures where trends are declining and utilization levels have been regularly exceeded.

Response: The utilization objectives identified in the evaluation are target utilization levels and are not intended to be allowable use levels. The key management areas do have allowable use levels identified. The grazing regulations provide the authority and flexibility to make necessary annual adjustments as required.

Comments received from the permittee

Comment: No Key management areas are located in horse use areas.

Response: The draft evaluation identifies on page 51 the need for monitoring studies specifically for wild horses.

Comment: When will we manage and maintain the horse numbers so we can achieve the free roaming behavior of wild horses protecting and enhancing their home ranges.

Response: Through the evaluation process the AML will be established. However, current Bureau policy provides for removal of horses under ten years of age through fiscal year 92. In fiscal year 93 this will drop to horses under five years of age. Obviously this will take some time to attain the identified AML. In the interim the Bureau will have to provide for wild horses in the HMA's.

Comment: Maintain and improve wild horse habitat by assuring free access to water. It will have to be public waters only because of failure to maintain the herd levels is forcing the private land owner to close access to their land. The highest and best use of private land is not wild horse use.

Response: The AML will be based on waters and forage on public and private lands. Nevada is an open range state in which private owners must fence out domestic animals and wild horses. It is not the responsibility of the Bureau to keep wild horses and domestic livestock off of private land. If horses are fenced off of private waters their foraging area will be reduced to the areas around public water. To insure that adequate forage is available for these horses, livestock will be reduced in these areas. By fencing horses off of private waters you will actually reduce the numbers of livestock allowed on the allotment.

Comment: Need to fence the North and South Forks of the Little Humboldt Rivers to improve water quality.

Response: Project planning has been initiated for both of these rivers which will protect and enhance watershed, water quality and aquatic habitats.

Comment: Some general comments were made about the horse census data on page 21. The permittee indicates that the counts were low and identified information missing for a removal in 1977.

Response: The permittee has not provided census data that was collected by an approved method utilized by the BLM or NDOW or aerial census. The 1977 data is available, however it is not included as prior to 1979 the horses in the south Lake Creek pasture were counted as part of the Snowstorm HMA. Therefore these counts cannot be compared to more recent counts. This will be identified in the final allotment evaluation.

Comment: There is no census data for horses in the summer use areas.

Response: On Page 22 of the draft evaluation a table identifies census data collected, which includes summer use areas.

Comment: General comments about key management areas located next to water trailing routes or lack of them in horse use areas.

Response: Page 51 identifies monitoring needs for the allotment. Key areas will be reevaluation to determine if they are representative areas and will be reestablished if warranted.

Comment: Winter use should be 9/1 to 2/28 if monitoring and AUM use show available forage.

Response: See technical recommendation on page 49. Additionally, the TRT prescribes use in a flip-flop for Fairbanks and Lake Creek pasture not for use in both pastures each year. The selected management action will finalize the management for these pastures for winter use.

VIII. Selected Management Actions

A. Livestock

1. Grazing Preference Status (AUMs)
 - a. Total preference 47,463
 - b. Suspended preference 19,663
 - c. Active preference 27,800
 - 1) Authorized Use 17,523
 - 2) Not Scheduled Available with intermittent water or riparian fencing 10,277
2. Season of Use

Spring Use	03/01 to 05/14
Summer Use	05/15 to 07/15
Winter Use	11/01 to 02/28
3. Kind and Class of Livestock - Cattle, Cow/Calf
4. Percent Federal Range - 100%

1993
 0001
 0001
 0001
 0001

5. Grazing System

The grazing system listed below is for the next evaluation period.

Spring Use (Each Year)

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Fairbanks	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800
Twin Valley	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800
Lake Creek	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800

Summer Use

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
1993	Antelope	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802
	Rock Springs	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717
1994	Rock Springs	1160	05/15 to 06/30	802
	Antelope	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717
1995	Antelope	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802
	Rock Springs	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717
1996	Rock Springs	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802
	Antelope	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717

Winter Use

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
1993	Lake Creek	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1994	Fairbanks	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1995	Lake Creek	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1996	Fairbanks	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000

INTERIM SYSTEM

The Bureau's strategic plan for wild horses will be implemented with the first capture slated for 1993. This will reduce the estimated population of 700 adults to 297 adults which will be within the selected management range for population of adult wild horses.

During the interim, forage will be allocated for the estimated population of wild horses. This forage will be made available by reducing the number of authorized livestock using the winter and spring pastures. The interim grazing system that will be followed until the population of adult horses is reduced is as follows:

1. Grazing Preference Status (AUMs)
 - a. Total preference 47,463
 - b. Suspended preference 19,663
 - c. Active preference 27,800
 - 1) Authorized Use 12,693
 - 2) Not Scheduled
 - a) Available with intermittent water or riparian fencing 10,285
 - b) Unavailable to livestock due to wild horse use 4,822
2. Season of Use

Spring Use	03/01 to 05/14
Summer Use	05/15 to 07/15
Winter Use	11/01 to 02/28
3. Kind and Class of Livestock - Cattle, Cow/Calf
4. Percent Federal Range - 100%
5. Grazing System

Spring Use

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Fairbanks	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190
Twin Valley	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190
Lake Creek	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190

There is not an interim system for the winter and summer pastures. They will remain as scheduled.

B. Wild Horses

Establish an Appropriate Management Level (AML) for the Little Owyhee Herd Management Area (HMA) of 298 adult wild horses. The AML will be managed within the range of 246 to 350 adult wild horses.

Schedule a gather for the fall of 1993 to reduce the population of horses to the Appropriate Management Level if funding is available for such gather.

C. Wildlife

Adjustment to the wildlife population levels is not warranted. Wildlife populations will remain at current levels.

2. Monitoring

- a. Continue to implement the rangeland monitoring program on the Little Owyhee Allotment.
- b. Continue Wildlife Habitat Inventory and Riparian/Fisheries Habitat Studies.
- c. Continue with intensive wild horse habitat and monitoring studies. Collect data to determine population estimates, population trend, population characteristics, population dynamics, and population analysis.

3. Objectives

The allotment objectives under which the grazing use will be monitored and evaluated in FY 1997 should have the phrasing modified to accurately reflect how these objectives will be used in the future. These objectives are not intended to be "allowable use levels" dictating livestock removal on a seasonal basis. Utilization levels are intended as target levels, in accordance with Bureau manual guidance, to be used for monitoring and analysis of achievement of long term objectives. The short term objectives can be examined on an annual basis after the end of the grazing season when monitoring data is collected and analyzed. All data will be evaluated to determine if short term objectives are being met and to determine if changes in management will be required to meet objectives.

