

BLM-038

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Form 4130-2a
(February 1999)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

STATE NV
OFFICE LLNVB01000
AUTH NUMBER 2704013
PREFERENCE CODE 03
DATE PRINTED 08/19/2014
TERM 08/19/2014 TO 08/18/2024

GRAZING PERMIT

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MOUNT LEWIS FO
50 BASTIAN RD
BATTLE MOUNTAIN NV 89820

ARC DOME PARTNERS LLC
C/O ROBERT BECK
HC 62 BOX 62626
EUREKA NV 89316

THIS GRAZING PERMIT IS OFFERED TO YOU UNDER 43 CFR PART 4100 BASED ON YOUR RECOGNIZED QUALIFICATIONS. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO MAKE GRAZING USE OF LANDS, UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND COVERED BY THIS GRAZING PERMIT, UPON YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS GRAZING PERMIT AND PAYMENT OF GRAZING FEES WHEN DUE. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BLM OFFICE AT 775-635-4000 IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.

MANDATORY TERMS AND CONDITIONS

ALLOTMENT	PASTURE	LIVESTOCK		GRAZIN PERIO		% P	TYPE USE	AUMS
		NUMBER	KIND	G BEGIN	D END			
10031 ARAMBEL	4 CRNRS SDG	983	SHEEP	04/15	05/15	100	ACTIVE	200
		950	SHEEP	05/01	10/31	100	ACTIVE	1149

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

GRAZING USE WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ARAMBEL ALLOTMENT PORTIONS OF THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX FINAL MULTIPLE USE DECISION DATED SEPTEMBER 27, 2004.

SHEEP CAMPS WILL BE PLACED A MINIMUM OF ONE-QUARTER (1/4) MILE FROM ALL PERMANENT WATER.

SHEEP CAMPS WILL BE MOVED EVERY FIVE DAYS. NO TWO (2) SHEEP CAMPS WILL CAMP IN THE SAME AREA IN A GRAZING SEASON.

NEW BED GROUNDS WILL BE USED EVERY NIGHT. BED GROUNDS WILL BE A MINIMUM OF ONE-QUARTER (1/4) MILE FROM PREVIOUS BED GROUNDS, PERMANENT WATER SOURCES, AND FROM RIPARIAN-WETLANDS AND ASPEN.

IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING TO HAUL WATER TO CURRENT WATER HAUL LOCATIONS, THE PERMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH NEW WATER HAUL SITES IN AREAS PREVIOUSLY RECEIVING SLIGHT AND/OR LIGHT USE AS DETERMINED BY BLM IN ORDER TO IMPROVE LIVESTOCK DISTRIBUTION. THE PERMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED TO HERD SHEEP THROUGHOUT THE ARAMBEL ALLOTMENT TO UTILIZE AREAS THAT HAVE RECEIVED SLIGHT AND/OR LIGHT USE. IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT UTILIZATION OBJECTIVES ARE BEING MET IN ANY AREA, THE PERMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED TO MOVE SHEEP TO OTHER AREAS OF THE ALLOTMENT THAT HAVE NOT BEEN GRAZED.

THE PERMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET WITH BLM PRIOR TO EACH GRAZING YEAR IN ORDER TO DETERMINE AN ANNUAL GRAZING PLAN THAT WOULD ENSURE APPROPRIATE USE THROUGHOUT THE ALLOTMENT.

THE PERMITTEE WILL BE ALLOWED FIVE DAYS FLEXIBILITY PRIOR TO AND FOLLOWING THE SCHEDULED USE DATES TO MOVE LIVESTOCK.

NO "DOUBLE HARVESTING" WILL OCCUR WITHIN THE ARAMBEL ALLOTMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE PERMITTEE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO GRAZE LIVESTOCK IN THE SPRING OF THE GRAZING YEAR THEN ALSO GRAZE IN THE FALL OF THE SAME YEAR.

