



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ELKO DISTRICT OFFICE  
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P.O. BOX 831  
ELKO, NEVADA 89801



IN REPLY REFER TO:

4130/4400  
(NV-015)

JUL 19 1990

*Rec'd  
7/25/90*

Ms. Dawn Lappin, Director (RH)  
WHOA! Inc.  
P.O. Box 555  
Reno, NV 89504

Dear Ms. Lappin:

I have enclosed a copy of the grazing agreement for the North Butte Valley Allotment of the Wells Resource Area, Elko District. This agreement documents the changes in livestock grazing practices resulting from the allotment evaluation. This agreement was signed following review and comment on the North Butte Valley Allotment evaluation by all interested parties. The Nevada Department of Wildlife and the livestock permittee, William G. Dickinson, were the only respondents to the evaluation, and supported the management actions as described in the enclosed grazing agreement.

This agreement is being sent to you for your information, and no response is necessary.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN A. PHILLIPS, Manager  
Wells Resource Area

Enclosure: Agreement

1993 FEB 14 A 11:07

NORTH BUTTE VALLEY  
GRAZING AGREEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

This agreement documents the changes in livestock grazing practices in the North Butte Valley Allotment, as a result of the allotment evaluation.

The agreed upon changes in livestock use are made in order to achieve the management objectives identified in the Wells Resource Management Plan, which are specifically related to authorized livestock grazing use on the North Butte Valley Allotment.

This agreement was prepared in consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the permittee and other affected interests.

II. ALLOTMENT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING MONITORING DATA

A. EVALUATION OF RANGELAND PROGRAM SUMMARY OBJECTIVES

1. Manage livestock grazing to sustain 1,645 AUMs active grazing preference.

The following data support the conclusion that livestock have been managed to sustain the active grazing preference.

Ecological status at all native sites has substantially improved or has been maintained in late-seral status since 1983. Crested wheatgrass production has also substantially increased since 1986, meeting key area objectives.

Trend on key species is up or has not significantly changed, (with the exception of one key species at one key area which decreased).

Because key area utilization was, on the average, lower than the key area objectives, the preferred stocking rate (calculated using the ratio method or linear regression) indicates that active preference should be adjusted up 91 to 326 AUMs (see Appendix 7 of allotment evaluation). However, because actual use and utilization are so poorly correlated, they should not be used to support adjustments to preference. Use pattern maps indicate that there are distribution problems that could be improved with use of existing range improvements and salting.

2. Maintain or improve the present ecological status and trend.

The Spring pasture key area improved from mid- to late-seral status. The North pasture remained static in late-seral status. South pasture remained in mid-seral status, but improved from 27 to 46 percent of PNC. (At this rate of improvement, the South pasture will most likely be in late-seral status by the year 2004.) Therefore, all sites have been maintained or have improved, meeting the ecological status part of this objective.

Trend of four of the six key species at the native key areas has not significantly changed. The frequency of occurrence of one key species increased and one decreased. Because trend of one key species decreased, this objective was not met.

3. Improve livestock distribution in Juniper pasture.

Water development is the primary means for improving livestock distribution in Juniper pasture. To date no water has been developed in that field. Pinyon Pipeline Extension is scheduled to be built in 1990.

4. Manage rangeland habitat to provide forage to sustain 480 AUMs of wild horse use.

Actual use (in AUMs) made by wild horses in North Butte Valley Allotment has not been measured. Herd censuses are not frequent enough to accurately determine numbers of wild horses through out the year.

Limited censuses indicate that herds are less than objective levels (480 AUMs, or 40 horses for 12 months). However, use pattern maps and key area utilization indicated that the forage needs of wild horses currently using the allotment are being met. In addition, production and frequency studies indicate that ecological status is improving or maintaining and that trend is generally static (see discussions for objectives one and two above.) Therefore, this objective has been met.