1) Short Term

- a. The objective for utilization of key plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA) in wetland riparian habitats is 50%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period. [1]
- b. The objective for utilization of key streambank riparian plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA, SALIX, ROWO) on the East Little Owyhee River is 30%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period. [1]
- c. The objective for utilization of key streambank riparian plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA, SALIX, ROWO) on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River is 30%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period. [1]
- d. The objective for utilization of key upland plant species will be 50% for STTH2, SIHY, and FEID and it will be 40% for CREPIS, ELCI, POSE,

AGSP, EULA5, ORHY and LUPIN. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period. [1]

2. Long Term

- a. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for livestock, with an initial stocking level of 27,800 AUMs.
- b. Improve to and maintain the ecological status per key management area as determined in the Little Owyhee Monitoring Plan.
- c. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for big game, with an initial forage demand of 288 AUMs for mule deer, 1,233 AUMs for pronghorn and 72 AUMs for bighorn sheep.
 - 1) Improve to and maintain 2,756 acres in Paradise Valley Dy-1, 29,612 acres in Santa Rosa DY-10, 31,678 acres in Santa Rosa DW-2, and 44,210 acres in Santa Rosa Ds-1 in good or excellent mule deer condition.
 - 2) Improve to and maintain 2,490 acres in Mahogany Ridge PS-8, 25,837 acres in Santa Rosa PS-7 and 21,608 acres in Little Owyhee PS-10 to good condition. Improve to and maintain 457,963 acres in Owyhee Desert PY-9, 17,847 acres Maiden Butte PW-9, 2,306 acres in Evans Lake PW-11, 4,939 acres in Button Lake PS-11, and 7,469 acres in Bullhead PW-13 in fair or good pronghorn habitat condition.
- d. Maintain and improve the free roaming behavior of wild horses by protecting and enhancing their home ranges.
 - 1) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide an initial level of 3578 AUMs of forage on a sustained yield basis.
 - 2) Maintain and improve wild horse habitat by assuring free access to water.
- e. Improve to and maintain 594 acres of riparian and meadow habitat types in good condition.
- f. Improve to and maintain 21 acres of aspen habitat types in good condition.
- g. Improve to and maintain 60 acres of mahogany habitat types in good condition.

- h. Improve to or maintain the following stream habitat conditions on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt and the East Little Owyhee from 26% on the North Fork, and unknown on the East Little Owyhee to an overall optimum of 60% or above.
 - 1) Streambank cover to 60% or above.
 - 2) Streambank stability to 60% or above.
 - 3) Maximum summer water temperature below 70 F.
 - 4) Sedimentation below 10%.
- i. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and brooding areas. Maintain a minimum of 30% canopy cover of sagebrush for nesting and winter use.
- j. Improve to or maintain the water quality of the North Fork Humboldt River and the East Little Owyhee River to the State criteria set for the following beneficial uses: livestock drinking water, cold water aquatic life, wading and wildlife propagation and sport fishery.
 - [1] Utilization levels will be used to evaluate and adjust management practices over a period of time.

IX. Rationale

It has been determined through monitoring that water is the limiting factor in the HMA and not the vegetative resource. 17,975 AUMs has been established as the carrying capacity within the spring/winter pastures (HMA) of this allotment for wild horse and livestock use. This carrying capacity was derived from an analysis of available monitoring data and using the 1978 range survey within a five mile radius of perennial and dependable artificial (private wells) water sources.

Using the Land Use Plan and CRMP plan proportion for forage, 15,800 AUMs were available for livestock use and 3578 AUMs were available for wild horse use in the spring/winter (HMA) pastures. This relates to 81.5% for livestock and 18.5% for wild horses. Applying these percentages to the current carrying capacity of 17,975 for the spring/winter (HMA) pastures, there are 3,325 AUMs available for wild horses around perennial water sources and 14,650 AUMs available for livestock. The 3,325 AUMs for wild horses would relate to 277 adults which is within the management range that we have specified for our Appropriate Management Level.

Water and access to the riparian areas are the limiting factors on this allotment not the vegetative resource. This leads to distribution problems.

At the present time the only sources of natural, permanently available water are the South Fork, Milligan Creek, the North Fork and a few springs in the Fairbanks Pasture. There are four wells that are private and a pipeline system that originates from a private spring that are also available for water consumption when livestock are in the area.

Because permanent dependable water has not been available, the present CRMP grazing system has never been followed. Consistent patterns of rest-rotation and periods of use have not been applied to the Little Owyhee Allotment throughout the evaluation period.

The spring pastures have been utilized from March 1 through June 30 in a three pasture rest-rotation. While Fairbanks was rested three consecutive years due to fire, Twin Valley and Lake Creek have been grazed every year during the evaluation period.

The summer pastures, which contain the majority of the riparian areas, have been utilized from July 1 through August 30. Rest has been applied to Antelope and Calico, but on an irregular schedule. Rock Springs has been grazed every year throughout the evaluation period.

Under the present system, and with water being the limiting factor on this allotment, utilization and distribution patterns are showing heavy use around wetland/riparian habitats within the summer pastures and in the upland areas of the spring pastures.

The AUMs in non-use can be activated when new water developments are installed, when climatic conditions allow for run-off to fill the existing reservoirs, and/or when riparian fences are completed. A field tour will be made before livestock are turned out to insure the availability of water.

The selected management action will eliminate the three pasture rest rotation spring grazing system. Use will be based on available water in these pastures with the stipulation that a specific area will not be utilized more than two consecutive years. When this allotment receives substantial moisture to fill the numerous reservoirs and to recharge the existing springs and creeks, use will be made on these water sources and the existing wells and pipelines will be rested.

By implementing this system, spring use will be shortened from 03/01 through 06/30 to 03/01 through 05/14 which will allow for regrowth in the spring pastures and allow the plants to store food reserves in their root system for the next growing season.

Winter use will consist of a two pasture rest rotation between Lake Creek and Fairbanks with the maximum use of 3000 AUMs. The winter use areas in Lake Creek will be at the north end in the Wild Bill Flat area and the area around Corral Lake Well. Winter use in Fairbanks will be the lower elevational area which exists south of the rim in the Mud and Whiskey Springs area. Winter use will be taken from 11/01 to 02/28 as compared to the CRMP dates 12/01 to 02/28. The utilization will be taken when plants are dormant, thus the vegetative resource will not be adversely effected. The possibility exists for conflict between winter use areas and spring use areas. These areas will be monitored, and if excessive use is noted, a decision will be made on whether or not to continue use in these areas.

The management action will also change the grazing system from the current CRMP deferred three pasture rest-rotation system on the summer pastures, to a two pasture flip-flop system between Rock Springs and Antelope. Capitol Peak will continue to have deferred use after seedripe and Calico will be used to facilitate the livestock operation. Use in Calico will be made in May when the livestock are moved from the spring pastures to the summer pastures. The pasture will be used again in September when the livestock are moved from the Forest Service

allotment to their base property. The maximum carrying capacity of Calico, until riparian fencing is completed, is 717 AUMs per year. It is expected that the use will occur in the last half of May and the last half of September.