IF UTILIZATION LEVELS REACH SPECIFIED OBJECTIVES IN ANY USE AREA OR PASTURE, THE PERMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED TO REMOVE LIVESTOCK FROM THAT AREA, USE MAY CONTINUE IF LIVESTOCK ARE KEPT IN AREAS CONTAINING AVAILABLE FORAGE. IF LIVESTOCK CANNOT BE KEPT IN PROPER AREAS, LIVESTOCK REMOVAL WILL BE REQUIRED. THE AUMS AUTHORIZED FOR A USE AREA OR PASTURE, THAT IS NOT UTILIZED, WILL NOT BE USED IN OTHER ROTATING USE AREAS OR PASTURES.

THE SEASON OF USE IN EACH PASTURE MAY BE TEMPORARILY MODIFIED FROM THE GRAZING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT THE DISCRETION OF THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER ON AN ANNUAL BASIS IF MONITORING DATA INDICATES THAT CHANGES ARE NECESSARY TO MEET MULTIPLE USE OBJECTIVES AND THE STANDARDS FOR RANGELAND HEALTH.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.8-1(F): FAILURE TO PAY GRAZING BILLS WITHIN 15 DAYS OF THE DUE DATE SPECIFIED IN THE BILL SHALL RESULT IN A LATE FEE ASSESSMENT OF \$25.00 OR 10 PERCENT OF THE GRAZING BILL, WHICHEVER IS GREATER, BUT NOT TO EXCEED \$250.00. PAYMENT MADE LATER THAN 15 DAYS AFTER THE DUE DATE, SHALL INCLUDE THE APPROPRIATE LATE FEE ASSESSMENT. FAILURE TO MAKE PAYMENT WITHIN 30 DAYS MAY BE A VIOLATION OF 43 CFR SEC. 4140.1(B)(1) AND SHALL RESULT IN ACTION BY THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER UNDER 43 CFR SECTIONS 4150.1 AND 4160.1-2.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.3-2(D): ACTUAL USE INFORMATION, FOR EACH PASTURE/USE AREA, WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER WITHIN 15 DAYS OF COMPLETING GRAZING USE AS SPECIFIED ON THE GRAZING PERMIT AND/OR GRAZING LICENSES.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4120.3-1(A): ALL RANGE IMPROVEMENTS SHALL BE INSTALLED, USED, MAINTAINED, AND/OR MODIFIED ON THE PUBLIC LANDS, OR REMOVED FROM THESE LANDS, IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.3-2(C): IN ORDER TO IMPROVE LIVESTOCK AND RANGELAND MANAGEMENT ON THE PUBLIC LANDS, ALL SALT AND/OR MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS WILL NOT BE PLACED WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF ANY RIPARIAN AREA, WET MEADOW, OR WATERING FACILITY (EITHER PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY) UNLESS STIPULATED THROUGH A WRITTEN AGREEMENT OR DECISION.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.3-2(H): ALL GRAZING PERMITTEES SHALL PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCESS ACROSS PRIVATE AND/OR LEASED LANDS TO THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT FOR THE ORDERLY MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC LANDS.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.3-3: THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER MAY MODIFY TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE PERMIT OR LEASE WHEN THE ACTIVE USE OR RELATED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ARE NOT MEETING THE LAND USE PLAN, ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN OR OTHER ACTIVITY PLAN, OR MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES, OR IS NOT IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SUBPART 4180 RAC STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

PURSUANT TO 43 CFR 10.4(G) THE HOLDER OF THIS AUTHORIZATION MUST NOTIFY THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER, BY TELEPHONE, WITH WRITTEN CONFIRMATION IMMEDIATELY UPON THE DISCOVERY OF HUMAN REMAINS, FUNERARY OBJECTS, SACRED OBJECTS, OR OBJECTS OF CULTURAL PATRIMONY (AS DEFINED AT 43 CFR 10.2). FURTHER, PURSUANT TO 43 CFR 10.4(C) AND (D), YOU MUST STOP

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ACTIVITIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE DISCOVERY AND PROTECT IT FROM YOUR ACTIVITIES FOR 30 DAYS OR UNTIL NOTIFIED BY THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH 43 CFR 4130.3-1 (B) - ALL PERMITS AND LEASES SHALL BE MADE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION, SUSPENSION, OR MODIFICATION FOR ANY VIOLATION OF THESE REGULATIONS OR OF ANY TERM OR CONDITION OF THE PERMIT OR LEASE.

