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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445
702-623-1500

In Reply Refer To:
(NV-22.10)
4130

December 11, 1998

Dear Sir or Madame:

I am sending you the draft evaluations for the Clear Creek, Dolly Hayden, and Goldbanks Allotments for your review and comments. This is the culmination of several years of meetings and input from the working group, the public, and my staff.

The Evaluations have several carrying capacities and grazing alternatives for you to comment on.

Based on the Clear Creek and Dolly Hayden Allotment Evaluations there appears to be additional forage available. The evaluations also describe the framework in which to manage livestock. If you are a qualified applicant under 43 CFR 4110 and are interested in acquiring use in one or both allotments we are now accepting applications for this use. Your application should reflect the framework for using these allotments as stated in the evaluations and should include the:

1. Livestock numbers;

2. Dates the livestock would graze on the public lands;

3. A narrative on how you plan to run your livestock within the framework, and;

4. If you are not currently a permittee, a legal description of lands you own or lease that would be used for base property to attach the grazing preference. Please include a copy of your deed if you own the property, or if you lease the property, a copy of the lease document(s) with the terms of the lease.

Please contact Wendy Fuell or Rich Adams for the appropriate application forms.

To chose the best qualified applicants, I will use the factors outlined in the grazing regulations; §4110.3-1, Increasing permitted use and §4130.1-2, Conflicting applications. In summary, the regulations state:

§4110.3-1

(b) ...shall be used to satisfy suspended permitted use....

(c) ...may be apportioned to permittees or lessees or other applicants, provided the permittee, lessee, or other applicant is found to be qualified under subpart 4110 of this part. Additional forage shall be apportioned in the following priority:

(1) Permitees or lessees in proportion to their contribution or stewardship efforts which result in increased forage production;

(2) Permitee(s) or lessee(s) in proportion to the amount of their permitted use; and

(3) Other qualified applicants under §4130.1-2 of this title.

§4130.1-2

(a) Historical use of the public lands;

(b) Proper use of rangeland resources;

(c) General needs of the applicant's livestock operation;

(d) Public ingress or egress across privately owned or controlled land to public lands;

(e) Topography;

(f) Other land use requirements unique to the situation;

(g) Demonstrated stewardship by the applicant to improve or maintain and protect the rangeland ecosystem; and

(h) The applicant's and affiliate's history of compliance with the terms and conditions of grazing permits and leases of the BLM and any other Federal or State agency, including any record of suspensions or cancellations of grazing use for violations of terms and conditions of agency grazing rules.

I have attached copies of the above portions of the grazing regulations.

Please submit your comments and/or applications by January 29, 1999. If needed, I will bring the working group together to provide additional input. After the comment period, it should take about two months to evaluate the applications and make a decision. Once I have made my decision, you will receive the final allotment evaluations and proposed multiple use decisions.

If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Fuell or Rich Adams at (775) 623-1500.

Sincerely yours,

Richard E Adams, Acting

Colin P. Christensen
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources

Enclosures

CC

Mike Burke
Garley Amos
NRCS, Lovelock
NDOW, Fallon
RCI
Dee Westmoreland
John Thacker
Dana & Chris Finlayson
Smokey Weagant
Black Elk Ranch, LLC
Trout Unlimited
Casey Anderson
CPWH
Craig Downer
NRDC
Sierra Club-Toiyabe Chap.
Agri Beef
Kinross/Goldbanks Mining Co
Pleasant Valley Ranch, Inc.
Joe Sicking
William Schroeder
NV Catteleman's
John Aitken
Coyote Creek Ranch
NRCS, Winnemucca
Pershing County Commissioners
Intermountain Range Consultants
Cecil Martin
Alan Cain
Desert Bighorn Council
John Phillips
NV Woolgrowers

with such modifications as he may request which are approved by the authorized officer or with such modifications as may be required by the authorized officer.

(4) The transferee shall file an application for a grazing permit or lease to the extent of the transferred preference simultaneously with filing a transfer application under paragraph (b) or (c) of this section.

(b) If base property is sold or leased, the transferee shall within 90 days of the date of sale or lease file with the authorized officer a properly executed transfer application showing the base property and the amount of permitted use being transferred in animal unit months.

(c) If a grazing preference is being transferred from one base property to another base property, the transferor shall own or control the base property from which the grazing preference is being transferred and file with the authorized officer a properly completed transfer application for approval. If the applicant leases the base property, no transfer will be allowed without the written consent of the owner(s), and any person or entity holding an encumbrance of the base property from which the transfer is to be made. Such consent will not be required where the applicant for such transfer is a lessee without whose livestock operations the grazing preference would not have been established.

(d) At the date of approval of a transfer, the existing grazing permit or lease shall terminate automatically and without notice to the extent of the transfer.

(e) If an unqualified transferee acquires rights in base property through operation of law or testamentary disposition, such transfer will not affect the grazing preference or any outstanding grazing permit or lease, or preclude the issuance or renewal of a grazing permit or lease based on such property for a period of 2 years after the transfer. However, such a transferee shall qualify under paragraph (a) of this section within the 2-year period or the grazing preference shall be subject to cancellation. The authorized officer may grant extensions of the 2-year period where there are delays solely attributable to probate proceedings.

(f) Transfers shall be for a period of not less than 3 years unless a shorter term is determined by the authorized officer to be consistent with management and resource condition objectives.

(g) Failure of either the transferee or the transferor to comply with the regulations of this section may result in rejection of the transfer application or cancellation of grazing preference.

[43 FR 29067, July 5, 1978, as amended at 46 FR 5788, Jan. 19, 1981; 47 FR 41709, Sept. 21, 1982; 49 FR 6450, Feb. 21, 1984; 53 FR 10233, Mar. 29, 1988; 60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995; 61 FR 4227, Feb. 5, 1996]

§ 4110.2–4 Allotments.

After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected grazing permittees or lessees, the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public, the authorized officer may designate and adjust grazing allotment boundaries. The authorized officer may combine or divide allotments, through an agreement or by decision, when necessary for the proper and efficient management of public rangelands.

[60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4110.3 Changes in permitted use.

The authorized officer shall periodically review the permitted use specified in a grazing permit or lease and shall make changes in the permitted use as needed to manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity, to assist in restoring ecosystems to properly functioning condition, to conform with land use plans or activity plans, or to comply with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part. These changes must be supported by monitoring, field observations, ecological site inventory or other data acceptable to the authorized officer.

[60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4110.3–1 Increasing permitted use.

Additional forage may be apportioned to qualified applicants for livestock grazing use consistent with multiple-use management objectives.

(a) Additional forage temporarily available for livestock grazing use may be apportioned on a nonrenewable basis.

(b) Additional forage available on a sustained yield basis for livestock grazing use shall first be apportioned in satisfaction of suspended permitted use to the permittee(s) or lessee(s) authorized to graze in the allotment in which the forage is available.

(c) After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected permittees or lessees, the State having lands or managing resources within the area, and the interested public, additional forage on a sustained yield basis available for livestock grazing use in an allotment may be apportioned to permittees or lessees or other applicants, provided the permittee, lessee, or other applicant is found to be qualified under subpart 4110 of this part. Additional forage shall be apportioned in the following priority:

(1) Permittees or lessees in proportion to their contribution or stewardship efforts which result in increased forage production;

(2) Permittee(s) or lessee(s) in proportion to the amount of their permitted use; and

(3) Other qualified applicants under § 4130.1–2 of this title.

[53 FR 10233, Mar. 29, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4110.3–2 Decreasing permitted use.

(a) Permitted use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, or other natural causes, or to facilitate installation, maintenance, or modification of range improvements.

(b) When monitoring or field observations show grazing use or patterns of use are not consistent with the provisions of subpart 4180, or grazing use is otherwise causing an unacceptable level or pattern of utilization, or when use exceeds the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring, ecological site inventory or other acceptable methods, the authorized officer shall reduce permitted grazing use or otherwise modify management practices.

[53 FR 10234, Mar. 29, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4110.3–3 Implementing reductions in permitted use.

(a) After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected permittee or lessee, the State having lands or managing resources within the area, and the interested public, reductions of permitted use shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision of the authorized officer. Decisions implementing § 4110.3–2 shall be issued as proposed decisions pursuant to § 4160.1, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) When the authorized officer determines that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on the public lands require immediate protection because of conditions such as drought, fire, flood, insect infestation, or when continued grazing use poses an imminent likelihood of significant resource damage, after consultation with, or a reasonable attempt to consult with, affected permittees or lessees, the interested public, and the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, the authorized officer shall close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or modify authorized grazing use notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section. Notices of closure and decisions requiring modification of authorized grazing use may be issued as final decisions effective upon issuance or on the date specified in the decision. Such decisions shall remain in effect pending the decision on appeal unless a stay is granted by the Office of Hearings and Appeals in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21.

