

Rattlesnake Grazing Allotment
 Research – Grazing Renewal

Preliminary Environmental Assessment EA # EA-NV-040-07-016
 Ely FO & Caliente FS

Dean Carter and Sons

The Rattlesnake Allotment is a cattle allotment with a grazing preference of 1,504 AUMs. 1,180 AUMs are active and 324 Suspended. Current season of use: 10/16 to 5/30. The current term permit has been issued for 3/1/06 to 2/28/16. The allotment encompasses 39,948 acres of BLM land.

On all three standards, not achieving or making progress.

Relates to the Lincoln County Elk Management Plan – Revised 2006
 Wilderness Management is also applicable.
 Also in Dry Lake Valley

Table 1. Current Term Permit for Dean Carter and Sons (#2705027)

Allotment Name and Number	Livestock Number/Kind	Grazing Period		% Public Land*	Type Use	AUMs**
		Begin	End			
Rattlesnake 01058	158 Cattle	10/16	5/30	100	Active	1,180
*% Public Land is the percent of public land for billing purposes.						
**AUMs may differ from Active Preference due to a rounding difference with the number of livestock and the period of use.						
Allotment AUMs Summary						
ACTIVE AUMS		SUSPENDED AUMS		GRAZING PREFERENCE		
1,180		324		1,504		

Table 2. Proposed Term Permit for Dean Carter and Sons (#2705027)

Allotment Name and Number	Livestock Number/Kind	Grazing Period		% Public Land*	Type Use	AUMs**
		Begin	End			
Rattlesnake 01058	169 Cattle	10/1	4/30	100	Active	1,180
*% Public Land is the percent of public land for billing purposes.						
**AUMs may differ from Active Preference due to a rounding difference with the number of livestock and the period of use.						
Allotment AUMs Summary						
ACTIVE AUMS		SUSPENDED AUMS		GRAZING PREFERENCE		
1,180		324		1,504		

Will start grazing 15 days earlier, but stop 30 days earlier. Increase of 11 cattle in proposed action.

According to grazing bills, the average use over 9 years was 716 AUMs.

The allotment provides year round habitat for game animals such as mule deer and elk. Elk habitat encompasses the area but the allotment's location is not high quality habitat for elk. Elk have moved into the area recently, though their current numbers in the area are not known. Elk use was observed at Rattlesnake Spring in 2007. Elk have begun using the fenced spring site for foraging and bedding purposes. The Rattlesnake Allotment is in Big Game Hunting Unit 223. American antelope are often observed on the allotment as well.

Elk use on riparian vegetation inside the spring enclosure was heavy in 2007. As a result, the spring vegetation has not recovered since it was burned over in 2002. No livestock use has occurred in the riparian area due to the enclosure fence.

Livestock contributed moderate use in the burn seeded area in 2006.

Utilization was measured using the key forage plant method in 2007, 2004 and 2001. Use measured in winter 2007 showed use was slight within the eastern portions of the allotment. The upper benches show no use by livestock and light to moderate use by wildlife from 2006. Use by elk at Rattlesnake Spring was heavy on the riparian grasses. Light use had occurred on basin wildrye (*Leymus cinereus*) at the spring. Key species observed were Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, galleta grass, and fourwing saltbush. Use by rabbits was the major concern in the burn areas in 2006.

5. Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) – Riparian Assessment

PFC was conducted on the Rattlesnake Spring in February, 2007. The spring was rated as functional at risk by the team. Due to the recent burn and the continued overuse by wildlife for bedding and browsing, the existing vegetation shows heavy use and the spring has shown very little recovery since being burned over in 2002. Livestock and wild horses have not contributed to the overuse or current condition of the spring.