The earlier summer grazing compared to the CRMP system (07/01 to 08/30) will encourage uniform utilization and distribution patterns by maximizing water availability and thereby reducing impacts to riparian habitats through cooler season of use. The livestock removal on 07/15 in the summer will be beneficial to riparian vegetation because of the regrowth potential, which in turn will improve the water quality and fisheries of the riparian habitats. Using Capitol Peak every year after seedripeness will not have an adverse effect on the vegetative resource because the vegetation has all spring the following year to build its reserves and grow until it is utilized.

The current estimated population of adult wild horses on the Little Owyhee Allotment is 700 animals. Of this population, we know that 124 of the animals are over 10 years of age. These animals were released back onto the range after a gather in August of 1992. This leaves approximately 576 animals that have a "normal" age structure. Using age structure data collected during the 1992 gather, we have determined that 70% of the population is between 0-5 years of age. Applying this figure to the 576 animals we have determined that 403 animals are between the age of 0 and 5 years. The 576 minus 403 leaves 173 animals 6 years of age and older plus the 124 animals returned to the range in 1992 making a total population of 297 animals. This is within the range for the Appropriate Management Level.

The analysis of monitoring data indicates that the multiple-use objectives for the Little Owyhee Allotment are not being met. The analysis of utilization and use pattern mapping determined that livestock were the primary factor in the non-achievement of the multiple-use objectives in the summer pastures and that livestock and wild horses were the primary factors inhibiting achievement of the multiple-use objectives in the winter/spring pastures. Analysis of the existing management of wildlife indicates that wildlife populations in the Little Owyhee Allotment are not contributing to the failure in meeting the multiple-use objectives. Therefore, a change in the existing wildlife populations or the existing wildlife management within the Little Owyhee Allotment is not warranted.

The Little Owyhee Allotment is scheduled to be re-evaluated in 1996.

XI. NEPA Review

The selected management action for grazing in the Little Owyhee Allotment conforms with the environmental analysis of grazing impacts described in the Final Paradise-Denio Environmental Impact Statement dated September 18, 1981.

The EIS and NEPA Compliance Record are on file in the Winnemucca District Office, located at 705 E. Fourth Street, Winnemucca, NV 89445.

Table 3:

Key Management Area Utilization

Spring Use Area:

Area	Pasture	Key Species	Allowable Use Levels	% Utilization by Year								
				1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
*0401	Fairbanks	SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	31%	3%	10%	48%	10%
*0402	Fairbanks	AGSP	50%	-	-	-	-	10%	-	10%	-	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	9%	-	18%	0%
		STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	21%	23%	10%	28%	0%
0403	Fairbanks	AGSP	50%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	12%	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	10%	4%
		STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	20%	27%
0501	Lake Creek	EULAS	50%	-	-	39%	12%	5%	0%	31%	68%	-
		ORHY	50%	-	33%	42%	18%	12%	0%	56%	70%	10%
		SIHY	40%	-	32%	11%	12%	4%	0%	20%	70%	10%
0502	Lake Creek	ORHY	40%	-	-	6%	-	2%	6%	12%	15%	0%
		POSE	50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1%	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	5%	-	6%	7%	10%	2%	0%
0503	Lake Creek	SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	19%	0%	3%	-
		STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	-
0504	Lake Creek	ORHY	50%	-	-	12%	-	4%	27%	0%	2%	0%
		POSE	50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2%	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	12%	-	4%	22%	0%	0%	0%
0505	Lake Creek	ORHY	50%	-	-	-	-	-	6%	10%	18%	0%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	4%	10%	15%	0%
0506	Lake Creek	EULAS	50%	-	-	.5%	-	-	-	-	12%	-
		ORHY	50%	-	-	9%	25%	-	2%	10%	12%	4%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	4%	-	-	.5%	10%	10%	5%
0507	Lake Creek	ORHY	50%	-	-	-	-	-	9%	-	9%	0%
		STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	8%	14%	5%	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	3%	10%	0%	0%
0701	Twin Valley	AGSP	50%	19%	-	1%	3%	15%	7%	-	48%	0%
		STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64%	-
0702	Twin Valley	ORHY	50%	-	-	-	7%	10%	44%	-	54%	0%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	10%	6%	-	62%	0%
0703	Twin Valley	ORHY	50%	25%	-	-	-	-	20%	-	78%	10%
		SIHY	40%	18%	-	-	-	-	12%	-	48%	10%
		STTH2	40%	35%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* The utilization levels depicted at these key areas are winter/early spring use by livestock and wild horses.

Key Management Area Utilization

Summer Use Areas:

Area	Pasture	Key Species	Allowable Use Levels	% Utilization by Year								
				1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
0101	Antelope	STTH2	40%	-	-	36%	15%	39%	-	-	12%	10%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12%	1%
0102	Antelope	STTH2	40%	28%	-	1%	11%	13%	-	-	40%	26%
		SIHY	40%	17%	-	1%	-	-	-	10%	-	10%
0103	Antelope	STTH2	40%	24%	-	-	-	-	-	-	58%	36%
*0104	Antelope	CELE3	50%	-	-	-	-	43%	39%	-	-	-
0105	Antelope	SALDX	50%	-	-	-	-	43%	39%	43%	-	-
*0106	Antelope	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	70%	43%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	60%	49%	-	-	-
		SALDX	50%	-	-	-	-	93%	64%	-	-	-
*0107	Antelope	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	78%	50%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	76%	52%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	83%	61%	-	-	-
*0108	Antelope	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	85%	48%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	77%	30%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	66%	54%	-	-	-
0301	Capitol	FEID	40%	-	38%	55%	6%	28%	14%	15%	14%	21%
		STTH2	40%	20%	58%	49%	3%	46%	18%	20%	18%	20%
*0302	Capitol	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	64%	86%	-	-	-
*0303	Capitol	PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	62%	90%	-	-	-
		SALDX	30%*	-	-	-	-	79%	77%	-	-	-
*0304	Capitol	ROWO	50%	-	-	-	-	49%	55%	21%	-	-
		PONE3	30%	-	-	-	-	64%	71%	-	-	-
*0305	Capitol	PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	49%	87%	72%	-	-
		CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	78%	79%	55%	-	-
0601	Rock Spr	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	65%	83%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	63%	85%	-	-	-
0602	Rock Spr	FEID	40%	-	11%	-	0%	6%	14%	-	-	32%
		STTH2	40%	-	21%	-	0%	16%	-	28%	-	48%
0603	Rock Spr	STTH2	40%	-	-	32%	0%	22%	-	32%	18%	-
		ELCI2	50%	-	-	21%	0%	20%	-	34%	-	63%
		CRAC2	50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
*0604	Rock Spr	STTH2	40%	-	-	42%	0%	56%	-	20%	50%	42%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	-	10%	16%	28%
		CRAC2	50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	10%	-	-
*0605	Rock Spr	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	66%	47%	-	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	65%	51%	-	-	-
*0606	Rock Spr	PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	63%	68%	-	-	-
		CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	74%	70%	-	-	-
*0607	Rock Spr	CAREX	50%	-	-	-	-	54%	73%	59%	-	-
		PONE3	50%	-	-	-	-	41%	68%	57%	-	-
		CELE3	50%	-	-	-	-	54%	59%	28%	-	-

