



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>



In Reply Refer To:
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MAR 15 2007

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION LANDS IN WILDERNESS

STATE: Nevada

COUNTY: Humboldt

FIELD OFFICE: Winnemucca Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Blvd.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA: North Jackson Mountains Wilderness (N74470)

PROPOSED ACTION: Preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and multiple use decision regarding grazing in the Happy Creek Allotment.

RECEIVED

MAR 19 2007

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

Background

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is now being prepared to analyze the environmental effects of livestock grazing on the Happy Creek Allotment. The recommendations and alternatives that are being considered are summarized below, in the description of the proposed action.

Portions of the Happy Creek Allotment are within a designated wilderness area. As such all management of grazing within that portion of the allotment must be in compliance with the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the Black Rock Desert High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act of 2000, which allowed permitted grazing to continue in the NCA and Wilderness Areas, subject to applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders.

The level of authorized livestock use at the time of passage of the NCA Act (12/21/2000) was 3723 AUMs within the Happy Creek Allotment.

Description of the Proposed Action

Four different alternatives are being considered in the EA. A summary of the alternatives is found below.

Alternative 1 (Proposed Action). The allotment would be divided into three (3) use areas or pastures. Some fencing currently exists so that a combination of herding and fencing would be relied upon to ensure livestock are maintained in the proper area of the allotment. No new fencing is proposed. The North Jackson Mountains Wilderness Area is located primarily in the *Upper Happy Creek Pasture*, and a small part in the *South of Highway Pasture*. If the Proposed Action were implemented, *Upper Happy Creek Pasture* would be rested (0 cows) until Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) is met on Happy Creek. Once PFC is met, 150 cows would be grazed from 5/15 to 6/15 every other year. The number of cows grazed in the *South of Highway Pasture* would alternate every other year between 500 and 272 cows.

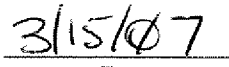
Alternative 2. The allotment would be divided into four (4) use areas or pastures. Some fencing currently exists and one new fence is proposed that would be located outside the Wilderness Area. A combination of herding and fencing would be relied upon to ensure livestock are maintained in the proper area of the allotment. The North Jackson Mountains Wilderness Area is located primarily in the *Upper Happy Creek Pasture*, and a small part in the *South of Highway Pasture*. If the Proposed Action were implemented, *Upper Happy Creek Pasture* would be rested (0 cows) until Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) is met on Happy Creek. Once PFC is met, 150 cows would be grazed from 5/15 to 6/15 for two years and rested in year three. The number of cows grazed in the *South of Highway Pasture* would occur as follows: Year 1 – 500 cows would graze from 7/1 to 8/30 and Year 2 – 500 cows would graze from 4/1 to 6/30.

Alternative 3 (No Action). The allotment would remain under the existing grazing system. The allotment is divided into three (3) use areas or pastures. The North Jackson Mountains Wilderness Area is located primarily in the *Upper Happy Creek Pasture*, and a small part in the *South of Highway Pasture*. From 04/01 to 05/14 and 7/16 to 08/30 500 cows are grazed in the *South of Highway Pasture*. From 05/15 to 7/15 150 cows are grazed in the *Upper Happy Creek Pasture* (reducing the cows in the *South of Highway Pasture* to 350 cows during this period). Under this existing system, PFC is not being 100% achieved across all areas.

Alternative 4 (No Livestock Grazing). Under this alternative no livestock grazing would be permitted on the Happy Creek Allotment.

Please send comments to Gail Givens, Field Manager, at the address above within the comment period of March 16th to April 16th, 2007.


for Gail G. Givens, Field Manager


Date