ALLOTMENT SUMMARY (AUMS)

<u>ALLOTMENT</u>	<u>ACTIVE AUMS</u>	<u>SUSPENDED AUMS</u>	<u>TEMP SUSPENDED AUMS</u>	<u>PERMITTED USE</u>
10031 ARAMBEL	1349	1205	0	2,554

Standard Terms and Conditions

1. Grazing permit or lease terms and conditions and the fees charged for grazing use are established in accordance with the provisions of the grazing regulations now or hereafter approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
2. They are subject to cancellation, in whole or in part, at any time because of:
 - a. Noncompliance by the permittee/lessee with rules and regulations.
 - b. Loss of control by the permittee/lessee of all or a part of the property upon which it is based.
 - c. A transfer of grazing preference by the permittee/lessee to another party.
 - d. A decrease in the lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management within the allotment(s) described.
 - e. Repeated willful unauthorized grazing use.
 - f. Loss of qualifications to hold a permit or lease.
3. They are subject to the terms and conditions of allotment management plans if such plans have been prepared. Allotment management plans MUST be incorporated in permits or leases when completed.
4. Those holding permits or leases MUST own or control and be responsible for the management of livestock authorized to graze.
5. The authorized officer may require counting and/or additional or special marking or tagging of the livestock authorized to graze.
6. The permittee's/lessee's grazing case file is available for public inspection as required by the Freedom of Information Act.
7. Grazing permits or leases are subject to the nondiscrimination clauses set forth in Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1964, as amended. A copy of this order may be obtained from the authorized officer.
8. Livestock grazing use that is different from that authorized by a permit or lease MUST be applied for prior to the grazing period and MUST be filed with and approved by the authorized officer before grazing use can be made.
9. Billing notices are issued which specify fees due. Billing notices, when paid, become a part of the grazing permit or lease. Grazing use cannot be authorized during any period of delinquency in the payment of amounts due, including settlement for unauthorized use.
10. The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (cultural items), stop the activity in the area of the discovery and make a reasonable effort to protect the remains and/or cultural items.
11. Grazing fee payments are due on the date specified on the billing notice and MUST be paid in full within 15 days of the due date, except as otherwise provided in the grazing permit or lease. If payment is not made within that time frame, a late fee (the greater of \$25 or 10 percent of the amount owed but not more than \$250) will be assessed.
12. No Member of, or Delegate to, Congress or Resident Commissioner, after his/her election of appointment, or either before or after he/she has qualified, and during his/her continuance in office, and no officer, agent, or employee of the Department of the Interior, other than members of Advisory committees appointed in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.1) and Sections 309 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) shall be admitted to any share or part in a permit or lease, or derive any benefit to arise therefrom; and the provision of Section 3741 Revised Statute (41 U.S.C. 22), 18 U.S.C. Sections 431-433, and 43 CFR Part 7, enter into and form a part of a grazing permit or lease, so far as the same may be applicable.

THIS GRAZING PERMIT:

1. CONVEYS NO RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST HELD BY THE UNITED STATES IN ANY LANDS OR RESOURCES
2. IS SUBJECT TO (A) MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION AS REQUIRED BY LAND PLANS AND APPLICABLE LAW; (B) ANNUAL REVIEW AND MODIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS AS APPROPRIATE; AND (C) THE TAYLOR GRAZING ACT, AS AMENDED, THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT, AS AMENDED, THE PUBLIC RANGELANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT, AND THE RULES AND REGULATIONS NOW OR HEREAFTER PROMULGATED THEREUNDER BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

ACCEPTED:
SIGNATURE OF PERMITTEE:

DATE:

8-19-14

APPROVED
BLM AUTHORIZED OFFICER:

DATE:

8-19-14



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Battle Mountain Field Office
50 Bastian Road
Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>