[60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4110.4 Changes in public land acreage.

§ 4110.4–1 Additional land acreage.

When lands outside designated allotments become available for livestock grazing under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management, the forage available for livestock shall be

rule to achieve improved administration consistent with the objectives of this part, the Director may approve such rules. The rules shall be subject to public review and comment, as appropriate, and upon approval, shall become effective when published in the FEDERAL REGISTER as final rules. Special rules shall be published in a local newspaper.

(b) Where the Bureau of Land Management administers the grazing use of other Federal Agency lands, the terms of an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding or Cooperative Agreement shall apply.

[49 FR 6452, Feb. 21, 1984]

§ 4120.5 Cooperation.

§ 4120.5–1 Cooperation in management.

The authorized officer shall, to the extent appropriate, cooperate with Federal, State, Indian tribal and local governmental entities, institutions, organizations, corporations, associations, and individuals to achieve the objectives of this part.

[60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4120.5–2 Cooperation with State, county, and Federal agencies.

Insofar as the programs and responsibilities of other agencies and units of government involve grazing upon the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, or the livestock which graze thereon, the Bureau of Land Management will cooperate, to the extent consistent with applicable laws of the United States, with the involved agencies and government entities. The authorized officer shall cooperate with State, county, and Federal agencies in the administration of laws and regulations relating to livestock, livestock diseases, sanitation, and noxious weeds including—

(a) State cattle and sheep sanitary or brand boards in control of stray and unbranded livestock, to the extent such cooperation does not conflict with the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (16 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.); and

(b) County or other local weed control districts in analyzing noxious weed problems and developing control programs for areas of the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

[60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995]

Subpart 4130—Authorizing Grazing Use

§ 4130.1 Applications.

§ 4130.1–1 Filing applications.

Applications for grazing permits or leases (active use and nonuse), free-use grazing permits and other grazing authorizations shall be filed with the authorized officer at the local Bureau of Land Management office having jurisdiction over the public lands involved.

[43 FR 29067, July 5, 1978, as amended at 49 FR 6453, Feb. 21, 1984. Redesignated at 60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995]

§ 4130.1–2 Conflicting applications.

When more than one qualified applicant applies for livestock grazing use of the same public lands and/or where additional forage for livestock or additional acreage becomes available, the authorized officer may authorize grazing use of such land or forage on the basis of § 4110.3–1 of this title or on the basis of any of the following factors:

(a) Historical use of the public lands (see § 4130.2(e));

(b) Proper use of rangeland resources;

(c) General needs of the applicant's livestock operations;

(d) Public ingress or egress across privately owned or controlled land to public lands;

(e) Topography;

(f) Other land use requirements unique to the situation.

(g) Demonstrated stewardship by the applicant to improve or maintain and protect the rangeland ecosystem; and

(h) The applicant's and affiliate's history of compliance with the terms and conditions of grazing permits and leases of the Bureau of Land Management and any other Federal or State agency, including any record of suspensions or cancellations of grazing use for violations of terms and conditions of agency grazing rules.

[49 FR 6453, Feb. 21, 1984; 49 FR 12704, Mar. 30, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 10234, Mar. 29, 1988; 60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995; 61 FR 4227, Feb. 5, 1996]

§ 4130.2 Grazing permits or leases.

(a) Grazing permits or leases shall be issued to qualified applicants to authorize use on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management that are designated as available for livestock grazing through land use plans. Permits or leases shall specify the types and levels of use authorized, including livestock grazing, suspended use, and conservation use. These grazing permits and leases shall also specify terms and conditions pursuant to §§ 4130.3, 4130.3–1, and 4130.3–2.

(b) The authorized officer shall consult, cooperate and coordinate with affected permittees or lessees, the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public prior to the issuance or renewal of grazing permits and leases.

(c) Grazing permits or leases convey no right, title, or interest held by the United States in any lands or resources.

(d) The term of grazing permits or leases authorizing livestock grazing on the public lands and other lands under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management shall be 10 years unless—

(1) The land is being considered for disposal;

(2) The land will be devoted to a public purpose which precludes grazing prior to the end of 10 years;

(3) The term of the base property lease is less than 10 years, in which case the term of the Federal permit or lease shall coincide with the term of the base property lease; or

(4) The authorized officer determines that a permit or lease for less than 10 years is in the best interest of sound land management.

(e) Permittees or lessees holding expiring grazing permits or leases shall be given first priority for new permits or leases if:

(1) The lands for which the permit or lease is issued remain available for domestic livestock grazing;

(2) The permittee or lessee is in compliance with the rules and regulations and the terms and conditions in the permit or lease;

(3) The permittee or lessee accepts the terms and conditions to be included by the authorized officer in the new permit or lease.

(f) The authorized officer will not offer, grant or renew grazing permits or leases when the applicants, including permittees or lessees seeking renewal, refuse to accept the proposed terms and conditions of a permit or lease.

(g) Temporary nonuse and conservation use may be approved by the authorized officer if such use is determined to be in conformance with the applicable land use plans, allotment management plan or other activity plans and the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.

(1) Conservation use may be approved for periods of up to 10 years when, in the determination of the authorized officer, the proposed use will promote rangeland resource protection or enhancement of resource values or uses, including more rapid progress toward resource condition objectives; or

(2) Temporary nonuse for reasons including but not limited to financial conditions or annual fluctuations of livestock, may be approved on an annual basis for no more than 3 consecutive years. Permittees or lessees applying for temporary nonuse shall state the reasons supporting nonuse.

(h) Application for nonrenewable grazing permits and leases under §§ 4110.3–1 and 4130.6–2 for areas for which conservation use has been authorized will not be approved. Forage made available as a result of temporary nonuse may be made available to qualified applicants under § 4130.6–2.

(i) Permits or leases may incorporate the percentage of public land livestock use (see § 4130.3–2) or may include private land offered under exchange-of-use grazing agreements (see § 4130.6–1).

(j) Provisions explaining how grazing permits or authorizations may be granted for grazing use on state, county or private land leased by the Bureau

12/11/98

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Allotment Name: Goldbanks Allotment
Allotment Number: 00105

B. Permittee(s): Mike Burke
Agri Beef Co.

C. Evaluation Period: 1989 - 1996

D. Selective Management Category: M
Priority: 5

II. INITIAL STOCKING RATE

A. Livestock Use

The Goldbanks Allotment has a total number of AUMs of specified grazing use of 1,907 cattle AUMs and 161 AUMs of sheep use. Livestock use is rotated between five historical use areas in the allotment (Panther Canyon, Pollard Canyon, China Mountain, Mud Springs and Jim Creek Spray Field) See Appendix 1, Map 1. The season of use for cattle is spring through winter with fall use for sheep. (Table 1)

Table 1. Livestock operators, season of use and total number of AUMs of specified livestock grazing.

Permittee	Livestock		Grazing Begin	Period End	% PL	Total # of AUMs of specified livestock grazing	Historical Suspended
	#	Kind					
Mike Burke	210	c	04/01	10/31	100	1477	404
	211	c	12/01	01/31	100	430	
AgriBeef	1300	s	10/03	11/03	59	161	48

The average actual use of livestock during the evaluation years (1988 - 1996) was 1,857 AUMs of cattle use and 160 AUMs of sheep use.

Table 2. Existing Grazing system for the Goldbanks Allotment

treatment 1	Graze from 5/1 to 7/15	
treatment 2	rest until seedripe (July 15) for plant vigor, food storage, forage production, and seed production.	Graze from 7/16 to 9/30
treatment 3	Rest for vigor, food storage, forage production, and establishment of seedlings.	
treatment 4	Graze from 10/1 to 10/30	
treatment 5	Graze from 12/1 to 1/31 and 4/1 to 4/30	

Table 3. Sequence of treatments for the Goldbanks Allotment

Pasture	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Pollard Canyon	5/1 - 7/15	7/16 - 9/30	Rest
Panther Canyon	Rest	5/1 - 7/15	7/16 - 9/30
China Mountain	7/16 - 9/30	Rest	5/1 - 7/15
Jim Spring Spray Field	10/1 - 10/30	10/1 - 10/30	10/1 - 10/30
Mud Springs	12/1 - 1/31 4/1 - 4/30	12/1 - 1/31 4/1 - 4/30	12/1 - 1/31 4/1 - 4/30

B. Wildlife Use:

1. Reasonable Numbers (from Sonoma-Gerlach MFP-III - 1982)

Mule Deer	- (Odocoileus hemionus)	92 AUMs
Bighorn Sheep	- (Ovis canadensis nelsoni)	18 AUMs

2. Key or Critical Management Areas within the Allotment

Mule Deer

The following mule deer habitat within the Goldbanks Allotment has been identified in the Sonoma-Gerlach MFP: East Range DY-3b(12)*, Tobin Range DY-4a(12), and Tobin Range DS-4a(6). The following bighorn sheep habitat areas have been identified: Tobin Range BS-4(6) and Tobin Range BW-3(6).

