



**SCOPING DOCUMENT  
BLACKROCK ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN  
Ely Ranger District  
Humboldt National Forest**

**I. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY**

**A. Description, Location and Short History**

The Ely Ranger District of the Humboldt National Forest is proposing to update the Blackrock Cattle and Horse (C&H) Allotment Management Plan (AMP). The intent is to bring grazing on the allotment into compliance with the Humboldt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and its amendments.

The allotment is located on the White Pine Division in White Pine and Nye Counties, Nevada and contains roughly 69,102 federal acres located in parts of the following townships: T14N, Ranges 57 and 58E; T13N, Ranges 57 and 58E; T12N, Ranges 57 and 58E and T11N, Range 58. This allotment includes a portion of the Current Mountain Wilderness. Please see attached maps for the exact location. The allotment is permitted for 244 cattle (cow/calf pairs) from June 21 to September 30 (813 head months) annually under Term Grazing Permits issued to two permittees. Permits were issued to Halstead-Forsgren Ranches, Inc. on June 16, 1986 (amended May 15, 1991) and to Barry K. and Norma J. Bradshaw on June 17, 1991.

The most recent AMP for this allotment was approved April 4, 1972, and set up a two pasture deferred rotation grazing system. This is the system that is still in place, but current management is not meeting Forest Plan direction for the resources.

**B. Relationship to Plans and Management Direction**

The Forest Plan and its amendments provides directions, goals and objectives and measurement standards for livestock grazing and related resources, which any proposed action must be consistent with. The Forest Plan provides for grazing in several of its goals and objectives. One in particular pertaining to this project states allotments will be managed to maintain satisfactory ecological condition range and improve range in less than satisfactory ecological condition. A review of management direction shows this project is within the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan. Any activity that takes place in the Current Mountain Wilderness will follow the rules and regulations established in its enabling legislation.

**C. Decision to be Made**

The decision to be made is to select a management strategy with accompanying mitigation and structures that best meets and implements the general direction, including standards and guidelines, from the Forest Plan.

**II. IDENTIFIED LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

This project was initially scoped in 1991. The following issues have been identified by an interdisciplinary (ID) team and incorporates comments previously received for this project. These issues are provided as a starting point for additional public input and to assist in identifying additional input needed for completion of the environmental analysis.

***Livestock Management***

- What is the proper stocking level for this allotment?
- What can be done to improve livestock distribution?
- What impact would lower utilization levels have on fuel loading?

***Economics***

- How would changing livestock numbers, additional improvements, grazing practices and other changes affect the permittees economically?

### ***Riparian Management***

- What can be done to prevent excessive utilization in riparian areas?
- How can the spring sources be improved?

### ***Wildlife***

- How will livestock management affect the following wildlife species and habitat and vice versa: mule deer, elk, desert bighorn sheep, sage grouse, blue grouse, mountain lions and other fur bearers and other non-game species?
- What effects will any improvements and the resulting change in livestock distribution have on wildlife habitat?

### ***Wild Horses***

- What effect are wild horses having on the allotment? How significant is this effect?

### ***Minerals Development***

- What impact would potential minerals developments have on livestock management?

### ***Recreation and Wilderness***

- What effects do current conditions have on recreational and wilderness experiences?
- What effect does recreation have on livestock management and range conditions?

### ***Cultural Resources***

- What effect will livestock management, proposed improvements and range conditions have on cultural resources?

### ***Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species***

- How will livestock management and range conditions effect Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species?

### ***Biodiversity***

- How can livestock management affect the level of plant and animal diversity?
- What is the desired future condition for the allotment?
- How can the health of rangeland vegetation not at desired conditions be improved?

## **III. PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES**

These preliminary alternatives are presented to help in your comments. Some items are common to all alternatives. Riparian and upland utilization standards and guidelines from the Forest Plan and its amendments are already part of the Term Grazing Permit and will be enforced under any grazing alternative.

Utilization studies conducted in 1988, 1989 and 1991 suggest an approximately 73 percent reduction is necessary. This may be taken in livestock numbers or season of use or a combination of the two. The permittees have signed an agreement to stock to the levels indicated by the utilization studies.

1. **No Action.** The Blackrock allotment will continue to be grazed by total permitted numbers of cattle under a two pasture deferred grazing system during the established season of use. No additional structural range improvements will be constructed.
2. **Eliminate Grazing.** Close the allotment to livestock grazing to facilitate recovery and protection of riparian zones, wildlife habitat and watershed. Evaluate existing range improvements and remove or reassign maintenance responsibilities dependent on the continuing usefulness of the improvement for other purposes. This alternative would require a Forest Plan amendment to implement.
3. **Two Pasture Deferred Grazing System with Adjusted Stocking Level &/or Season.** Continue to use the current grazing system and adjust stocking level and/or season of use to facilitate reaching the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan.
4. **Two Pasture Deferred Grazing System - Alternating Season of Use.** Continue to use the current grazing system and alternate season of use. For example, one year the cattle would graze early in the year, the next year the cattle would go on late in the year.

5. **Two Pasture Deferred Grazing System - Rotate Season of Use.** Use the allotment for approximately one month a year and follow a rotation schedule for use. For example, graze from June 15 to July 15 in year one, July 15 to August 15 in year two, August 15 to September 15 in year three.

6. **Four Pasture Deferred Grazing System.** Build at least two fences and implement a four pasture deferred grazing system.

7. **Four Pasture Rest Rotation.** Build at least two fences and implement a four pasture rest rotation system where at least one pasture is completely rested yearly.

8. **Modified Rest Rotation System.** Permit cattle on the allotment for one or two years and then completely rest the allotment for the following one or two years.

#### IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This project was initially scoped in 1991. It is being scoped again to bring to light any new and additional concerns. ID teams, specialists and the previous public involvement helped to formulate the above issues and alternatives.

The public is encouraged to participate throughout the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) environmental analysis process. Public comments received during the scoping process will be used in developing the necessary NEPA document. Comments received will assist the Forest Service in determining the scope of the issues and to identify those significant issues related to this proposal. Things such as **new issues, clarifying existing issues and new alternative proposals** will be the most helpful comments. Written comments should be addressed to:

Humboldt National Forest, Ely Ranger District  
ATTN: Wayne Swenson  
P.O. Box 539  
Ely, NV 89301

To be most helpful in this process, we would like to receive your comments by **March 17, 1994.**

If you have any questions or need further clarification concerning this proposal, please feel free to contact Wayne Swenson or Brenda Quale at the Ely Ranger District office at 350 8th Street, Ely, Nevada, or call (702) 289-3031.

R 57E

R 58E

Blackrock Cattle & Horse Allotment