In Reply Refer To:
4130/4160
(NV062.10)

SEP 27 2004

FISH CREEK COMPLEX FINAL MULTIPLE USE DECISION

Introduction:

The Fish Creek Complex Evaluation and Rangeland Health Assessment (FCC Evaluation) was sent to the interested public June 21, 2004, and analyzed monitoring data collected within the Arambel, Fish Creek Ranch, Lucky C, Romano and Ruby Hill Allotments. Monitoring data was collected to determine whether current livestock management practices, grazing systems and existing wild horse populations in the Fish Creek and Whistler Herd Management Areas (HMAs) are meeting the Land Use Plan (LUP), Rangeland Program Summary (RPS), Resource Management Plan (RMP), the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health and allotment specific objectives. A thirty day comment period was provided for the interested public to submit comments and provide any alternatives that BLM could consider in preparing the proposed management actions that were identified in the Fish Creek Complex Evaluation and Rangeland Health Assessment. Refer to Map 1 which displays the allotments and HMAs within the Complex.

The analysis of the data resulted in the conclusions that several RAC Standards for Rangeland Health and RPS allotment specific objectives were not being met. The Conformance Determination sent to the interested public August 31, 2004, responded to the comments received, described any changes to the FCC Evaluation resulting from the comments, and served as the determination document consistent with the requirements of 43 CFR 4180.

After careful consideration of written comments to the FCC Evaluation, the Authorized Officer issued a Proposed Multiple Use Decision (PMUD), Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Fish Creek Complex. The Environmental Assessment (EA)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued with the PMUD on August 31, 2004. The interested public was provided an opportunity to review the EA/FONSI prior to the issuance of this Final Decision.

No protests were received on the PMUD. Comments to the PMUD were received on September 24, 2004 from Roy Risi. In his letter, Mr. Risi requested that the BLM re-examine the carrying

capacity calculations for the Lucky C Allotment and consider placing a portion of the AUMs into temporary suspension. Following consideration of his comments, further analysis of the Use Pattern Maps and development of additional terms and conditions, the Final Decision for the Lucky C Allotment has been modified. Please refer to the Grazing Decision numbers two and three for the Lucky C Allotment.

This Final Multiple Use Decision for the Fish Creek Complex will serve as the decision record for the Fish Creek Complex Environmental Assessment (NV062-EA04-69).

Changes in livestock management, and establishing Appropriate Management Level (AML) for wild horses have been identified that will result in continued achievement of RAC Standards for Rangeland Health, or significant progress being made towards achievement of Standards and allotment specific management objectives. The allotment specific objectives for the Complex were identified in the Fish Creek Complex Evaluation and Rangeland Health Assessment, and are detailed in Attachment 1. The FMUD identifies adjustments to livestock management and establishment of an AML for wild horses within the Fish Creek Complex. The FMUD also identifies allocations of AUMs to big game within the Complex. The Final Multiple Use Decision has been developed following public review and comment of the FCC Evaluation, and coordination meetings with permittees of the affected grazing allotments and other members of the interested public.

FINAL LIVESTOCK GRAZING DECISION

Selected Management Actions for Livestock within the Fish Creek Complex

Following the analysis of monitoring data, an interdisciplinary team determined that the following changes in existing livestock management are needed to ensure significant progress towards the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health approved by the Northeastern Great Basin and Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Councils, and the Shoshone-Eureka Area (SERA) RMP multiple use objectives for the Fish Creek Complex.

Therefore, I issue the following final decision for livestock grazing management within each of the allotments in the Fish Creek Complex:

Arambel Allotment

Management Action 1

- Retain the total permitted use for sheep for the Arambel Allotment 1,349 AUMs.

Rationale

It has been determined in the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1-4, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Arambel Allotment.