* The numbers in parenthesis represent the numbers of months of use By mule deer.

Table 4. Number of Acres by Wildlife Use Area Within the Goldbanks Allotment

Wildlife Use Area	Acres Within the Allotment
East Range DY-3b	4,677
Tobin Range DY(Deer Yearlong)	10,821
Tobin Range DS-4a	5,157
Tobin Range BS-4	1,103
Tobin Range BW-3	4,648

Sage grouse

A portion of the allotment falls within sage grouse range which contains two identified sage grouse brooding areas. There are no known strutting grounds within the allotment and no identified winter or key summer use areas.

C. Wild Horse Use: The Sonoma-Gerlach MFP III (1982) established an initial stocking level of 0 for the East Range Herd Area and that part of the Tobin Range Herd Management Area contained within the allotment. There is 5% of the East Range HA and 10 % of the Tobin Range HMA contained within the allotment.

III. ALLOTMENT PROFILE

A. Description

The Goldbanks Allotment is a category M allotment involving 37,460 acres of public land, 39,605 total acres located 30 miles south of Winnemucca Nevada on the Grass Valley Road in Northeastern Pershing County. The allotment lies on the Divide between Grass Valley and Pleasant Valley and contains portions of the East and Tobin Ranges. The Goldbanks Hills form the western portion the allotment, with the northwest portion of the Tobin Range dominating the eastern side of the allotment. Elevation on the allotment varies from 4,700 feet to near 8,000 feet. The two main vegetative classes on the allotment are the sagebrush-bunchgrass type and the shadscale-budsage type.

B. Allotment Specific Objectives

The following allotment specific objectives are found in the Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) Update.

1. Short Term

   a. Total utilization of key plant species in 40 acres of wetland riparian habitat shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted by an approved activity plan.

   b. Utilization of key plant species in upland habitats shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted by an approved activity plan.

2. Long Term

   a. Improve or maintain the condition of 40 acres of wetland riparian habitat type to good or higher condition.

   b. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and nesting wintering habitat and improve brooding habitat by:

1. Following NDOW's guidelines for Vegetal Control Programs in sage grouse habitat in Nevada.

2. Maintain sagebrush canopy at 30% in sage grouse nesting areas where sagebrush does not exceed three (3) feet in height.

c. Manage, maintain, or improve 5 acres of aspen woodland habitat type to good condition.

d. Manage, maintain, or improve public rangeland habitat condition to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial forage demand for big game of 92 AUMs for mule deer, and 18 AUMs for bighorn sheep by:

1. Improving or maintaining to good condition East Range DY-3, Tobin Range DY-4, and Tobin Range DS-4.

2. Improving or maintaining potential bighorn sheep habitat in good condition Tobin Range BS-4 and BW-3.

e. Mange, maintain, and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial stocking level of 2,051 AUMs.

f. Improve range/ecological condition from fair to good on 4,100 acres and good to excellent on 112 acres.

g. Remove all wild horses/burros from the East Range Herd Area, (This Herd Area includes the Goldbanks Allotment), unless a cooperative agreement with the affected land owner is obtained.

h. The East Range Herd Area boundary will be retained for administrative purposes.

3. a. Standards

The following are Standards for Rangeland Health as developed in consultation with the Sierra Front - Great Basin Resource Advisory Council, other interested publics and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on February 12, 1997. The terms and conditions of the livestock grazing permit must be in conformance with these approved Standards and Guidelines.

1. Soil processes will be appropriate to soil type, climate and land form.

2. Riparian/wetland systems are in properly functioning condition.

3. Water quality criteria in Nevada State Law shall be achieved or maintained.

4. Populations and communities of native plant species and habitats for native animal species are healthy, productive and diverse.

5. Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of special status species.

IV. ALLOTMENT EVALUATION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether current management practices are meeting the multiple use objectives for the allotment and to determine the appropriate stocking level for the various pastures for livestock.

B. Summary of Studies Data

Utilization patterns were mapped for portions of the allotment from 1989 to 1995 and use transects have been completed in various use areas within the allotment since 1982. There are eleven key areas identified for this allotment for utilization purposes with frequency trend studies established at eight of the key areas. The locations of identified key areas with trend studies are shown in Appendix I, Map 2. An Ecological Site Inventory was conducted for the allotment in 1988. There is one big game key area/monitoring site located in mule deer winter range on the allotment. Riparian functionality studies and a fishery habitat survey have been conducted on Pollard Creek, which is the one perennial stream located in the allotment.

1. Actual Use

a. Livestock

Table 5. *Livestock Actual Use from Licensed Use.*

Permittee	Grazing Year	Livestock		Grazing Period		%PL	AUMs
		#	Kind	Begin	End		
	1988						
Mike Burke		203	C	04/01/88	10/31/88	100	1428
		203	C	12/01/88	01/31/89	100	414
TOTAL							**1842**
Agri Beef							0
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**1842**
	1989						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/89	10/31/89	100	1463
		208	C	12/01/89	01/31/90	100	424
TOTAL							**1887**
Agri Beef		2150	S	02/10/90	02/28/90	59	159
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**2046**
	1990						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/90	10/31/90	100	1463
		208	C	12/01/90	01/31/91	100	424
TOTAL							**1887**
Agri Beef		1500	S	01/05/91	01/15/91	59	64
		1500	S	01/16/91	01/31/91	59	94
TOTAL							**158**
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**2045**
	1991						

Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/91	10/31/91	100	1463
		208	C	12/01/91	01/31/91	100	424
TOTAL							**1887**
Agri Beef		1500	S	01/25/92	02/21/92	59	163
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**2050**
	1992						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/92	10/31/92	100	1463
		208	C	12/01/92	01/31/93	100	424
TOTAL							**1887**
Agri Beef							0
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**1887**
	1993						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/93	07/31/93	100	834
		208	C	10/01/93	02/28/94	100	1033
TOTAL							**1867**
Agri Beef		810	S	12/31/93	12/31/93	59	3
		1620	S	01/01/94	01/01/94	59	6
		2430	S	01/02/94	01/17/94	59	151
TOTAL							**160**
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**2027**
	1994						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/94	10/31/94	100	1463
		208	C	12/01/94	01/31/95	100	424
		208	C	02/01/95	02/28/95	100	191
TOTAL							**2078**
Agri Beef		2520	S	02/11/95	02/26/95	59	156
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**2234**

	1995						
Mike Burke		208	C	03/01/95	03/31/95	100	212
		208	C	06/01/95	10/31/95	100	1046
		208	C	12/01/95	02/29/960	100	622
TOTAL							**1880**
Agri Beef							0
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**1880**
	1996						
Mike Burke		208	C	04/01/96	10/31/96	100	1463
TOTAL							**1463**
Agri Beef							0
ALLOTMENT TOTAL							**1463**

b. Wildlife

1. Mule Deer

Allotment specific estimates of mule deer numbers occurring in the Goldbanks Allotment are not available. Mule deer populations in Northern Nevada increased from an extended period of depressed numbers in the middle 1980's. This trend has not been apparent over the last two years. Over this period, numbers have actually declined slightly. The cause of this shift is unclear.

2. Sage Grouse

Sage grouse densities in the Goldbanks allotment are not known. General trends have been downward over the last several years. There are two known brood rearing areas in the Goldbanks Allotment.

3. Big Horn Sheep

Thirty-four head of bighorn sheep were released in the Tobin Range in the summer of 1984 and another nineteen head were released in 1991. By 1993/1994 NDOW reported that there were no bighorn sheep left on the Tobin Range.

c. Wild Horses

No wild horses have been reported using this allotment.

2. Climate

The following table describes the amount of annual, water year (October - September), winter (November - February), crop year (September - August), and percent of normal precipitation recorded at the Winnemucca NOAA weather station from 1989 through 1995.

Table #6. Climate Data from the Winnemucca NOAA Weather Station.