Key Management Area Utilization

Summer Use Areas:

Area	Pasture	Key Species	Allowable Use Levels	% Utilization by Year								
				1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
0201	Calico	STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	1%	34%	58%	24%
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	1%	22%	-	10%
		LUPIN	50%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	-
		CRAC2	50%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	-
		SIHY	40%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	10%
0202	Calico	STTH2	40%	-	-	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	10%

* Tentative Key Areas

Table 4:

Frequency Trend Data:

<u>Key Management Area</u>	<u>Key Species</u>	<u>% Frequency</u>		
		<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
0402	STTH2	18.50	22.50	23.50
	SIHY	58.00	54.00	51.50
	AGSP	.50	1.00	0.00
	CRAC2	13.50	12.00	11.50
0403	STTH2	9.00	8.50	4.50
	SIHY	37.00	35.00	34.50
	AGSP	0.00	0.00	0.00
	CRAC2	7.00	3.00	1.00
0501	EULA5	2.00	2.00	1.00
	ORHY	11.00	10.00	5.50
	SIHY	60.00	56.50	39.00
0502	ORHY	14.50	16.50	11.50
	SIHY	87.00	83.50	85.00
	POSE	79.50	72.00	77.50
0504	ORHY	16.50	13.50	14.50
	SIHY	86.00	85.00	68.50
	POSE	9.00	5.50	9.50
0506	ORHY	41.50	45.00	41.00
	SIHY	56.00	64.00	45.00
	EULA5	7.00	-	3.00
0701	AGSP	39.00	37.50	48.50
	STTH2	7.00	4.50	2.50
	CRAC2	6.00	11.50	6.00
0702	SIHY	89.00	77.50	67.50
	ORHY	7.50	6.00	6.00
	CRAC2	1.50	2.00	4.00
0703	ORHY	76.50	64.00	74.00
	SIHY	9.50	1.00	6.50
	ERIOG	2.00	-	.50
0101	STTH2	25.50	28.50	3.00
	SIHY	54.00	59.50	76.50
	CRAC2	15.50	30.50	12.00
0102	STTH2	76.50	74.50	35.50
	SIHY	60.00	54.50	41.50
	CRAC2	17.50	20.50	1.50

Little Owyhee Allotment

February 12, 1993

<u>Key Management Area</u>	<u>Key Species</u>	<u>% Frequency</u>			
		<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
0201	STTH2	47.50	-	40.00	53.00
	SIHY	-	62.50	63.00	23.50
	LUPIN	43.00	38.00	53.50	-
0202	STTH2	0.00	0.00	-	1.00
	SIHY	73.00	68.00	77.00	36.00
	CRAC2	6.50	4.50	7.50	3.50
0301	STTH2	36.00	41.00	34.00	32.50
	FEID	7.50	9.50	9.50	3.50
	CRAC2	7.00	6.00	9.50	1.00
0602	STTH2	10.00	7.00	7.00	12.00
	ELCI2	16.00	17.50	20.00	10.50
	CRAC2	5.50	5.00	6.00	-
0603	STTH2	-	48.50	50.00	38.50
	SIHY	-	60.50	58.00	50.50
	CRAC2	-	6.50	11.50	0.50

Little Owyhee Allotment

February 12, 1993

Appendix I

1991 Actual Use for Livestock and Wild horses

Actual Use Livestock-1991

Spring Use Pastures

Lake Creek	2908 AUMs
Twin Valley	0
Fairbanks	2355 AUMs

Summer Use Pastures

Antelope	3513 AUMs
Rock Spring	997 AUMs
Calico	155 AUMs
Capitol Peak	851 AUMs

Winter Use Pastures

Lake Creek	493 AUMs
Fairbanks	1910 AUMs

Actual Use Livestock and Wild Horses-1991

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Cattle AUMs</u>	<u>Wild Horse AUMs</u>	<u>Total AUMs</u>
Fairbanks	4265	1872	6137
Lake Creek	3401	4164	7565
Twin Valley	<u>0</u>	<u>3708</u>	<u>3708</u>
Total	7666	9744	17,410

APPENDIX 2

Stocking Level Calculations Little Owyhee Allotment-Summer Pastures

Desired Stocking Rate

The desired stocking rate for the summer pastures was determined in accordance with BLM Manual Rangeland Monitoring Analysis, Interpretation, and Evaluation, Technical Reference 4400-7.

Two desired stock rates, DSR A and DSR B, were calculated for each of the following pastures: Antelope, Rock Springs, Capitol Peak and Calico. DSR A is the stocking rate at which both riparian and upland utilization objectives are expected to be met under present management. DSR B is the stocking rate at which upland utilization objectives are expected to be met under present management. The two stocking rates are useful because maintaining present management dictates that the pasture be stocked at the lower level to allow riparian utilization objectives to be met. However, under intensified management, such as fencing wetland/riparian habitats or grazing systems designed to minimize riparian impacts by improving livestock distribution, riparian utilization objectives may be met at the higher stocking rate. The following summarizes the desired stocking rates by pasture:

Desired Stocking Rates (AUMs)

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>DSR A</u>	<u>DSR B</u>
Antelope	1204	3125
Rock Spring	802	2551
Capitol Peak	895	2109
Calico	<u>717</u>	<u>1526</u>
Total	3618	9311

These stocking rates are an average of the years data. In order to keep a constant herd size in the summer pastures, 802 AUMs was the stocking rates used.

The following formula was used for calculating a desired stocking levels.

$$\frac{\text{ACTUAL USE}}{\text{KMA UTILIZATION}} = \frac{\text{DESIRED ACTUAL USE}}{\text{DESIRED KMA UTILIZATION}}$$

APPENDIX Plant list for pages 15 & 16

Upland Species

<u>Key Species</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
SIHY	Sitanion hystrix	bottlebrush squirreltail
ORHY	Oryzopsis hymenoides	Indian ricegrass
STTH2	Stipa thurberana	Thurber needlegrass
FEID	Festuca idahoensis	Idaho fescue
AGSP	Agropyron spicatum	bluebunch wheatgrass
POSE	Poa secunda	Sandberg bluegrass
ELCI	Elymus cinereus	basin wildrye
CREPI	Crepis	hawksbeard
LUPIN	Lupinus	lupine
EULA5	Eurotia lanata	winterfat
CELE	Cercocarpus ledifolius	mountainmahogany

Riparian Species plant list for pages 26-28

CAREX	Carex	sedge
SALIX	Salix	willow
PONE3	Poa nevadensis	Nevada bluegrass
ROWO	Rosa Woodsii	Woods rose



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

2/16/93
TAKE
PRIDE IN
AMERICA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

4130, 4160
(NV-241.3)

FEB 16 1993

15 DAYS

Received 2/22/93

CERTIFIED MAIL NO. P336513414
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Nevada First Corporation
P.O. Box 490
Winnemucca, NV 89445

PROPOSED MULTIPLE USE DECISION LITTLE OWYHEE ALLOTMENT

Dear Mr. Bengochea:

The record of Decision of the Paradise-Denio Environmental Impact Statement was issued on 09/18/81. The Paradise-Denio Management Framework Plan was issued on 07/09/82. These documents guide the management of public lands within the Paradise-Denio Resource Area and more specifically within the Little Owyhee Allotment. Monitoring data has been collected on this allotment and in accordance with Bureau policy and regulations, this data has been evaluated in order to determine progress in meeting management objectives for the Little Owyhee Allotment and to determine if management adjustments may be necessary to meet the management objectives.