The 1998 and 2003 use pattern maps were used to analyze the potential and desired carrying capacity. The potential carrying capacity calculation was implemented for this allotment due to current water hauling, herding and the potential of additional water haul locations, resulting in improved distribution to areas currently receiving slight and light use. It has been determined that the potential carrying capacity for livestock grazing within the allotment will result in the attainment of the allotment specific objectives for the Arambel Allotment. In addition, this level of livestock use in conjunction with the removal of excess wild horses will continue to maintain the Land Use Plan objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health. The permittee will be required to haul water to suitable areas that have received minimal use thereby justifying grazing at the carrying capacity level. This requirement will be specified in the new grazing stipulations for grazing use within the allotment. Throughout the evaluation period, the permittee has demonstrated that water hauling for sheep use has been an effective means of grazing management within the allotment as indicated by use pattern maps.

It has been determined through use pattern map data, that wild horses are the primary causal factor for the heavy utilization that has occurred in the allotment. It is expected that once wild horse AML is achieved, utilization objectives will be met within the allotment. The carrying capacity analysis identified a 69 AUMs reduction in livestock use. The difference between average actual use and the current permitted use is marginal. There are no indications that grazing at the permitted use levels in conjunction with the grazing stipulations will result in the non-attainment of objectives in the allotment. Therefore, a reduction in permitted use has been deemed unnecessary at this time. The level of permitted use in conjunction with the grazing stipulations for grazing and the removal of excess wild horses is expected to result in the continued attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

A conversion of cattle to sheep occurred in a Final Decision completed in March 2004, which changed management in the allotment. The conversion of cattle to sheep has been determined to be a benefit to allow the Standards for Rangeland Health to be met/maintained for the Arambel Allotment. Sheep are herded more effectively, utilizing areas that would not normally be grazed by cattle. These areas can be influenced by topography, and distance from water. Sheep would not concentrate on riparian areas due to herding and water hauls established throughout the allotment. The result is improved livestock distribution. Furthermore, the conversion of cattle AUMs to sheep AUMs in addition to implementation of the management actions being implemented will ensure that the multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health will continue to be met.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4110.3, BLM will continue to monitor the Arambel Allotment to determine if any changes to permitted use will be required. Through future reevaluations of the allotment if monitoring data indicates that the existing permitted use is resulting in the non-attainment of the Standards and Guidelines further changes will be made to the permit.

Based on the evaluation of monitoring data it has been determined that the livestock carrying capacity for each pasture is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, and 4.1.

Management Action 2

- Implement the following grazing management system and grazing stipulations for the Arambel Allotment.

Allotment	Pasture	Season Of Use	Kind of Livestock	Percent Public Land	Number of Livestock	AUMs
Arambel	Four Corners Seeding	04/15-05/15	Sheep	100%	*	200
	Arambel Allotment	05/01-10/31	Sheep	100%	*	1,149

*Livestock within the pastures is variable, not to exceed designated AUMs.

Grazing Stipulations for the Arambel Allotment

1. Sheep camps will be placed a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from all permanent water.
2. Sheep camps will be moved every five days. No two (2) sheep camps will camp in the same area in a grazing season.
3. New bed grounds will be used every night. Bed ground will be a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from previous bed grounds, permanent water sources, and from riparian-wetlands and aspen.
4. In addition to continuing to haul water to current water haul locations, the permittee will be required to establish new water hauls sites in areas previously receiving slight and/or light use as determined by BLM in order to improve livestock distribution. The permittee will be required to herd sheep throughout the Arambel Allotment to utilize the areas that have received slight and/or light use. If it is determined that utilization objectives are being met in any area, the permittee will be required to move sheep to other areas of the allotment that have not been grazed.
5. The permittee will be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that would ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment.
6. The permittee will be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock.
7. No “double harvesting” will occur within the Arambel Allotment. For example, the permittee will not be allowed to graze livestock in the spring of the grazing year then also graze in the fall of the same grazing year.
8. If utilization levels reach specified objectives in any use area or pasture the permittee will be required to remove livestock from that area, use may continue if livestock are kept in areas containing available forage. If livestock cannot be kept in proper areas, livestock removal will be required. The AUMs authorized for a use area or pastures, that are not utilized, will not be used in other rotating use areas or pastures.
9. The season of use in each pasture may be temporarily modified from the grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.