YEAR	ANNUAL 8.25"	% of NORMAL	WATER YEAR 8.29"	% of NORMAL	WINTER 3.37"	% of NORMAL	CROP YEAR 8.29	% of NORMAL
1989	5.56	67%	6.27	76%	3.03	90%	5.62	68%
1990	6.37	77%	7.0	84%	1.79	53%	7.72	93%
1991	7.8	95%	6.56	79%	1.43	42%	5.96	72%
1992	4.14	50%	4.11	50%	1.74	52%	4.85	59%
1993	7.27	88%	8.33	100%	4.13	123%	8.37	101%
1994	7.58	92%	5.98	72%	1.72	51%	5.8	70%.
1995	9.82	119%	10.72	129%	3.78	112%	10.87	131%

3. Utilization - Utilization was mapped for portions of the allotment from 1989 - 1995. The tables below reflect this data by pasture.

a. Upland Utilization

1.) Mud Springs Pasture

Table #7. Mud Springs Pasture Utilization

Use Class	**1989** 12/1 -1/31 4/1 - 4/30		**1992** 12/1 - 1/31 4/1 - 4/30		**1994** 12/1- 1/31 4/1 - 4/30	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
No Apparent Use					1,115	9%
Slight					5,609	47%
Light	6,448	47%			2,706	22%
Moderate	6,883	50%	4,064	80%	523	4%
Heavy	447	3%	985	20%	2,004	17%
Severe						

2.) Panther Canyon Pasture

Table #8. Panther Canyon Utilization

Use Class	**1989** - Rest		**1993** - 4/1 to 6/15		**1994** - 7/16 to 9/30	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
No Apparent Use	1,573	100%	759	16%	504	18%
Slight			3,964	84%	2,298	82%
Light						
Moderate						
Heavy						
Severe						

3.) China Pasture

Table #9. China Pasture Utilization

Use Class	**1990** Rest		**1992** 7/16 to 9/30		**1994** 5/1 -7/15		**1995** 6/16 - 7/31	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
No Apparent Use					1260	29.6%		
Slight	1076	31%					2519	86%
Light			430	33%	2299	54%		
Moderate	2432	69%	729	56%	697	16.4%	396	14%
Heavy			135	11%				
Severe								

4.) Pollard Pasture

Table #10. Pollard Pasture Utilization

Use Class	**1992** - 5/1 to 7/15		**1993** - 6/1 to 7/31		**1995** - 4/1 to 6/15	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Use Class						
			36	2%	154	6%
No Apparent Use	1308	80%	763	45%	1875	76%
Moderate	324	20%	611	36%	444	18%
Heavy			268	16%		
Severe			8*	1%		

* gathering place for cows, not severe use.

5.) Jim Creek Spray Field

No use pattern mapping was conducted in this pasture.

b. Riparian Utilization

1. 1993 - Pollard Creek

A majority of the riparian vegetation for Pollard Creek was slight and light on the herbaceous vegetation. Overall the use on the willows was slight with the lower branches heavily used (mechanical damage) where the cows shade up under the larger willows. Moderate use was found on Nebraska sedge at the spring complex at the headwaters of Pollard Creek. The Juncus spp. received no use to slight use where they occur on the meadow complex. The benches above the riparian area are areas of high concentration for livestock. The 1985 wildfire removed the woody species from the canyon bottom, which is now dominated by crested wheatgrass, basin wildrye, Bottlebrush squirreltail, bluegrass, and cheatgrass. The area was heavily used and could result in siltation to the creek.

2. 1995 - Pollard Creek

A utilization transect was conducted starting at stream survey station 1. Bluegrass received 60% use and Juncus spp received 32% use. Trespass livestock from the South Buffalo Allotment were found using this pasture after the permittee moved his cows into the next pasture. The trespass livestock concentrated in the riparian area. This utilization reflects the use by the permittee and the trespass livestock.

3. At least since the fall of 1992, a group of hunters have camped at the mouth of Pollard Creek on private land. They have placed a temporary corral for horses at their campsite that crosses the creek.

4. Trend

Frequency trend transects have been established on eight of the eleven key areas in the allotment. Species frequency has been measured twice on four of the key areas providing an indication of trend in these areas. Statistical significance of changes was determined by comparison of confidence intervals at the 95% confidence level.

The following tables show percent frequency by species by year.

a. Mud Springs Pasture (Key Area 5-1)

SPECIES	1979	1981	1994
POSA	11	45	59
SIHY	28	56	43
BRTE	92	76	91
ATCO	40	23	40
ARSP5	26	15	8
ARTRW			1

b. Panther Canyon Pasture (Key Area 1-1)

SPECIES	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1994
POSA	89	92	94	98	98	99
SIHY	13	36	38	31	22	41
ELCI2	6	1				
BRTE	2		16	4	1	
PHLOX	30	23	19	21	40	38

ASTRA		2	3	3		
AAFF			50	67		
PPFF						4
ARTR	50	14	23	30	35	48
GRSP			1			
Vegetation				29		12
Bare Ground				16		55
Litter				55		33
Rock						

c. China Pasture (Key Area 2-1)

SPECIES	**1979**	**1981**	**1983**	**1987**	**1994**
POSA	80	83	85	44	100
SIHY	17	20	20	4	41
STTH2	1	2	14	6	
BRTE	1		4		
LOMAT					1
PHHO		19	11	19	4
ASTRA		4	5	2	4
AAFF				1	5
ARTR	53	25	29	31	37

d. Pollard Pasture

In 1994, the two trend sites within the Pollard Pasture were not found. No trend data has been collected in this pasture since 1981.

e. Jim Creek Spray Field (Key Area 3-1)

SPECIES	1979	1981	1987	1995
POSA	74	83	51	98
SIHY	1	14	18	39
STTH2	2	1	49	
BRTE	45	11	4	37
ASPU		11		
DEPI		2		5
PHLOX			21	26
ARTR	35	19	47	23
TEGL	4	3	5	2

Table 7. Summary of Frequency Trend Transects for Key areas on the Goldbanks Allotment

Key Area	Years Read	Significant Changes	Indicated Trend
5-1	79, 81, 94	Increase in POSA,SIHY Decrease in ARSP, ATCO Static	Static
1-1	79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 94	Increase in SIHY, POSA Decrease in vegetative cover, Increase in % bare ground	Static

2-1	79, 81, 83, 87, 89	Increase in SIHY, POSA STTH2 static	Static
3-1	79, 81, 87, 95	Increase in SIHY, POSA STTH2 static	Static

5. Ecological Site Inventory

An ecological site inventory was completed in 1988. The following lists the acres and percentage by seral stage for the Goldbanks Allotment:

Seral Stage	Acres	Percentages
Early	1930	5
Mid	19360	50
Late	4963	13
Potential	11799	31
Barren	223	<1
Rock	0	

Table # 11 Summary of the Ecological Site Inventory for the Goldbanks Allotment.

Ecological Site	Seral Stage							
	Early		Mid		Late		PNC	
	acres	percent	acres	percent	acres	percent	acres	percent
024XY002	0	0	523	1	864	2	11302	30
024XY005	0	0	9905	26	0	0	0	0
024XY011	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	<1
024XY016	0	0	168	<1	0	0	0	0
024XY020	630	2	1269	3	1544	4	0	0
024XY021	0	0	0	0	873	2	0	0
024XY023	0	0	0	0	1173	3	0	0
024XY027	0	0	1767	5	0	0	0	0
024XY028	0	0	3351	9	0	0	0	0
024XY029	1300	3	1518	4	0	0	0	0

024XY032	0	0	0	0	509	1	467	1
024XY033	0	0	859	2	0	0	0	0
Barren	223 acres; <1%							

The following paragraphs describe the plant community dynamics of the prevalent ecological sites within the Goldbanks Allotment.

Ecological Site 024XY002

Ecological Site 024XY002 loamy 5-8" p.z. occurs on low hills, fan piedmonts, alluvial flats on all aspects. Elevations are 4000 to 6000 feet. The plant community is dominated by shadscale, budsage, and Indian ricegrass. The potential vegetative composition is about 25% grasses, 5% forbs, and 70% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, shadescale increases in density while Indian ricegrass and budsage compositions are reduced. With further site degradation, shadscale may become dominant to the extent of a nearly pure stand. Cheatgrass, halogeton, and tansy mustard are species likely to invade this site. Ecological site 024XY002 comprises 33 percent of the Goldbanks Allotment. 91% at potential, 6% at late, and 3% at mid seral condition.

Ecological Site 024XY005

Ecological site 024XY005 loamy 8-10" p.z. occurs on lower mountains, hills, and piedmont slopes of all exposures. Elevations are 5000 to 6500 feet. The plant community is dominated by Thurbers needlegrass and Wyoming sagebrush. The potential vegetative composition is 55% grasses, 5% forbs, and 40% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, Thurbers needlegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass decrease and are replaced by bluegrasses and bottlebrush squirreltail as the dominant grasses in the understory. Cheatgrass and other annuals will begin to dominate the understory as conditions deteriorate. Wyoming big sagebrush and downy rabbitbrush increase in the overstory and become the dominant vegetation on this site. Where site degradation has been fire induced, broom snakeweed may comprise 30-50% of the total annual yield. Ecological site 024XY005 comprises 26 percent of the Goldbanks Allotment all of which is in mid seral.