On August 26, 1991, an allotment evaluation was sent to you for your review and comment. On December 16, 1991, a second allotment evaluation was sent to you for your review and comment.

The following are the multiple use management objectives under which grazing on the Little Owyhee Allotment will be monitored and evaluated.

1. Short Term
 - a. The objective for utilization of key plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA) in wetland riparian habitats is 50%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period.
 - b. The objective is for utilization of key streambank riparian plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA, SALIX, ROWO) on the East Little Owyhee River is 30%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period.

- c. The objective for utilization of key streambank riparian plant species (CAREX, JUNCUS, POA, SALIX, ROWO) on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt River is 30%. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period.
- d. The objective for utilization of key upland plant species will be 50% for STTH2, SIHY, and FEID and it will be 40% for CREPIS, ELCI, POSE, AGSP, EULA5, ORHY and LUPIN. Utilization data will be collected at the end of the grazing period.

2. Long Term

- a. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for livestock, with an initial stocking level of 27,800 AUMs.
- b. Improve to and maintain the ecological status per key management area as determined in the Little Owyhee Monitoring Plan.
- c. Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis for big game, with an initial forage demand of 288 AUMs for mule deer, 1,233 AUMs for pronghorn and 72 AUMs for bighorn sheep.
 - 1) Improve to and maintain 2,756 acres in Paradise Valley DY-1, 29,612 acres in Santa Rosa DY-10, 31,678 acres in Santa Rosa DW-2, and 44,210 acres in Santa Rosa DS-1 in good or excellent mule deer habitat condition.
 - 2) Improve to and maintain 2,490 acres in Mahogany Ridge PS-8, 25,837 acres in Santa Rosa PS-7 and 21,608 acres in Little Owyhee PS-10 to good condition. Improve to and maintain 457,963 acres in Owyhee Desert PY-9, 17,847 acres in Maiden Butte PW-9, 2,306 acres in Evans Lake PW-10, 7,762 acres in Button Lake PW-11, 4,939 acres in Button Lake PS-9, 8,322 acres in Evans Lake PS-11, and 7,469 acres in Bullhead PW-13 in fair or good pronghorn habitat condition.
- d. Maintain and improve the free roaming behavior of wild horses by protecting and enhancing their home ranges.
 - 1) Manage, maintain and improve public rangeland conditions to provide an initial level of 3578 AUMs of forage on a sustained yield basis.

- 2) Maintain and improve wild horse habitat by assuring free access to water and development of new permanent water sources.
- e. Improve to and maintain 594 acres of riparian and meadow habitat types in good condition.
- f. Improve to and maintain 21 acres of aspen habitat types in good condition.
- g. Improve to and maintain 60 acres of mahogany habitat types in good condition.
- h. Improve to or maintain the following stream habitat conditions on the North Fork of the Little Humboldt and the East Little Owyhee from 26% on the North Fork, unknown on the East Little Owyhee to an overall optimum of 60% or above.
 - 1) Streambank cover to 60% or above.
 - 2) Streambank stability to 60% or above.
 - 3) Maximum summer water temperature below 70°F.
 - 4) Sedimentation below 10%.
- i. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and brooding areas. Maintain a minimum of 30% canopy cover of sagebrush for nesting and winter use.
- j. Improve to or maintain the water quality of the North Fork Humboldt River and the East Little Owyhee River to the State criteria set for the following beneficial uses: livestock drinking water, cold water aquatic life, wading and wildlife propagation and sport fishery.

Based upon the evaluation of monitoring data for the Little Owyhee Allotment, consultation with the permittee and other affected interests, recommendations from my staff, and the Little Owyhee Allotment evaluation dated December 2, 1992, it is my proposed decision to:

CARRYING CAPACITY

The carrying capacity for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife is 32,971 AUMs during periods of maximum water availability. Of this total, 27,800 AUMs are designated for livestock, 3,578 AUMs are designated for wild horses and 1593 AUMs are designated for wildlife.

Rationale: Analysis of the monitoring data indicates there are areas of light, moderate and heavy use throughout the allotment and that dependable, available water sources are the limiting factor on the allotment. Therefore, the carrying capacity for the Little Owyhee Allotment is based on the forage available within a 5 mile radius of permanent available water. This may not always equal 32,971 AUMs.

The livestock operation will be licensed according to available forage left after wild horse and wildlife allocations. The difference in AUMs between the permittee's active preference and his licensed authorization will not be scheduled and will be held in non-use. When temporary water becomes available, the Bureau of Land Management will calculate the available forage within a five mile radius and the permittee will be licensed accordingly from AUMs held in non-use.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based upon the evaluation of monitoring data for the Little Owyhee Allotment, consultation with the permittee and other affected interests and recommendations from my staff, it is my proposed decision for wildlife to continue with the reasonable numbers as outlined in the Land Use Plan.

RATIONALE:

The analysis of monitoring data indicates that the multiple-use objectives for the Little Owyhee Allotment are not being met. The analysis of utilization and use pattern mapping determined that livestock were the primary factor in the non-achievement of the multiple-use objectives in the summer pastures and that livestock and wild horses were the primary factors inhibiting achievement of the multiple-use objectives in the winter/spring pastures. Analysis of the existing management of wildlife indicates that wildlife populations in the Little Owyhee Allotment are not contributing to the failure in meeting the multiple-use objectives. Therefore, a change in the existing wildlife populations or the existing wildlife management within the Little Owyhee Allotment is not warranted. Reasonable numbers for wildlife will remain as follows:

Mule Deer
288 AUMs

Pronghorn Antelope
1233 AUMs

Bighorn Sheep
72 AUMs

If you wish to protest this wildlife management decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2 you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file such protest with the Paradise-Denio Resource Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District, 705 East Fourth St. Winnemucca, NV 89445. Subsequent to the fifteen day protest period, a final decision will be issued which will provide opportunity for appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.4 and 43 CFR 4.470.

WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Based on the evaluation of the monitoring data for the Little Owyhee Allotment, consultation with the permittee and affected interests and recommendations of my staff, my proposed decision for wild horses is:

To establish an **Appropriate Management Level (AML)** for the Little Owyhee Herd Management Area (HMA) of **298 adult wild horses**. The AML will be managed within the range of **246 to 350 adult wild horses**.

To schedule a gather for the fall of 1993 to reduce the population of horses to the Appropriate Management Level if funding is available for such gather.