Rationale

Analysis and interpretation of the available monitoring data has indicated that the Standards for Rangeland Health are being met within the Arambel Allotment.

The grazing management system will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover and seedling establishment. Due to the nature of sheep grazing and herding, it is expected that a certain percentage of the allotment will be deferred annually. This will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growing period, allow forage plants to gain in vigor, and produce seed. Proper vegetative management maintains or improves the plant community for protection of soil and water resources. Sufficient seedling and young plant recruitment is needed to maintain and increase herbaceous species in the plant community. Healthy plant communities must be able to complete their life cycle by preventing damage during the critical growth period. Critical growth period in a plant growth cycle occurs when food reserves are the lowest and grazing is the most harmful.

A grazing system based on the frequent herding of sheep across the landscape will provide partial deferment on a rotational basis, ensure that utilization objectives are met, protect sage grouse habitat during nesting, and provide for the attainment of riparian and habitat objectives. The improvement of ecological condition will increase productivity, litter, soil fertility, infiltration and nutrient cycling.

It has been determined that this grazing management system is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, Vegetation Guidelines and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines.

Management Action 3

- Issue a ten year permit for the Arambel Allotment with the following terms and conditions:

Grazing use will be in accordance with the Arambel Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Complex Final Multiple Use Decision dated _____.

Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of \$25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, but no to exceed \$250.00. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(B) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

Actual use information, for each pasture would be submitted to the authorized officer within 15 days of completing grazing use as specified on the grazing permit and/or grazing licenses.

Permittee would be required to maintain all range improvement projects for which maintenance responsibility is assigned in accordance with 43 CFR 4140.

In order to improve livestock and rangeland management on the public lands, all salt and/or mineral supplements would not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated through a written agreement or decision.

All grazing permittees shall provide reasonable access across private and/or leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(C) and (D), you must stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and protect it from your activities for 30 days or until notified by the authorized officer.

All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease

The terms and conditions of this permit may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.

Rationale

Issuance of a ten-year permit is based on the evaluation of monitoring and the evaluation of Land Use Plan objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health. The grazing stipulations for grazing in the Arambel Allotment will result in the attainment of multiple use objectives and is consistent with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Standards and conforms with the Guidelines. An environmental assessment has been prepared and a FONSI has been signed by the Authorized Officer. This final multiple use decision will implement the selected management actions described in the Conformance Determination and will authorize the issuance of a new ten-year grazing permit. These terms and conditions will ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing livestock grazing on public lands.

The ten-year permit and terms and conditions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and 4.1.

Fish Creek Ranch Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish the active permitted use for cattle in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment at 4,013 AUMs as indicated in the table below.

- Retain the temporary suspended use of 5,125 AUMs until a carrying capacity evaluation is completed following the 2007 grazing year.
- The remaining 802 AUMs of the active permitted use (4,815 – 4,013) will be converted to sheep use as stated in the Management Action 2.
- Retain the historic suspended AUMs of 32,000 until carrying capacity has been completed for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment.

The BLM will conduct utilization monitoring for a period of three years to determine carrying capacity for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment. Following the 2007 grazing year, the carrying capacity analysis will be completed and a new permit will be issued specifying the permitted use for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment. The interested public will be informed of the results of the carrying capacity analysis and prior to the issuance of the new permit.

Use Area	Period of Use	Class	AUMS
Fish Creek Valley South	3/1 - 3/31	Cattle	612
Fish Creek Valley North	4/1 - 5/15	Cattle	888
Antelope Valley	11/1 - 3/31	Cattle	2,513
Total			4,013

Rationale

Prior to 1994, the active permitted use for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment was 18,914 AUMs. In 1994, the BLM issued a Final Multiple Use Decision (FMUD) for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment reducing the permitted use to 4,815 AUMs. The decision also placed 5,125 AUMs into suspension. Between 1994 and 2002, with the exception of 1999, no livestock grazing had occurred in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment. In 1999, cattle used a total of 1,529 AUMS in the Eight Mile Seeding. The remainder of the allotment was not grazed in that year. In 2003, cattle used 4,815 AUMs in the Fenstermaker Wash, Ninemile Peak, and Pinto Summit use areas. A partial use pattern map was prepared following the 2003 grazing season. Utilization was not completed in the Ninemile Peak and Fenstermaker Wash use area due to snow. The 2003 use pattern map revealed predominantly moderate use in Pinto Summit use area. Other than 2003, use pattern map, no utilization studies have been completed documenting use by livestock; however, wild horse use has been documented through partial use pattern maps completed in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2003.