Ecological Site 024XY020

Ecological site 024XY020 droughty loam 8-10" p.z. occurs on hills, mid to upper piedmont slopes and on inset fans on lower piedmont slopes. Elevations are 4000 to 6000 feet. The plant community is dominated by Wyoming big sagebrush, spiny hopsage, Thurber needlegrass, and Indian ricegrass. Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail are important grasses on this site. Potential vegetative composition is about 50% grasses, 5% forbs, and 45% shrubs. Where management results in abusive livestock use, Wyoming big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, snakeweed, and other shrubs increase in density, as Thurber needlegrass and Indian ricegrass decrease in the understory. Cheatgrass, halogeton, and annual mustard are species likely to invade this site. Ecological site 024XY020 comprises 9 percent of the Goldbanks Allotment. 45% is late, 33% is mid, and 22% is in early seral condition.

Ecological Site 024XY028

Ecological site 024XY028 south slope 8-12"p.z. occurs on southerly exposed side slopes of upper piedmont slopes, hills, and lower mountains. Elevations are 5500 to 7000 feet. The plant community is dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass. Big sagebrush, Thurber needlegrass and basin wild rye are other important species associated with this site. Potential vegetative composition is about 65% grasses, 10% forbs, and 25% shrubs. Where management results in abusive use by livestock, bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurber needlegrass decrease and Sandberg and bottlebrush squirreltail increase in understory. Big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, horsebrush, and arrowleaf balsamroot increase in density and become dominant overstory vegetation. Cheatgrass and thistles are species likely to invade this site. Ecological site 024XY028 comprises 9 percent of the Goldbanks Allotment. All of this site is in mid seral condition.

6. Wildlife Habitat

a. Mule Deer

Mule deer habitat in the Goldbanks allotment is varied and includes spring, yearlong, and summer ranges. The Goldbanks allotment includes portions of two mountain ranges the East and Tobins. As a result, two different habitat associations occur. The East range portion of the allotment contains yearlong range which is predominantly used in the winter. Within this habitat there are two use situations which occur. The extreme western portion of the range west of the Quicksilver road is the traditional winter range. East of there extending out into the Goldbanks hills, is lower elevation habitat used in the most difficult years when snow accumulations drive them from the higher elevation

areas to the west.

Portions of the allotment along the Tobin Range contain yearlong range used primarily in the winter and spring. In addition, a significant amount of summer habitat also occurs within the allotment in the higher elevations.

A key area was established in the Tobins portion of the range in deer winter habitat in 1990. The following table summarizes conditions found at key area 105-4.

105-4 winter range		key browse age class:	poor
Range Site 024XY005NV		key browse form class:	good
Loamy 8-10"		average veg. height:	11"
key browse species: ARTRW		Disturbance Rating:	good

Overall Habitat Rating: POOR

Species	Species % comp.	Canopy Cover %	Frequency of Occurrence	forage preference value
POSE	16.7	4.1	92	good
SIHY	7.3	1.8	38	fair
BRTE	2.2	0.5	22	fair
TOTAL GRASS	26.2	6.4		
PHLOX	1.8	0.5	18	poor
TOTAL FORB	1.8	0.5		
ARTRW	51.6	12.7	44	fair
TEGL	20.3	4.9	28	poor
TOTAL SHRUB	71.9	17.6		

The overall mule deer habitat condition rating for approximately 3,000 acres represented by the key area is poor. Key area 105-4 is located in a sagebrush/grass community at an elevation of 5,650 feet. The range site description for this area suggests a potential vegetation community of 55% grass, 5% forb and 40% shrubs could occur. Based on the above data, the current condition of the vegetative community is poor both in terms of diversity and quality.

A total of six species were encountered at 105-4. Of these, only one was rated as good winter forage. Three species were rated as fair winter forage.

The disturbance/interference rating was good as a result of the relative inaccessibility of most of the range. Sagebrush was selected as the key browse species and was evaluated for age and form class condition. Age class distribution was poor. This was again attributed to the natural characteristic of a sagebrush community which is overmature. Form class was good. Thermal and protective cover was poor over this portion of the range as a result of low vegetation heights(11 inches) and topography tending toward a north and west aspect which is the origin of prevailing winter storms.

Winter habitat conditions in the Goldbanks Hills portion of the allotment have not been evaluated.

b. Sage grouse

1. General Habitat Requirements for Sage Grouse

The Western States Sage Grouse Committee presented a comprehensive guide to habitat requirements for sage grouse in their 1974 Guidelines for Habitat Protection in Sage Grouse Range (Report). In this report, habitat conditions observed most frequently, and which resulted in the highest success for sage grouse strutting, nesting, brood rearing, and wintering ranges in the west are summarized.

The following criteria were found to sustain the highest levels of use and success by sage grouse:

a) Strutting Habitat

Low sagebrush or brush free areas for strutting and nearby areas of sagebrush having 20-50% canopy cover for loafing.

b) Nesting Habitat

1) Areas within 2 miles of strutting grounds.
2) Sagebrush between 7 and 31 inches in height (Optimum = 16 inches)
3) Sagebrush canopy cover of 20-30% (optimum = 27%).

c) Brood Rearing habitat

1) Sagebrush canopy cover of 10-21% (optimum = 14%).
2) High composition of forb species.
3) Vigorous-available meadow vegetation in late summer and fall.

d) Winter habitat

1) Greater than 20% sagebrush canopy cover.
2) Areas do not maintain high winter snow depth due to either elevation or topography.

In addition NDOW personnel cited various literature sources which indicated the importance of good understory growth beneath and surrounding the nest bush. Understory cover helps to conceal the nests from predation from the air and creates a microclimate around the nest bush.

2. Habitat Conditions using Wildlife Study Areas

Specific sage grouse habitat condition studies have not been established. However, data collected from key area 105-4 can provide limited information in regard to existing habitat suitability of sage grouse. Studies data was evaluated with respect to the criteria identified above for nesting brood rearing and wintering habitats and the suitability of this habitat for these sage grouse uses was determined. Based on the above criteria, the habitat represented by 105-4 would seem be only marginally suitable for nesting and winter use by sage grouse.

Wildlife Study area 105-4 is a sagebrush dominated community representing 30-40% of the identified habitat in the allotment. Species richness and forb composition are poor. Sagebrush

canopy cover is 12.7% and average vegetation height is 11 inches. Water is fairly limited, but available in several of the drainages. Understory nesting cover was present, but was dominated by cheatgrass, and was at less than its potential, based on the range site description.

a) Nesting Habitat Quality

Nesting habitat quality is fair. Sagebrush canopy cover is below standard, and sagebrush height is slightly below optimum. Meadow habitats are limited in their occurance, but are available in some of the drainages within an average distance of 1.5 to 2 miles. Understory nesting cover was present but was dominated by cheatgrass

b) Winter Habitat Quality

Sagebrush canopy cover is below the minimum recommended value. Snow accumulations along the western front of the Tobin mountains are generally higher than along other nearby ranges, and may be limiting in some years due to the limited height of the sagebrush. Winter habitat quality is fair.

c. Bighorn sheep

Specific studies to evaluate the condition and trend of bighorn sheep habitat in the allotment have not been established.

7. Fisheries/Riparian Condition

Goldbanks allotment contains one perennial stream. Pollard Creek is located on the north end of the Tobin Range at an elevation of 6,300 feet. Perennial flow begins at a large spring complex at an elevation of 8,113 feet. The creek flows a total of four miles; 3.4 miles is privately owned. Publicly administered portions of Pollard Canyon Creek occur in two larger and three smaller sections. The two larger sections are located approximately midway down the creek and collectively include just under one half mile of stream. The creek terminates at a diversion on private land at an elevation of 5,230 feet.

Pollard Canyon Creek contains a self sustaining brook trout fishery. Population density data has not been collected on this stream

Riparian habitat on the creek is dominated over much of its length by herbaceous riparian vegetation with a few scattered willow and rose shrubs. There is one small aspen stand along the creek. Approximately one third of the stream channel is deeply incised and confined with floodplain widths being only slightly larger than channel widths.

A fishery habitat survey was conducted on Pollard Canyon Creek in August, 1995. The two larger public sections of creek were surveyed during this study. Refer to the following table for summarized habitat conditions by station.

Table # 12 *Comparison Of Stream Habitat Conditions For the Public Lands Portion of Pollard Canyon Creek August, 1995, Pershing County, Nevada*

survey station	overall % habitat optimum	% stream width in pools	pool/ riffle ratio	pool quality % optimum	% stream bottom desirable material	bank cover % Optimum	bank stab. % Optimum	Average Stream Depth (feet)	Average Stream Width (feet)	Width/ depth Ratio
1	27.6	68.9	62.1	0	13.4	25	37.5	0.14'	5.2'	37.1
2	39.9	85.9	28.2	16.8	100	25	29.7	0.28'	7.8'	27.8

Overall, habitat conditions for Pollard Canyon Creek are very poor. The greatest limiting factors to habitat condition on Pollard Canyon Creek are bank cover, bank stability, width/depth ratio, and pool quality.

