

Prineville District
**Land Use Plan Conformance and
Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**
Review and Approval

Name of Proposed Action: Harsch Allotment (No. 5007) Grazing Permit Renewal

DNA Number: OR-056-08-097

Location of Proposed Action: 8 miles northwest of Redmond, Oregon (see attached map)

Allotment Summary: 1,310 acres of public land; 107 AUMs total (50 active, 57 suspended); season of use: May 1 to July 31; grazing system is deferred rotation.

Purpose of and Need for Action: The grazing permit for this allotment will expire on February 28, 2009. The purpose of and need for this action is to re-authorize grazing use for a 10-year period.

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is to renew the current grazing permit on the Harsch Allotment for a term of ten years. The existing permit would remain the same except for an increase of 31 AUMs due to a land exchange within the allotment boundary (see criteria No. 3 for details). Based on the Upper Deschutes Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (September 2005) the Harsch Allotment would be closed to grazing if the permittee relinquishes the grazing permit. The permittee of record has declined to relinquish at this time.

Plan Conformance:

Land Use Plan:

Upper Deschutes Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP), September 2005.

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decision:

Objective LG-1: ...provide for continued livestock grazing... (Page 76)

Allocations/Allowable Uses, No.12: "Livestock grazing will not be allowed for allotments falling in the "If Permit Relinquished (IPR), Close" category if the grazing permittee voluntarily relinquishes his or her grazing permit." (Page 78, also see page 81 and 245)

Applicable NEPA document and related documents:

The following NEPA documents and related documents cover the proposed action:

Proposed Upper Deschutes RMP and Final EIS (FEIS), January 2005

NEPA Adequacy Criteria:

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes, the proposed action is essentially the same as the Preferred Alternative analyzed in the Upper Deschutes RMP FEIS, Volume 2, pages 183 – 192 and Volume 3, Appendix G pages 207 – 211. The location of the proposed action is unchanged from when the previous analysis was completed in the listed NEPA documents.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes, the Upper Deschutes RMP FEIS compared the relative likelihood of grazing conflicts across allotments within the Planning Area, and analyzed the effects of discontinued grazing in areas where potential for conflicts was highest. This approach is still appropriate for the proposed action.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and updated lists of BLM sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is valid in light of the fact the public land administered by the BLM, within the allotment, has increased and therefore the AUMs have increased. In 1984, Deschutes County transferred title for 804 acres of county property, within the allotment boundary, to the BLM. This increased the public land acres from 506 to 1,310. The correct public land acreage (1,310) was shown in the Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan (UD RMP), but the total active AUMs were not adjusted. Since the acquired county lands are similar in vegetation composition, condition class, and soils to the public lands, the BLM inventoried rating would apply. The rating is 26 acres/AUM, so as a result, the estimated number of AUMs on the 804 acres is 31. This would increase the active AUMs from 19 to 50. The subsequent proposed decision to renew the grazing permit would show an active AUM total of 50. The increase in AUMs on changed land ownership within the allotment would not substantially change the overall analysis of the proposed action to renew the permit.

Additional new information which could become relevant may result from a completion of the Standards for Rangeland Health & Guidelines for Grazing Management (43 CFR 4180). The BLM is required to assess all public land on grazing allotments for compliance with the Standards for Rangeland Health & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Oregon and Washington (August 12, 1997). Presently, this allotment has not been scheduled for an assessment, but until completion of one, the new permit will contain stipulations that will provide for modifications if needed.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

Yes, the same effects that would result from the proposed action were analyzed in the Upper Deschutes RMP FEIS for the alternatives in Volume 2, pages 5 – 154 and pages 183 – 192.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, many of the individuals/organizations on our current “interested publics” list are the same as those on the mailing list for the RMP/EIS referenced above. The Description of the Proposed Action for this DNA would be posted on the Prineville District’s internet page. A copy of this conformance worksheet will be mailed to individuals and organizations that request a copy.

E. Persons/BLM Staff Consulted

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resource Represented</u>
Lyle Andrews	Rangeland Management Specialist	Range
JoAnne Armson	Natural Resource Specialist	Botany, Special Status Plants
Steve Castillo	Forester	Forestry
Jim Eisner	Fisheries Biologist	Fisheries
Ron Gregory	Archeologist	Cultural Resources
Jan Hanf	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife
Ed Horn	Soil Scientist	Soil
Michelle McSwain	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Riparian, Watershed
Tom Mottl	Recreation Planner	Recreation
Teal Purrington	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	NEPA Compliance
Michelle McSwain	Assistant Field Manager, DRA	Management

Note: Refer to the listed EIS/EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitute BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