RATIONALE:

It has been determined through monitoring that **water is the limiting factor** in the HMA and **not the vegetative resource**. **17,975 AUMs** has been established as the **carrying capacity** within the spring/winter pastures (HMA) of this allotment for wild horse and livestock use. This carrying capacity was derived from an analysis of available monitoring data and using the 1978 range survey within a five mile radius of perennial and dependable artificial (private wells) water sources.

Using the Land Use Plan and CRMP plan proportion for forage, **15,800 AUMs** were available for livestock use, and **3578 AUMs** were available for wild horse use in the spring/winter (HMA) pastures. This relates to **81.5%** for livestock and **18.5%** for wild horses. Applying these percentages to the current carrying capacity of **17,975** for the spring/winter (HMA) pastures, there are **3,325 AUMs** available for wild horses around perennial water sources and **14,650 AUMs** available for livestock. The **3,325 AUMs** for wild horses would relate to **277 adults** which is within the management range that we have specified for our Appropriate Management Level.

The **current estimated population** of adult wild horses on the Little Owyhee Allotment is **700 animals**. Of this population, we know that **124** of the animals are over 10 years of age. These animals were released back onto the range after a gather in August of 1992. This leaves approximately 576 animals that have a "normal" age structure. Using age structure data collected during the 1992 gather, we have determined that 70% of the population is between 0-5 years of age. Applying this figure to the 576 animals, we have determined that 403 animals are between the age of 0 and 5 years. The 576 minus 403 leaves 173 animals 6 years of age and older plus the 124 animals returned to the range in 1992 making a total population of 297 animals. This is within the range for the Appropriate Management Level.

AUTHORITY: The authority for this decision is contained in Sec. 3(a) and (b) of the Wild-Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (P.L. 92-195) as amended and in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which states in pertinent parts:

4700.0-6(a) "Wild horses and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of healthy animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat."

4710.4 "Management of wild horses and burros shall be undertaken with the objective of limiting the animals' distribution to herd areas. Management shall be at the minimum level necessary to attain the objectives identified in approved land use plans and herd management areas plans."

4720.1 "Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exists, the authorized officer shall remove the excess animals immediately..."

4770.3(c) "The authorized officer may place in full force and effect decisions to remove wild horses or burros from public or private lands if removal is required by applicable law or to preserve or maintain a thriving ecological balance and multiple use relationship. Full force and effect decisions shall take effect on the date specified, regardless of an appeal. Appeals and petitions for stay of decisions shall be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals as specified in this part."

If you wish to protest this decision for wild horse management, in accordance with 43 CFR you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file such protest with the Paradise-Denio Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District, 705 East Fourth St., Winnemucca, NV 89445. Subsequent to the fifteen day protest period a final decision will be issued which will provide opportunity for appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.4 and 43 CFR 4.470. Consideration is being given to place the final decision in Full Force and Effect.

LIVESTOCK DECISION

Based upon the evaluation of monitoring data for the Little Owyhee Allotment, consultation with the permittee and other affected interests and recommendations from my staff, it is my proposed decision for livestock to change the management:

FROM (Description of existing use)

1. Grazing Preference (AUMs)
 - a. Total preference 47,463
 - b. Suspended preference 2,581
 - c. Active preference 44,882

Initial stocking rate 27,800
Non-use 17,082
2. Season of Use

Spring Use	03/01 to 06/30
Summer Use	07/01 to 08/30
Winter Use	12/01 to 02/28

3. Kind and Class of Livestock - Cattle, Cow/Calf
4. Percent Federal Range - 100%
5. Grazing System

The current grazing system divides the allotment into three use areas; Spring, Summer and Winter. The Spring and Summer Use Areas are under a three pasture rest-rotation grazing system. The Spring Use Area consists of three large pastures and three treatments.

Treatment "A" Early Spring use 03/01-06/30
 Treatment "B" Late Spring use 04/01-06/30
 Treatment "C" Rest

The pastures in the Spring use area and an example of the grazing system are as follows:

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Fairbanks Field	Rest	Early Use	Late Use
Twin Valley Field	Early Use	Late Use	Rest
Lake Creek Field	Late Use	Rest	Early Use

The current grazing system on the Summer Use Area consists of four pastures, the fourth pasture, Capitol Peak, was designed to be used every year after seedripeness. The Summer use area also called for three treatments; they are as follows:

Treatment "A" - 07/01 to 08/15 (Early)
 Treatment "B" - 08/15 to 09/30 (Late)
 Treatment "C" - Rest
 Treatment "D" - 08/15 to 09/30 (Capitol Peak)

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Calico Field	Early use	Late use	Rest
Rock Springs Field	Late use	Rest	Early use
Antelope Field	Rest	Early use	Late use
Capitol Peak Field	Late use	Late use	Late use

A Winter Use Area had been designated in Fairbanks and Lake Creek Pastures. The Winter Use Area treatment is 12/01 to 02/28. Specific use areas within the pastures were based on monitoring data and areas which had been rested during the years scheduled use.

TO: GRAZING SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED

1. Grazing Preference Status (AUMs)
 - a. Total preference 47,463
 - b. Suspended preference 19,663
 - c. Active preference 27,800
 - 1) Authorized Use 17,523
 - 2) Non Use Available with intermittent water or riparian fencing 10,277

2. Season of Use

Spring Use 03/01 to 05/14
 Summer Use 05/15 to 07/15
 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 grazing system listed below is for the next evaluation period.

Spring Use (Each Year)

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Fairbanks	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800
Twin Valley	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800
Lake Creek	1540	03/01 to 05/14	3800

Summer Use

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>	
1993	Antelope	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802	
	Rock Springs	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802	
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802	
	Calico			05/15 to 06/30	
				09/20 to 09/30	717

1994	Rock Springs	1160	05/15 to 06/30	802
	Antelope	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717
1995	Antelope	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802
	Rock Springs	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717
1996	Rock Springs	1160	05/15 to 06/03	802
	Antelope	1160	06/04 to 06/24	802
	Capitol Peak	1160	06/25 to 07/15	802
	Calico		05/15 to 06/30 09/20 to 09/30	717

Winter Use

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
1993	Lake Creek	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1994	Fairbanks	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1995	Lake Creek	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000
1996	Fairbanks	760	11/01 to 02/28	3000

RATIONALE:

Water and access to the riparian areas are the limiting factors on this allotment not the vegetative resource. This leads to distribution problems.

At the present time the only sources of natural, permanently available water are the South Fork, Milligan Creek, the North Fork and a few springs in the Fairbanks Pasture. There are four wells that are private and a pipeline system that originates from a private spring that are also available for water consumption when livestock are in the area.

Because permanent dependable water has not been available, the present CRMP grazing system has never been followed. Consistent patterns of rest-rotation and periods of use have not been applied to the Little Owyhee Allotment throughout the evaluation period.

The spring pastures have been utilized from March 1 through June 30 in a three pasture rest-rotation. While Fairbanks was rested three consecutive years due to fire, Twin Valley and Lake Creek have been grazed every year during the evaluation period.