8. Riparian Functionality

Lotic riparian functionality was conducted on Pollard Canyon Creek in 1993. The result of this assessment was a determination that the creek was functioning at risk with a static trend. The primary limiting factors determined to be contributing to the condition at the time were: land status, effects of a 1980 wildfire which removed much of the native shrub cover on the uplands, and a lack of woody vegetation or well developed herbaceous streambanks to provide structure to the floodplain and encourage development of sinuosity and for the dissipation of runoff energy.

There are approximately 40 acres of wetland-riparian (lentic) habitat in the Goldbanks Allotment. Lentic functionality has not been completed on these acres.

9. Wild Horse Distribution

No wild horses have been observed within the Goldbanks Allotment.

10. Wild Horse Removal Data

Removal records do not indicate the specific allotment where wild horses were removed. The number of horses shown below is the total number of horses that were removed from the East Range Herd Area (HA).

East Range HA	
1977	296 horses
1980	374 horses
1981	557 horses
September 1985	77 horses
November/December 1986	580 horses 7 mules

11. Threatened/Endangered Species

No on the ground field observations have been conducted for sensitive/protected plant and animal species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife species of concern and Bureau of Land Management sensitive species for the Goldbanks Allotment are:

Mammals

Pygmy rabbit	*Brachylagus idahoensis*
Spotted bat	*Euderma maculatum*
Small-footed myotis	*Myotis ciliolabrum*
Long-eared myotis	*Myotis evotis*
Fringed myotis	*Myotis thysanodes*
Long-legged myotis	*Myotis volans*
Pale Townsend's big-eared bat	*Plecotus townsendii pallescens*
Pacific Towsend's big-eared bat	*Plecotus townsendii townsendii*

Birds

Northern goshawk	*Accipiter gentilis*
Western burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia hypugea*
Black tern	*Chlidonias niger*
Least bittern	*Ixobrychus exilis hesperis*
White-faced ibis	*Plegabis chihi*
Sage Grouse	*Controcercus urophasianus*

Plants

Windloving buckwheat	*Eriogonum anemophium*
Nevada oryctes	*Oryctes nevadensis*

12. Mining Activity

The Kinross Goldbanks Mining Company had originally proposed to operate a mine located approximately 35 miles south of Winnemucca in the Goldbanks Hills. The project area of the mine would have encompassed all of the Mud Springs Pasture west of Grass Valley Road and would have impacted a well and two spring developments within the Goldbanks Allotment. Presently, implementation of the mine is on hold. The company has contacted the BLM and requested that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be discontinued. Therefore, AUM loss due to the mine and mitigation for lost water developments within the allotment will not be addressed.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. Short Term

1. Total Utilization of key plant species in 40 acres of wetland riparian habitat shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted by an approved activity plan.

   Met along Pollard Creek in 1993. Not met on bluegrass in 1995, but was met on Juncus in 1995.

2. Utilization of key plant species in upland habitats shall not exceed 50% except where adjusted by an approved activity plan.

a.	Mud Spring Pasture	Met throughout the evaluation period except for a couple of areas that received heavy use. The heavy use areas include the area immediately around the ranch east to the pasture boundary and adjacent to a spring development in the East Range.
b.	Panther Pasture	Met throughout the evaluation period.
c.	China Pasture	Met except for the area immediately around Petain Spring.

d.	Pollard Pasture	Met in 1992 and 1995. Not met in 1993 on the benches above Pollard Creek.

B. Long Term

1. Improve or maintain the condition of 40 acres of wetland riparian habitat type to good or higher condition.

   The BLM portion of Pollard Creek was functioning ar risk with static trend. No other condition monitoring was done.

2. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and nesting wintering habitat and improve brooding habitat by:

   a. Following NDOW's guidelines for Vegetal Control Programs in sage grouse habitat in Nevada.

   b. Maintain sagebrush canopy at 30% in sage grouse nesting areas where sagebrush does not exceed three (3) feet in height.

      The Vegetal Control Program guideline identified by NDOW has been met. There has been no vegetal manipulations as a result of new range improvement projects such as fencing, brush control, or pipelines. The sagebrush canopy cover objective has not been met. Monitoring data shows that canopy cover within the key area was 12.7%; the objective is to maintain sagebrush canopy at 30%.

3. Manage, maintain, or improve 5 acres of aspen woodland habitat type to good condition.

   Unknown. Five acres of aspen does not exist on the Goldbanks Allotment. Only about a half acre exists on private land within the allotment in the Pollard Pasture.

4. Manage, maintain, or improve public rangeland habitat condition to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial forage demand for big game of 92 AUMs for mule deer, and 18 AUMs for bighorn sheep by:

   a. Improving or maintaining to good condition East Range DY-3, Tobin Range DY-4, and Tobin Range DS-4.

Not met on the Tobin portion of mule deer winter range. The current habitat condition rating was poor. However, there is some question to the validity of the key area that was used to assess condition. The objective states that we will maintain to good condition mule deer habitat in the Tobin Range; at potential the habitat condition rating for key area 105-4 is only fair. We do not know if this objective is met for mule deer habitat in the East Range.

b. Improving or maintaining potential bighorn sheep habitat in good condition Tobin Range BS-4 and BW-3.

Unknown. No bighorn sheep habitat studies have been done in the Goldbanks Allotment.

5. Mange, maintain, and improve public rangeland conditions to provide forage on a sustained yield basis with an initial stocking level of 2,051 AUMs.

Met. The actual use has been within the 2,051 AUMs, except for 1994 and 1995 when Temporary Non-Renewable (TNR) was issued. Upland utilization has been at or below acceptable levels for the allotment except for an area adjacent to Mud Springs Ranch which has received repeated heavy use.

6. Improve range/ecological condition from fair to good on 4,100 acres and good to excellent on 112 acres.

Met. The exact location of the above acreages are unknown and the objective is being measured as forage condition rather than ecological condition. An ecological site inventory (ESI) was completed for the allotment in 1988. Based on this ESI a majority of the area is within the mid to late seral condition, with approximately one third of the allotment is in the Potential Natural Community class.

7. Remove all wild horses/burros from the East Range Herd Area, (This Herd Area includes the Goldbanks Allotment), unless a cooperative agreement with the affected land owner is obtained.

Met.

8. The East Range Herd Area boundary will be retained for administrative purposes.

Met.

C. Standards

Standard 1.- Soils processes will be appropriate to soil types, climate and land form. As indicated by:

* Surface litter is appropriate to the potential of the site;

* Soil crusting formations, in shrub interspaces, and soil compaction are minimal or not in evidence, allowing for appropriate infiltration of water;

* Hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle and energy flow are adequate for the vegetative communities;

* Plant communities are diverse and vigorous, and there is evidence of recruitment; and

* Basal and canopy cover (vegetative) is appropriate for site potential.

Conclusions:

This standard is being met based on ESI and utilization data. The majority of the allotment is within the mid to later seral stages, with approximately one third of the allotment at PNC. Overall, livestock management is meeting short term upland utilization levels, therefore there is adequate plant material left to provide surface litter and be available for nutrient cycles and energy flows. The ESI data documents the communities are diverse and vigorous.

Standard 2. - Riparian/Wetlands: Riparian/Wetland systems are in properly functioning condition. As indicated by:

* Sinuosity, width/depth ratio and gradient are adequate to dissipate streamflow without excessive erosion or deposition;

* Riparian vegetation is adequate to dissipate high energy flow and protect banks from excessive erosion; and

* Plant species diversity is appropriate to riparian-wetland systems.

Conclusions:

The standard is not being met. The Goldbanks allotment contains one perennial stream, Pollard Creek which is located at the north end of the Tobin Range. The total length of the stream is approximately four miles with 3.4 miles (85%) of the stream occurring on private land. Based on lotic riparian functionality collected on Pollard Creek in 1993, the public portion of the creek was classified as functioning at risk with a static trend. There were several factors which contributed to this rating. As a result of fire in 1980 much of the native shrub cover on the uplands as well as the streambanks was removed and was replaced by cheatgrass. The majority of the stream is now characterized by a lack of woody vegetation or well developed herbaceous streambanks which results in riparian vegetation which is not adequate to dissipate high energy flow and protect banks. This vegetative makeup also fails to provide structure to the floodplain and does not encourage the development of sinuosity or provide for the dissipation of runoff energy.

Monitoring indicates that on years when livestock use is extended past the middle of July, herbaceous utilization objectives are not being met along Pollard Creek and the woody vegetation along the creek is receiving mechanical damage.