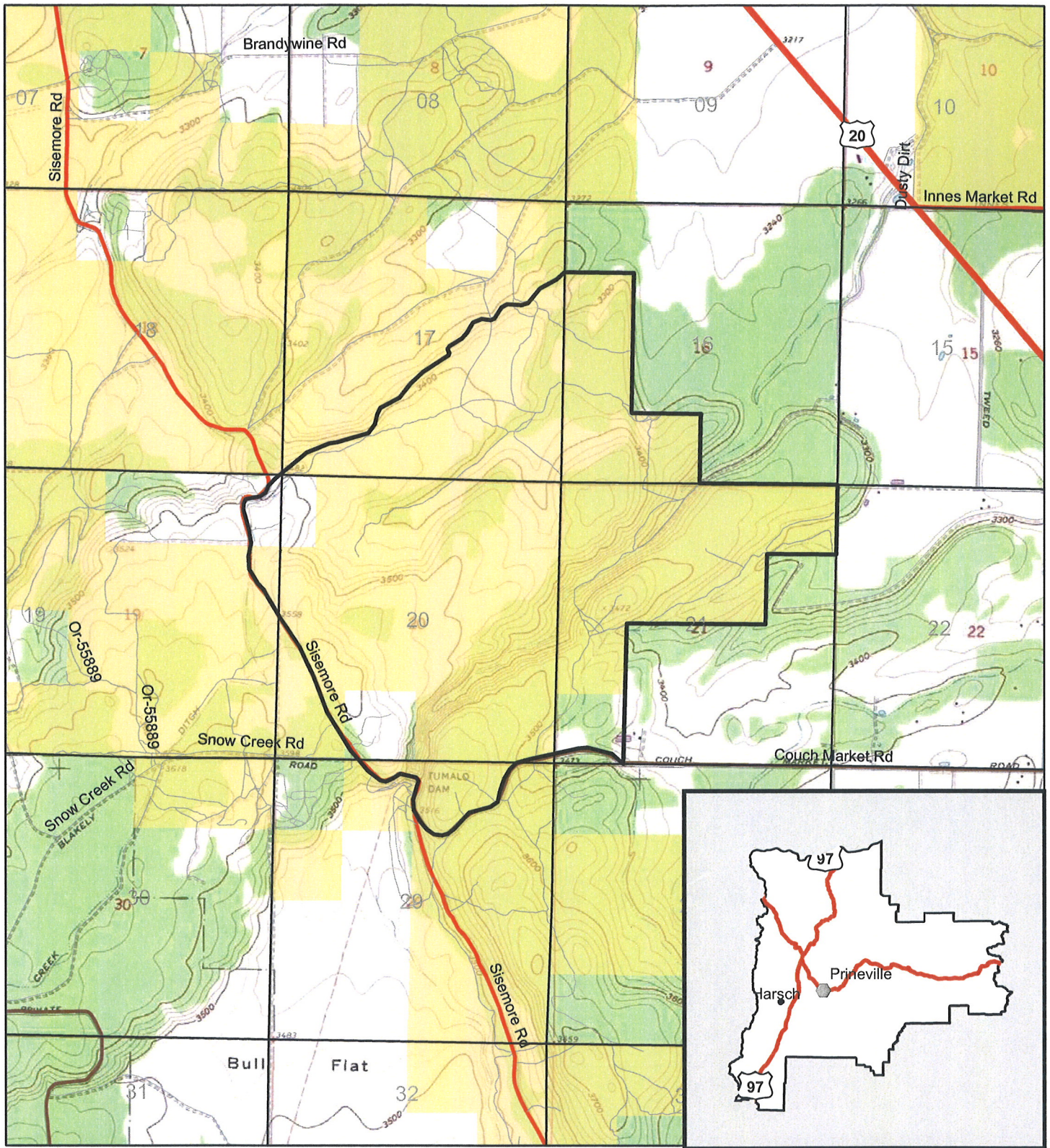
Signature

for Responsible Official: Michelle McSwain 1/6/09
Molly Brown, Deschutes Resource Area Field Manager Date

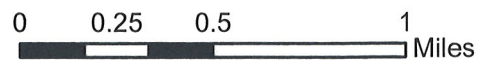
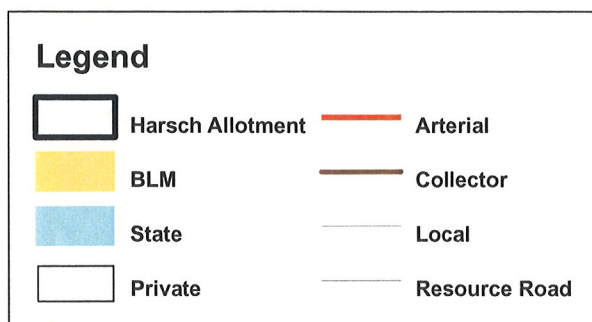
Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program specific regulations.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Lyle Andrews, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, 541-416-6715, Lyle_W_Andrews@or.blm.gov.



Harsch Allotment 5007



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Map created 11/14/2008
Modifications pending