The summer pastures, which contain the majority of the riparian areas, have been utilized from July 1 through August 30. Rest has been applied to Antelope and Calico, but on an irregular schedule. Rock Springs has been grazed every year throughout the evaluation period.

Under the present system, and with water being the limiting factor on this allotment, utilization and distribution patterns are showing heavy use around wetland/riparian habitats within the summer pastures and in the upland areas of the spring pastures.

Based on the perennial water sources in the spring pastures (HMA), there are 17,975 AUMs for both livestock and wild horses. This carrying capacity was calculated from an analysis of the 1978 range survey within a five mile radius of perennial water sources (including permittee-operated wells and pipelines) and from using monitoring data.

The AUMs in non-use can be activated when new water developments are installed, when climatic conditions allow for run-off to fill the existing reservoirs, and/or when riparian fences are completed. A field tour will be made before livestock are turned out to insure the availability of water.

The selected management action will eliminate the three pasture rest rotation spring grazing system. Use will be based on available water in these pastures with the stipulation that a specific area will not be utilized more than two consecutive years. When this allotment receives substantial moisture to fill the numerous reservoirs and to recharge the existing springs and creeks, use will be made on these water sources and the existing wells and pipelines will be rested.

By implementing this system, spring use will be shortened from 03/01 through 06/30 to 03/01 through 05/14 which will allow for regrowth in the spring pastures and allow the plants to store food reserves in their root system for the next growing season.

Winter use will consist of a two pasture rest rotation between Lake Creek and Fairbanks with the maximum use of 3000 AUMs. The winter use areas in Lake Creek will be at the north end in the Wild Bill Flat area and the area around Corral Lake Well. Winter use in Fairbanks will be the lower elevational area which exists south of the rim in the Mud and Whiskey Springs area. Winter use will be taken from 11/01 to 02/28 as compared to the CRMP dates 12/01 to 02/28. The utilization will be taken when plants are dormant; thus the vegetative resource will not be adversely effected. The possibility exists for conflict between winter use areas and spring use areas. These areas will be monitored, and if excessive use is noted, a decision will be made on whether or not to continue use in these areas.

The management action will also change the grazing system from the current CRMP deferred three pasture rest-rotation system on the summer pastures, to a two pasture flip-flop system between Rock Springs and Antelope. Capitol Peak will continue to have deferred use after seedripe and Calico will be used to facilitate the livestock operation. Use in Calico will be made in May when the livestock are moved from the spring pastures to the summer pastures. The pasture will be used again in September when the livestock are moved from the Forest Service allotment to their base property. The maximum carrying capacity of Calico, until riparian fencing is completed, is 717 AUMs per year. It is expected that the use will occur in the last half of May and the last half of September.

The earlier summer grazing compared to the CRMP system (07/01 to 08/30) will encourage uniform utilization and distribution patterns by maximizing water availability and thereby reducing impacts to riparian habitats through cooler season of use. The livestock removal on 07/15 in the summer will be beneficial to riparian vegetation because of the regrowth potential, which in turn will improve the water quality and fisheries of the riparian habitats. Using Capitol Peak every year after seedripeness will not have an adverse effect on the vegetative resource because the vegetation has all spring the following year to build its reserves and grow until it is utilized.

INTERIM SYSTEM

The Bureau's strategic plan for wild horses will be implemented with the first capture slated for 1993. This will reduce the estimated population of 700 adults to 297 adults which will be within the selected management range for population of adult wild horses.

During the interim, forage will be allocated for the estimated population of wild horses. This forage will be made available by reducing the number of authorized livestock using the winter and spring pastures. The interim grazing system that will be followed until the population of adult horses is reduced is as follows:

1. Grazing Preference Status (AUMs)
 - a. Total preference 47,463
 - b. Suspended preference 19,663
 - c. Active preference 27,800
 - 1) Authorized Use 12,693
 - 2) Non Use
 - a) Available with intermittent water or riparian fencing 10,285
 - b) Unavailable to livestock due to wild horse use 4,822
2. Season of Use
 - Spring Use 03/01 to 05/14
 - Summer Use 05/15 to 07/15
 - Winter Use 11/01 to 02/28
3. Kind and Class of Livestock - Cattle, Cow/Calf

4. Percent Federal Range - 100%

5. Grazing System

Spring Use

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Livestock #</u>	<u>Period of use</u>	<u>AUMs</u>
Fairbanks	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190
Twin Valley	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190
Lake Creek	888	03/01 to 05/14	2190

There is not an interim system for the winter and summer pastures. They will remain as scheduled.

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.

You are required to perform normal maintenance on the range improvements as per your signed cooperative agreements prior to turning out.

Your certified actual use report by pasture is due 15 days after the end of the authorized grazing period.

No livestock shall be allowed in the following fenced enclosures:

Lone Willow Enclosure T46N R41E and R42E Sec. 1, 12 and 6, 7.

Mahogany Ridge Enclosure T46N R41E Sec. 14, 15, 22, 23.

Antelope Springs Enclosure T45N R42E Sec. 28, 29, 33

Owyhee Res. #3 Enclosure T47N R41E Sec 25, NE1/4 SE1/4 and SE1/4 NE1/4.

Any livestock owned or controlled by you must be eartagged. You must supply the B.L.M. with a list of private ear tags and numbers for the livestock that you own or control. This list must be submitted prior to turnout along with copies of livestock use agreements.

AUTHORITY: The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which states in pertinent parts:

4100.0-8 "The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield. and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resource uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b)."

4100.3 "The authorized officer shall periodically review the grazing preference specified in a grazing permit or grazing lease and may make changes in the grazing preference status. These changes shall be

supported by monitoring, as evidenced by rangeland studies conducted over time, unless the change is either specified in an applicable land use plan or necessary to manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity.

4130.6-1(a) "The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring and adjusted as necessary under 4110.3-1 and 4110.3-2."

4130.6-2 "The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits and leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands..."

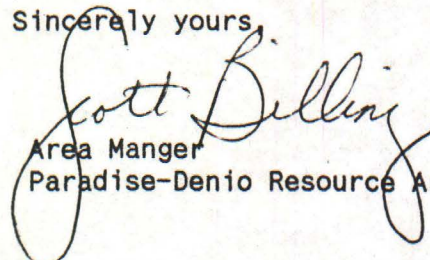
If you wish to protest this decision for livestock management, in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2 you are allowed fifteen (15) days from receipt of this notice within which to file such protest with the Paradise-Denio Resource Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District, 705 E. 4th Street, Winnemucca, NV 89445. Subsequent to the fifteen day protest period a final decision will be issued which will provide opportunity for appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.4 and 43 CFR 4.470.

FUTURE MONITORING AND GRAZING ADJUSTMENTS

The Paradise-Denio Resource Area will continue to monitor the Little Owyhee Allotment. The monitoring data will continue to be collected in the future to provide the necessary information for subsequent evaluations. These evaluations are necessary to determine if the allotment specific objectives are being met under the new grazing management strategy. In addition, these subsequent evaluations will determine if adjustments are required to meet the established allotment specific objectives.