Prior to the wild horse gathers that were completed in 1998 and 2000, utilization levels in the Antelope Valley use area were moderate to severe between 1996 and 1998. As a result of the wild horse gathers, the 2003 use pattern map indicated slight to moderate use in Antelope Valley use area. Moderate use occurred by wild horses in the Bellview use area where water resources are limited and more suitable for wild horse use.

The Standards for Rangeland Health have not been fully attained in the areas where BLM has allocated forage for cattle and sheep use. These use areas include Fish Creek Valley South, Fish Creek Valley North and Antelope Valley/Bellview/Fenstermaker Wash. It was determined through this Conformance Determination that historic year long livestock and wild horse use

were the causal factors for non-attainment of the standards. Grazing management practices such as appropriate stocking level, dormant winter use, and growing season utilization objectives for key species will ensure significant progress. This use is appropriate for improving plant communities that are currently failing to meet the standards.

Livestock use has generally not occurred in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment since the 1994 FMUD. As a result, no monitoring data exists to serve as a basis for modifying the current permitted use in the allotment. The management action to retain the active use for the allotment until 2007, in conjunction with the management actions identified will ensure significant progress towards the attainment of standards and will conform with the guidelines.

The proposal to allocate forage to cattle in the allotment is based on dormant season livestock grazing of use areas that are deemed to be winter range. Limited critical growing season use would be authorized in Fish Creek Valley North; however, this use area would be subject to growing season utilization objectives for key species. Furthermore, cattle tend to disperse throughout a use area during the early spring use period. Therefore, significant progress would be made with dormant season grazing at proper use levels.

Due to the lack of monitoring information and absence of livestock grazing since 1994, it is necessary to collect additional utilization and actual use data to determine carrying capacity for the allotment. Following the 2007 grazing season, this information will be analyzed to determine if any additional adjustments to the current active use will be necessary. Any AUMs that are currently listed as temporarily suspended in excess of the carrying capacity will be removed.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4110.3, BLM will continue to monitor the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment to determine if any changes to permitted use will be required. Through future reevaluations of the allotment, if monitoring data indicates that the existing permitted use is resulting in the non-attainment of the Standards and Guidelines further changes will be made to the permit.

Through the evaluation of monitoring data, it has been determined that the livestock carrying capacity in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, and the Vegetation Guidelines. The livestock carrying capacity will also be in conformance with the Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2.

Management Action 2

- Convert 802 AUMs of active use from cattle to sheep use in the Ninemile Peak use areas. Upon converting these AUMs identify appropriate terms and conditions for authorizing sheep use in these areas.

Rationale

The conversion of cattle AUMs to sheep AUMs will eliminate cattle grazing in the Ninemile use area where riparian and aspen habitat exists. Through the evaluation, riparian and aspen habitat has been identified in the Ninemile Peak use area. The springs in this area were assessed for Proper Functioning Condition. It was determined that several springs in this use area were rated below PFC. Headcutting, channelization, excessive bare soil, hoof action, and lack of riparian vegetation were the reasons for non-attainment of the riparian standard. It was determined that historic livestock and wild horses were the causal factors for the non-attainment of the standard.

The Ninemile Peak use area is more suited to sheep use due to topography, composition of vegetation, water availability, wildlife, habitat, riparian and aspen values. Historic use by livestock and wild horses resulted in use that occurred throughout the hot season, negatively impacting the riparian and aspen resources. Sheep would not concentrate on riparian areas due to herding and other requirements described as grazing stipulations, thereby providing for improved riparian and aspen conditions. The 1994 FMUD identified 296 AUMs of sheep use within the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment; however, this use was never permitted, as an environmental assessment was never prepared.