Standard 3. - Water Quality: Water quality criteria in Nevada or California State Law shall be achieved or maintained. As indicated by:

* Chemical constituents do not exceed the water quality standards;

* Physical constituents do not exceed the water quality standards:

* Biological constituents do not exceed the water quality standards; and

* The water quality of all water bodies, including ground water located on or influenced by BLM lands will meet or exceed the Applicable Nevada or California water quality standards. Water

quality Standards for surface and ground waters include the designated beneficial uses, numeric criteria, narrative criteria, antidegredation requirements set forth under State law, and as found in Section 303 (c) of the Clean Water Act.

Conclusions:

It is unknown if this standard is met.

Standard 4. - Plant and Animal Habitat: Populations and communities of native plant species and habitats for native animal species are healthy, productive and diverse.

* Good representation of life forms and numbers of species.

* Good diversity of height, size, and distribution of plants.

* Number of wood stalks, seed stalks, and seed production adequate for stand maintenance; and

* Vegetative mosaic, vegetative corridors for wildlife, and minimal habitat fragmentation.

Conclusions:

This standard is being met based on ESI and trend data. Over 90% of the allotment has vegetative cover that is appropriate for site potentials. The ESI and trend data documents that these communities are diverse and self perpetuating.

Standard 5. - Special Status Species Habitat: Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of special status species. As indicated by:

* Habitat areas are large enough to support viable populations of special status species;

* Special status plant and animal numbers and ages appear to ensure stable populations;

* Good diversity of height, size, and distribution of plants;

* Number of wood stalks, seed stalks, and seed production adequate for stand maintenance; and

* Vegetative mosaic, vegetative corridors for wildlife, and minimal habitat fragmentation.

Conclusions:

Unknown. Sage grouse are the most likely special status species which would occur on the allotment. We do not have specific key areas established at this time to determine habitat condition ratings for sage grouse or have specific data relating to the actual use of the existing habitat by sage grouse populations.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Carrying Capacity

The total carrying capacity was determined for the Goldbanks Allotment using the potential stocking level calculation from BLM TR 4400-7 (See Appendix II). The potential stocking level is the level of use that could be achieved on a management unit, at the desired utilization figure, assuming utilization could be completely uniform. The potential stocking level calculation is:

$$\frac{\text{actual use}}{\text{average utilization}} = \frac{\text{potential actual use}}{\text{desired average utilization}}$$

The average utilization was calculated for each use area by averaging utilization for each use area by year.

The potential stocking level for each use area is as follows:

1. Mud Springs Pasture (winter) - 1,348 AUMs

   This included sheep actual use. This is the only pasture that the sheep used during the evaluation period.

2. Summer Pastures

   a. Panther - 3275 AUMs
   b. China - 849 AUMs
   c. Pollard - 684 AUMs

Recommendation is to use the Pollard Pasture as the limiting factor and use 684 AUMs as the basis for the Summer Pastures With one pasture being rested on a yearly basis.

3. Jim Creek Sprayfield - No utilization during the evaluation period.

4. Authorized Use will be adjusted as follows:

	Total # of AUMs of specified livestock grazing	Historical Suspended
From:	2,068	452

	Authorized Use
To:	2,716

Of the 2,716 AUMs available 92% or 2,499 AUMs will be allocated for cattle and 8% or 217 AUMs will be allocated for sheep use. Allocations were based on original proportions from permitted use.

B. Grazing System

1. Alternative 1 Retain existing grazing system

treatment 1	Graze from 5/1 to 7/15	
treatment 2	rest until seedripe (July 15) for plant vigor, food storage, forage production, and seed production.	Graze from 7/16 to 9/30.
treatment 3	Rest for vigor, food storage, forage production, and establishment of seedlings.	
treatment 4	Graze from 10/1 to 10/30	
treatment 5	Graze from 12/1 to 1/31 and 4/1 to 4/30	

The sequence of the treatments is shown below:

Pasture	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Pollard Canyon	treatment 1	treatment 2	treatment 3
Panther Canyon	treatment 3	treatment 1	treatment 2
China Mountain	treatment 2	treatment 3	treatment 1
Jim Creek Sprayfield	treatment 4	treatment 4	treatment 4
Mud Springs	treatment 5	treatment 5	treatment 5

2. Alternative 2 Modify existing grazing seasons as follows:

treatment 1	Graze from 05/15 to 07/31	
treatment 2	Rest until after seedripe (July 15) for plant vigor, food storage, forage production, and seed production.	Graze from 08/01 to 10/16
treatment 3	Rest for vigor, food storage, forage production, and establishment of seedlings.	
treatment 4	04/15 to 05/15	
treatment 5	Graze from 04/1 to 04/15, 10/16 to 10/31, & 12/01 to 02/28	

C. Sheep Use - Currently the sheep permit is for the month of October. Agri Beef would like to have flexibility to use the allotment from 02/01 to 04/30 to fit within their other grazing allotment sequences better. Proportionate to the increase for the cattle permit, the sheep permit would be increased from 161 AUMs to 198 AUMs.

1. Add sheep troughs to Panther Canyon pipeline

Rationale: To make water assessable to sheep as well as cattle, so that livestock can be better distributed within the allotment.

2. Construct exclosures in the China Pasture to protect wetland riparian habitat. Exact location of exclosures will be determine during the survey and design stage of the project process in coordination with all interested publics.

   Rationale: To protect and improve wetland riparian habitat, so that the utilization and condition objective for wetland riparian habitat can be met.

3. Recommend fencing the headwater meadow of Pollard Creek. This is private land belonging to Agri Beef. Bob Schweigert said he would discuss with Agri Beef.

   Rationale: To protect the headwater meadow from trampling and to provide good wetland riparian habitat.

E. Studies

Since there was some question of the validity of the key area that was used to assess condition of mule deer habitat (105-4); the working group recommends rerunning this study to make sure that it is located in the correct ecological site.

VII. CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION

A working group was established in August of 1996 to begin the evaluation process for this allotment. All of the interested public for this allotment were invited to participate in this process. As meetings were held, the minutes were sent out to all of the interested publics. The meetings were held:

1. August 19, 1996
2. May 15, 1997
3. June 12, 1997
4. July 10, 1997
5. August 28, 1997
6. October 2, 1997

VIII. SELECTED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

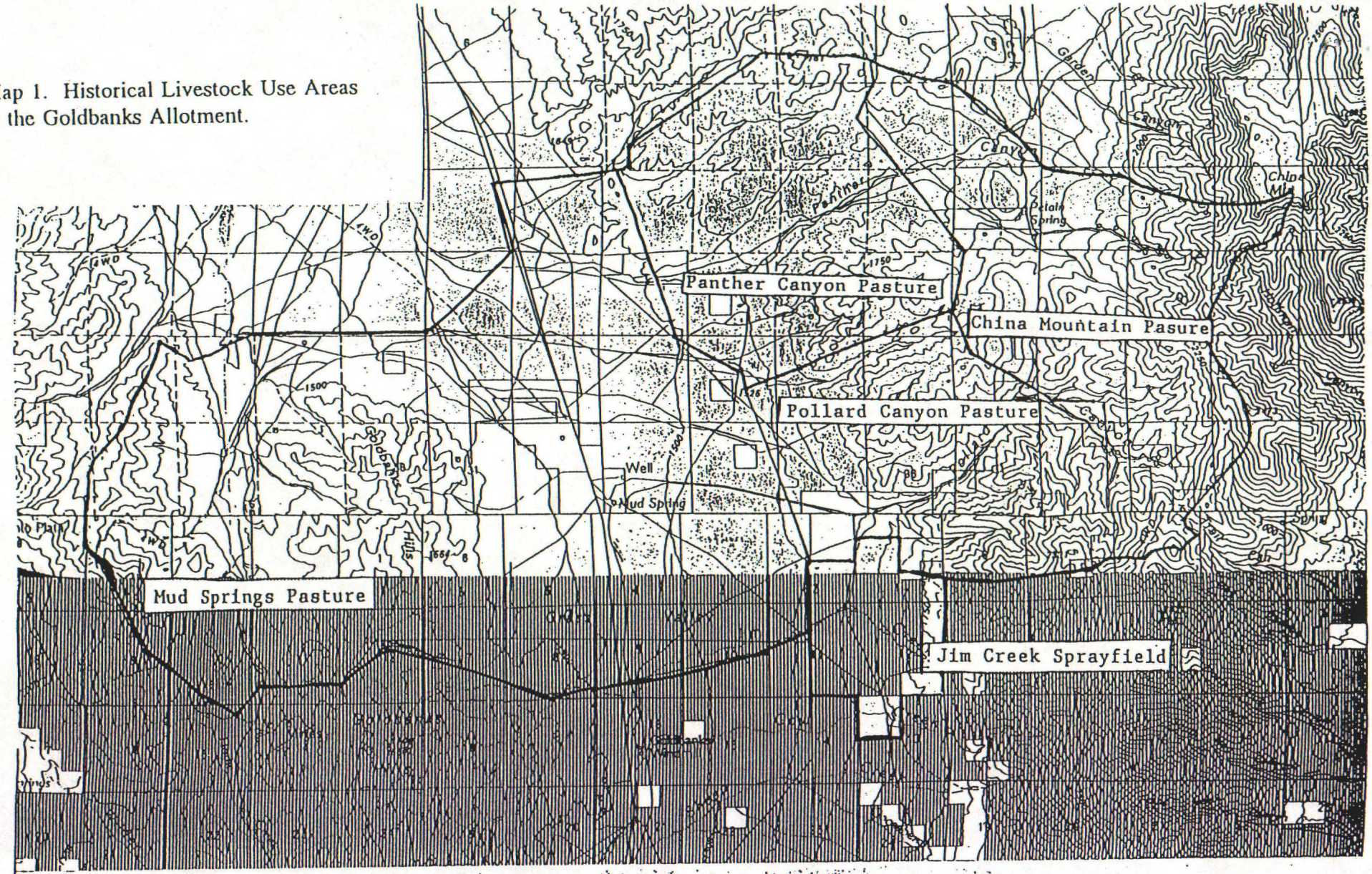
IX. RATIONALE

X. FUTURE MONITORING AND GRAZING ADJUSTMENTS

XI. NEPA REVIEW

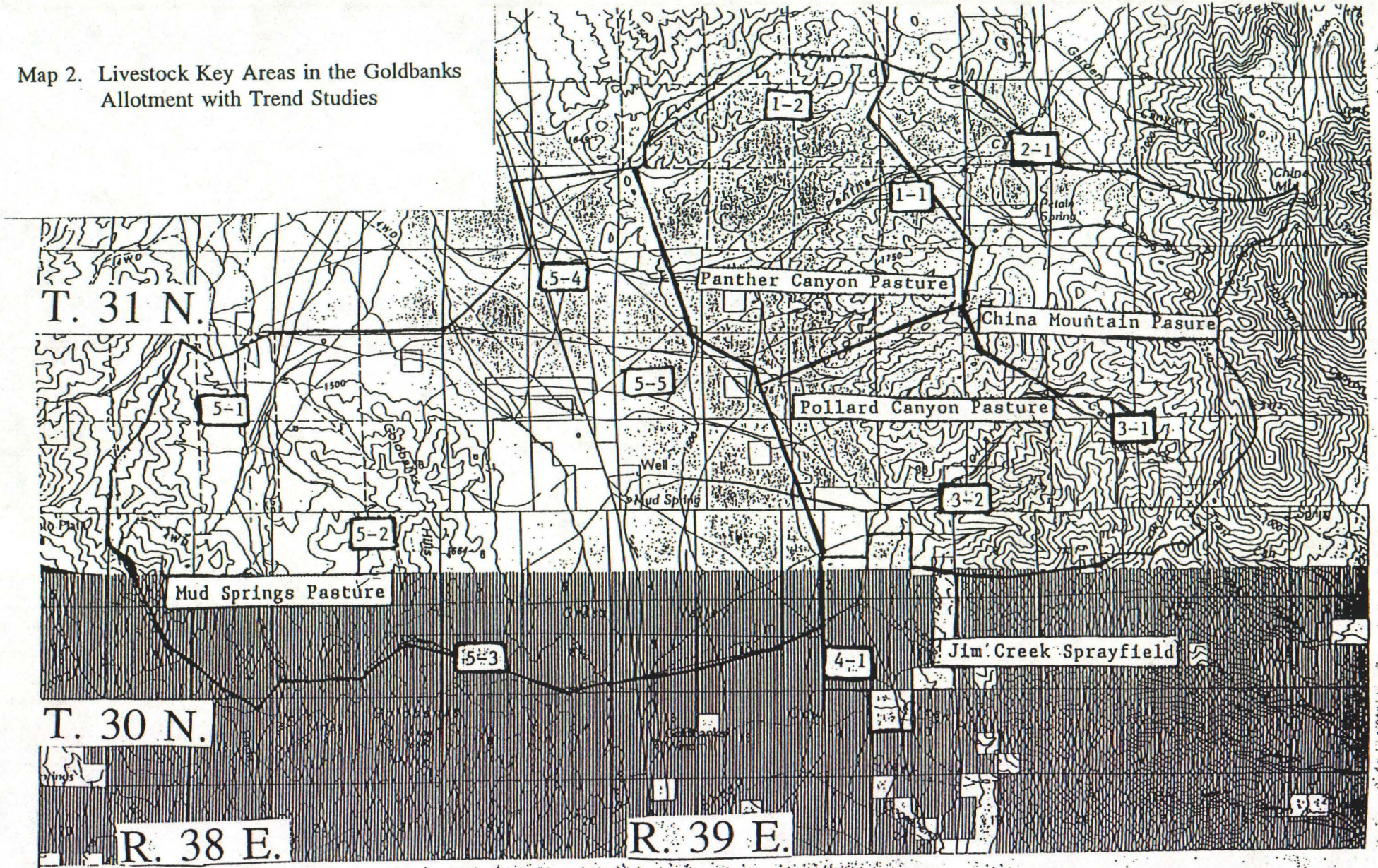
APPENDIX I

Map 1. Historical Livestock Use Areas
n the Goldbanks Allotment.



Goldbanks Allotment

Map 2. Livestock Key Areas in the Goldbanks Allotment with Trend Studies



Goldbanks Allotment

APPENDIX II

Utilization, Actual Use and Stocking Rate Calculations by Use Are for the Goldbanks Allotment

Data was analyzed and proper stocking levels calculated on a use area/pasture basis.

a. **Mud Springs Pasture**

1. **1989**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(6448 \times .30) + (6883 \times .50) + (447 \times .70)}{13{,}778} = .41$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Sheep	Total AUMs
611	159	770

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{770}{.41} = \frac{x}{.50} = 939 \text{ AUMs}$$

2. **1992**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(4064 \times .50) + (985 \times .70)}{5{,}049} = .54$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Sheep	Total
629	163	792

Stocking Rate Calculation

$\frac{792}{.54} = \frac{x}{.50}$ = 733 AUMs

3. **1994**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(1115 \times 0) + (5609 \times .10) + (2706 \times .30) + (523 \times .50) + (2004 \times .70)}{11,957} = .25$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Sheep	Total
1026	160	1186

Stocking Rate Calculation

$\frac{1186}{.25} = \frac{x}{.50}$ = 2372 AUMs

The average proper stocking level for the Mud Spring pasture is 1348 AUMs

b. **Panther Canyon Use Area**

1. **1993**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(759 \times 0) + (3964 \times .10)}{4,723} = .08$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total
520	520

Stocking Rate Calculations

$\frac{520}{.08} = \frac{x}{.50}$ = 3250

2. **1994**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(504 \times 0) + (2298 \times .10)}{2802} = .08$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total
527	527

Stocking Rate Calculations

$$\frac{527}{.08} = \frac{x}{.50} = 3300$$

The average proper stocking level for the Panther Canyon Use Area is 3,275 AUMs.

c. **China Mountain Use Area**

1. **1990**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(1076 \times .10) + (2432 \times .50)}{3508} = .38$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
520	520

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{520}{.38} = \frac{x}{.50} = 684$$

2. **1992**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(430 \times .30) + (729 \times .50) + (135 \times .70)}{1294} = .46$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total Aums
527	527

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{527}{.40} = \frac{x}{.50} = 765$$

3. **1994**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(1260 \times 0) + (2299 \times .30) + (697 \times .50)}{4256} = .24$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
520	520

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{520}{.24} = \frac{x}{.50} = 1083$$

4. **1995**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(2519 \times .10) + (396 \times .50)}{2915} = .15$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
315	315

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{315}{.15} = \frac{x}{.50} = 1053$$

The average proper stocking level for the China Mountain Use Area is 849 AUMs.

d. **Pollard Canyon Pasture**

1. **1992**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(1308 \times .30) + (324 \times .50)}{1632} = .34$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
520	520

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{520}{.34} = \frac{x}{.50} = 765$$

2. **1993**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(36 \times .10) + (763 \times .30) + (611 \times .50) + (268 \times .70) + (8 \times .90)}{1686} = .44$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
417	417

Stocking Rate Calculations

$$\frac{417}{.44} = \frac{x}{.50} = 475$$

3. **1995**

Weighted Average Utilization

$$\frac{(154 \times .10) + (1875 \times .30) + (444 \times .50)}{2473} = .32$$

Livestock Actual Use (AUMs)

Cattle	Total AUMs
520	520

Stocking Rate Calculation

$$\frac{520}{.32} = \frac{x}{.50} = 813$$

The average proper stocking level for the Pollard Pasture is 684 AUMs.