5. Improve or maintain mule deer summer and winter range to good or excellent condition to provide forage and habitat capable of supporting reasonable numbers of 819 mule deer with a forage demand of 840 AUMs.

Big game habitat studies have not been established in deer summer range, therefore, data is not available to monitor this objective. However, the North Butte Valley Allotment contains only a very small portion of DS-1 (approx. 500 acres). Because there is no water in this portion of DS-1, no conflicts exist between this mule deer summer range and livestock use in the North Butte Valley Allotment. Based on professional judgement, this objective has been met.

Pinyon and juniper invasion has lowered habitat conditions over much of DW-1. The Cherry Creek Habitat Management Plan (HMP) proposes that 10,000 acres of deer winter habitat in DW-1 be improved by selectively cutting 2,500 acres and burning and seeding 500 acres of pinyon-juniper range. Approximately 30 acres of pinyon and juniper in the North Butte Valley Allotment were selectively cut in 1987-88. Following completion of the project in 1988, this cut area was consumed by wildfire. Because habitat improvement objectives were negated by the wildfire, approximately 150 acres were proposed to be reseeded. Approximately 50 acres were seeded in the fall of 1988. The remaining 100 acres were seeded in the spring of 1989. The study location established before the 1988 fire will be used to monitor vegetative response and improvement of habitat conditions.

The Cherry Creek HMP did not identify specific selective cutting areas by allotment. Considering the suitability of North Butte Valley Allotment for cutting/habitat improvement, and the flexibility allowed by the HMP, the deer winter range objective will be met once that portion of the burn area in North Butte Valley Allotment has been successfully rehabilitated and at least one more selective cutting project is completed within the allotment (cutting projects average 20 to 40 acres in size). It should be noted that livestock make little or no grazing use in DW-1 within the North Butte Valley Allotment. Because conflicts between livestock and mule deer winter habitat do not currently exist, livestock use is not a factor in meeting or not meeting this objective.

6. Facilitate big game movements by evaluating and modifying existing fences to Bureau standards if necessary.

The Wells RMP provides for 50 miles of existing fence to be modified within the Cherry Creek RCA. The Cherry Creek HMP has identified 8.6 miles of existing fence within the North Butte Valley Allotment to be modified. No existing fences have been modified to date. Following are fences located in North Butte Valley that have been identified by the Cherry Creek HMP for modification:

<u>Project Number</u>	<u>Miles</u>	<u>Primary Species Benefitted</u>
4688	3.0	Mule deer
4589	2.6	Mule deer
4944	3.0	Mule deer

52-00110N-1185B-02V  
 1185B-1185B

7. Protect, enhance, or develop one spring, seep, and/or wet meadow for its wildlife values.

The Wells RMP provides for 25 spring improvement/development projects to be completed within the Cherry Creek RCA. The Cherry Creek HMP identified South Spring (T. 28 N., R. 62 E., Section 9, NE1/4SW1/4) located in North Butte Valley, to be improved or developed. Survey and design work was completed for this project in 1988. Construction is scheduled as early as 1989, pending availability of funds.

8. Improve crucial deer winter habitat by cutting pinyon and juniper.

See the discussion for objective 5 above.

#### B. EVALUATION OF KEY AREA OBJECTIVES

L001 -- Palomino Seeding. 1. Improve Crested wheatgrass production to 3.0 acres/AUM. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

1. Crested wheatgrass production increased from 4.4 acres/AUM to 2.6 acres/AUM, therefore this objective has been met.
2. Utilization at the key area was below 60% except in 1988 when it was 61%. Because sampling precision in utilization studies is not exact and the 1988 utilization level is so close to 60%, this objective has been met.

L002 -- Lower Seeding. 1. Improve Crested wheatgrass production to 3.0 acres/AUM. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

1. Production on Lower seeding increased from 5.1 acres/AUM to 3.4 acres/AUM, therefore this objective has been met.
2. Utilization was below 60% except in 1985, when it was 68%, therefore this objective has not been met.