The Little Owyhee Allotment is scheduled to be reevaluated in 1996.

Sincerely yours,


Area Manager
Paradise-Denio Resource Area

certified cc:

NRDC P103694994
Sierra Club-Toiyabe Chapter P103694995
Craig Downer P103694996
Wilderness Society P103694997
Desert Bighorn Council P103694998
Nevada Dept. of Wildlife (Fallon) P103694999
John Marvel P374309817
Nevada Land Action Assoc. P374309818
Nevada Farm Bureau Federation P374309819
James Shepherd P374309820
USFWS P374309821
Trout Unlimited P374309822
Clauida J. Richards P374309823
WHOA P374309824
Animal Protection Institute P374309825
Commission for the Preservation of WH&B P374309826
Society for the Protection of Mustands and Burros P374309827
American Horse Protection Association P374309828
U.S. Humane Society P374309829
Humboldt County Commissioners P374309830
Nevada Dept. of Wildlife (Winnemucca) P374309831
Nevada Dept. of Wildlife (Elko) P374309832
Charley Amos P374309833
James Bonavia P374309834
Area Manager, Elko Resource Area P374309835



COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES

Stewart Facility
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 687-5589

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Paula S. Askew
Carson City, Nevada

Steven Fulstone
Smith Valley, Nevada

Dawn Lappin
Reno, Nevada

February 26, 1993

Scott Billing, Area Manager
BLM-Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

Re: Little Owyhee Final Allotment Evaluation Summary and the
Proposed Multiple Use Decision

Dear Mr. Billing,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Little Owyhee final Allotment Evaluation Summary and proposed Multiple Use Decision.

We are protesting the final Little Owyhee AE and MUD on the following grounds.

1) Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent removing over 3,000 animals since 1977 to 1992; with no improvement in their habitat. Additional fences for the purpose of livestock management have been erected impeding wild horse movement within their HMA. The District has twice removed horses due to limited water and yet still has not addressed this requisite to life.

2) You have not included any information on trespass grazing and calculated those AUM's in the total amount used by livestock.

3) Use pattern mapping descriptions of the pastures does not attribute use seasonally and assumes even distribution over the pastures.

4) Percentages of historical use have no application in determining a thriving natural ecological balance.

5) Though we desire good management and proper use levels of the vegetation by all users we are not convinced that maintenance of past high stocking levels are realistic or reasonable and certainly we want to see some commitment to management of their habitat so that emergencies of this previous summer do not continuously occur.

6) Your summer data is incomplete though you attribute forage use by pasture by estimating by a factor of 14% because monitoring data was not available. You also provide data on page 22, for wild horses by pasture until 1991, however actual use by livestock on page 20 does not include 1991, the evaluation period stated on page 1 is 1983 through 1991.

Scott Billing, Area Manager
February 26, 1993
Page 2

We hope that you will consider our points of protest and include them in your revision of the final Evaluation and Multiple Use Decision.

If you have any questions or would care to discuss this matter, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director

2/26/93

W H O A

WILD HORSE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE
P.O. BOX 555
RENO, NEVADA 89504
(702) 851-4817

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DAVID R. BELDING
JACK C. McELWEE
GORDON W. HARRIS

In Memoriam

LOUISE C. HARRISON
VELMA B. JOHNSTON, "Wild Horse Annie"
GERTRUDE BRONN

February 26, 1993

Scott Billing, Area Manager
BLM-Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

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Scott Billing, Area Manager
February 26, 1993
Page 2

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Sincerely,

DAWN Y. LAPPIN
Director



STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

1100 Valley Road
P.O. Box 10678
Reno, Nevada 89520-0022
(702) 688-1500
Fax (702) 688-1595

BOB MILLER
Governor

WILLIAM A. MOLINI
Director

March 2, 1993

Mr. Scott Billings
Paradise-Denio Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
705 East Fourth Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

RE: Protest - Proposed Little Owhyee Multiple Use Decision

Dear Scott:

The Nevada Department of Wildlife has a long term interest and investment in the land use planning processes for the Little Owhyee Allotment. This is the highest priority allotment of the Paradise-Denio Resource Area. Intensive land use planning, range improvement projects and rangeland monitoring studies have been applied to this allotment; however, the Final Little Owhyee Allotment Evaluation Summary has concluded that none of the allotment specific objectives have been achieved. Therefore, we submit this Protest against the Proposed Multiple Use Decision - Little Owhyee Allotment for the following reasons:

The Proposed Decision was not timely.

The Paradise-Denio Range Management Framework III Decisions, Winnemucca District Coordinated Monitoring Plan and the Little Owhyee Allotment Monitoring Plan required that monitoring studies be evaluated in 1988 for a Manager's Decision. According to the activity plans for this allotment, the Winnemucca District should have issued two evaluations/decision prior to this Proposed Decision.

Proper monitoring, evaluations and decisions were to establish carrying capacities for wild horses, livestock and wildlife. The Proposed Decision is five years delinquent and does not schedule the next allotment evaluation in accordance with the Monitoring Plan. Failure to adhere to the Bureau of Land Management land use plan, decisions and procedures has delayed necessary adjustments in livestock and wild horses numbers necessary to protect critical fish and wildlife habitat.

Mr. Scott Billings
March 2, 1993
Page 2

The Proposed Decision carrying capacities are arbitrary.

The Final Little Owhyee Allotment Evaluation Summary does not present stocking level or appropriate management level computations to support the Proposed Decisions' numbers for livestock and wild horses, respectively. Monitoring data, methodology and assumptions must be presented to support the Proposed Decisions.

Livestock carrying capacities must assure no damage to vegetation or related resources.

The Proposed Decisions will exceed carrying capacities.

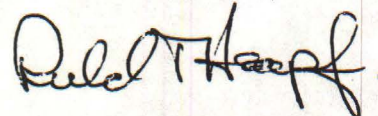
Key management areas were delineated in proper activity plans for the Little Owhyee Allotment. These areas were not monitored. Allowable use levels for key species, found in the Draft Paradise-Denio Environmental Impact Statement, were exceeded due to the lack of adequate in-season monitoring and annual compliance to an intensive grazing system. Failure to meet allotment specific Short Term Objectives has resulted in exceeding the carrying capacity for the allotment.

The Proposed Decision modifies allotment objectives to allow for after-the-fact grazing monitoring. This approach has repetitively failed in meeting objectives and properly enforcing the license terms and conditions necessary to protect critical fish and wildlife habitats.

The Proposed Decisions' livestock carrying capacities and wild horse appropriate management levels do not have supporting computations in the Final Little Owhyee Allotment Evaluation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM A. MOLINI, DIRECTOR



Richard T. Heap, Jr.
Regional Manager
Region I

REL:rl/

CC: Habitat, Reno
Jim Jeffress
Jim French