L003 -- South Pasture. 1. Improve from current mid-seral ecological status to late-seral stage by 2004. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 50% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

1. South pasture improved from 27 percent of PNC to 46 percent, but remains in mid-seral status. In the short-term, this objective has not been met. However, adequate progress is being made toward attainment of this long-term objective.
2. Utilization of native key species exceeded 50% every year in the South pasture, therefore this objective was not met.

L004 -- North Pasture. 1. Maintain current late-seral stage. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 50% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

1. A change in the ecological site description at this key area resulted in a 1983 ecological status rating of 61, or late-seral. Late-seral status was maintained at this key area.
2. Key area utilization exceeded 50% two out of six years (54% in 1985, and 53% in 1987) in the North pasture. Because sampling precision in utilization studies is not exact and the 1985 and 1988 utilization levels are so close to 50%, this objective has been met.

L005 -- Spring Pasture. 1. Improve from current mid-seral status to late-seral by 2004. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 50% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

1. A change in the ecological site description at this key area resulted in a 1983 ecological status rating of 37, or mid-seral status. Ecological status at this site improved from mid- to late-seral status.
2. Key area utilization for native key species in Spring pasture was less than 50% on all years. Therefore this objective has been met.

L006 -- Juniper Seeding. 1. Establish reseeded vegetation and achieve 3.0 acres/AUM production. 2. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

Insufficient data exists to determine if this objective has been met. The Juniper seeding was reseeded in 1984, however, production for the seeding has not been determined. The current production of the seeding is estimated to be about 5.0 acres/AUM, based on professional judgment. No key area has been established in this field because it receives little or no use.

### III. AGREED UPON CHANGES IN LIVESTOCK USE ADJUSTMENTS

#### A. EXISTING GRAZING USE

Dickinson's ten-year permit is described in Table 1. Since 1983, temporary non-renewable (TNR) has been issued twice (in 1984 and 1986). The average TNR for those two years is 41 AUMs.

TABLE 1. North Butte Valley Preference

<u>Active Pref.</u>	<u>Susp. Pref.</u>	<u>Total Pref.</u>	<u>Fenced Fed. Range</u>	<u>Season of Use</u>	<u>Live-stock</u>	<u>% Public Land</u>
1,645	0	1,645	51	5/1 to 12/22	206 Cattle	100

A grazing system was initiated in North Butte Valley in 1979 and revised in 1983. The 1983 grazing agreement can be found in Appendix 1 of the allotment evaluation. Most years, this system was revised at the beginning of each grazing season. Actual grazing use can be found in Sec. IV.B. of the evaluation, and a summary of seasons of use, by pasture is in Appendix 2 of the evaluation.

B. AGREED TO CHANGES IN GRAZING USE

The following recommendations are made to facilitate attainment of allotment objectives and to update Rangeland Program Summary and key area objectives. Management actions and improvements listed in the Rangeland Program Summary are also included in the following recommendations.

1. Revise the existing grazing system as follows:

SEEDINGS

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	
Lower Seeding	1	3	2	(1) 5/1 to 6/20
Palomino Seeding	2	1	3	(2) 6/21 to 7/31
Juniper Seeding	3	2	1	(3) rest

NATIVE

North Pasture	1	3	2	(1) 8/1 to 9/15
Spring Pasture	2	1	3	(2) 9/15 to 10/31
South Pasture	3	2	1	(3) 11/1 to 12/22

Repeat the rotation in 1993.

2. All water developments, in particular West Butte Well No. 1 (job number 4716), East Palomino Well (4690) and North Pasture Well (4623) will be maintained and pumped when pasture is in use to improve livestock distribution. Water troughs will be left full of water when cattle are removed until threat of freezing and damage requires draining.

Using all existing water developments will help meet utilization objectives, resulting in improved ecological status and an upward trend of key species. In addition, water will be made available to wild horses and big game, improving their habitat.

C. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations will be implemented by the BLM and are included in this agreement for the information of the permittee.

1. Evaluate fences to determine if they pose a barrier to wild, free roaming status of horses and modify if necessary.

Modification of fences will allow unrestricted movement of wild horses.

2. Modify 8.6 miles of existing fence that poses a hazard or barrier within deer winter and summer range.

Modification of 8.6 miles of fence will improve big game habitat, helping meet the wildlife objective.

3. Improve crucial deer winter habitat by cutting 20 to 40 acres of pinyon and juniper.

Selectively cutting 20 to 40 acres of pinyon and juniper will result in the attainment of deer winter range habitat objectives.

4. Protect, enhance, or develop South spring for its wildlife values.

#### IV. SPECIFIC MONITORING PROGRAM

Rangeland monitoring in North Butte Valley will continue as in the past, including utilization, actual use, frequency and ecological status. Wild horse utilization levels will be monitored and their impact analyzed in 1994, at the next evaluation. This entails reading key area utilization and use pattern mapping prior to cattle turn-out. Monitoring responsibilities will be as outlined in the District Monitoring Plan.

Rangeland Program Summary objectives and Key Area objectives are revised as follows.

##### A. RANGELAND PROGRAM SUMMARY OBJECTIVE REVISIONS

1. Manage livestock to maintain or improve ecological status on native range to late-seral status.
2. Provide forage to sustain 1,645 AUMs for livestock grazing.
3. Maintain Crested wheatgrass production.
4. Manage rangeland habitat to provide forage to sustain 480 AUMs of wild horse use.
5. Improve or maintain mule deer summer and winter range to good or excellent condition to provide forage and habitat capable of supporting reasonable numbers of 819 mule deer with a forage demand of 840 AUMs.
6. Improve year-long antelope habitat to at least good condition to provide forage and habitat capable of supporting reasonable numbers of antelope as determined by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.



The primary changes to the Rangeland Program Summary objectives are the addition of a Crested wheatgrass objective, and an objective for habitat of expanding antelope herds.

B. KEY AREA OBJECTIVE REVISIONS

L001 -- Palomino Seeding. Maintain 3 acres/AUM production of Crested wheatgrass. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

L002 -- Lower Seeding. Maintain 3 acres/AUM production of Crested wheatgrass. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

L003 -- South Pasture. Improve from current mid-seral ecological status to late-seral status by the year 2004. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 55% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

L004 -- North Pasture. Maintain the current late-seral status. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 55% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

L005 -- Spring Pasture. Maintain the current late-seral status. Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 55% on native key species (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

L006 -- Juniper Pasture. Maintain current crested wheatgrass production. (A key area must be established to monitor this objective). Do not exceed a combined, annual utilization of 60% on Crested wheatgrass (combined use includes livestock, wildlife and wild horses).

The major change to key area objectives is an increase in percent utilization on native key species from 50 to 55 percent. Because native pastures will be deferred every year, increased utilization levels will have little impact on key species. Phenological needs of the plants will be met before grazing use.

In addition, the new objectives reflect the current ecological status of native key areas.

V. FUTURE ADJUSTMENTS

North Butte Valley allotment will be re-evaluated again in 1994. Addition changes in authorized livestock use will be as a result of the analysis of monitoring data done at that time.

VI. AUTHORITY

This agreement is made in accordance with 43 CFR 4100.7-8, 4130.6, 4130.6-1(a), and 4130.6-2.

VII. The agreed upon changes in livestock use identified above are subject to the grazing regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) and are binding on any successor interest or future transferees with such modification as approved or required by the authorized officer.

*Elizabeth Dickinson*  
William & Elizabeth Dickinson

*John A. Phillips*  
John A. Phillips, Manager  
Wells Resource Area

2/20/90

52% COTTON FIBER U2V  
TYPE-EBV2E