The conversion will be as follows:

Use Area	Period of Use	Class	AUMS
Ninemile Peak Use Area	6/1 – 10/31	Sheep	802
Total			802

Due to the lack of monitoring information and the fact that sheep have not been permitted in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment, it would be necessary to collect additional utilization and actual use data to accurately estimate carrying capacity for the allotment. Following the 2007 grazing season, this information will be analyzed to determine if any additional adjustments to the current active use will be necessary. Any AUMs that are currently listed as temporarily suspended in excess of the carrying capacity will be removed.

The conversion of cattle to sheep AUMs will be in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, and the Vegetation Guidelines. The livestock carrying capacity will also be in conformance with the Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2.

Management Action 3

- Implement the following grazing management system, and grazing stipulations for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment.

Use Area	Period of Use	Class	AUMS
Fish Creek Valley South	3/1 - 3/31	Cattle	612
Fish Creek Valley North	4/1 - 5/15	Cattle	888
Antelope Valley	11/1 - 3/31	Cattle	2,513
Total			4,013

Grazing Stipulations for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment

1. The permittee will be required to repair and maintain all functional water wells, pipelines, and troughs prior to turnout. Grazing use will not be authorized unless water wells, pipelines, and troughs are functional.
2. The permittee will be required to haul water to established water haul sites throughout the allotment. Grazing use will not be authorized unless water is being hauled by the permittee.
3. Sheep camps will be placed a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from all permanent water.
4. Sheep camps will be moved every five days. No two (2) sheep camps will camp in the same area in a grazing season.
5. New bed grounds will be used every night. Bed ground will be a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from previous bed grounds, permanent water sources, and from riparian-wetlands and aspen.
6. In addition to continuing to haul water to current water haul locations, the permittee will be required to establish new water hauls sites in areas previously receiving slight and/or light use as determined by BLM in order to improve livestock distribution. The permittee will be required to herd sheep throughout the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment to utilize the areas that have received slight and/or light use. If it is determined that utilization objectives are being met in any area, the permittee will be required to move sheep to other areas of the allotment that have not been grazed.
7. The permittee will be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock from pasture to pasture.
8. Livestock use will not exceed 25% utilization on winterfat in the Fish Creek Valley North use area. If monitoring indicates that 25% use is either met or exceeded the permittee would have five days to remove cattle from that area.
9. The permittee will be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that will ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment.
10. No "double harvesting" will occur within the pastures. For example, the permittee would not be allowed to graze cattle in the spring of the grazing year then also graze in the fall of the same grazing year.
11. If utilization levels reach specified objectives in any use area or pasture the permittee will be required to remove livestock from that area, use may continue if livestock are kept in areas containing available forage. If livestock cannot be kept in proper areas, livestock

removal will be required. The AUMs authorized for a use area or pastures, that are not utilized, will not be used in other rotating use areas or pastures.

12. The season of use in Fish Creek Ranch Allotment may be temporarily modified from the grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.

Rationale

The grazing management system will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover, and seedling establishment. This deferred livestock grazing system will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growth period, allowing forage plants to remain healthy, provide seed to repopulate the plant communities for watershed stability and long-term sustainable use for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Proper vegetative management maintains or improves the plant community for protection of soil and water resources. Sufficient seedling and young plant recruitment is needed to maintain and increase herbaceous species in the plant community. Healthy plant communities must be able to complete their life cycle by preventing damage during the critical growth period. Critical growth period in a plant growth cycle is when food reserves are the lowest and grazing is the most harmful. The critical growth period begins with the boot stage and closes with complete mature seed. Any grazing during the critical growth period would be subject to growing season utilization objectives.

This deferred livestock grazing system will allow early and mid ecological status vegetative communities to improve over the long-term. The improvement of ecological condition would increase productivity, litter, soil fertility, infiltration, and nutrient cycling. This deferred livestock grazing system would reduce soil compaction and allow for moisture infiltration. Reduced soil compaction will increase the production of the dominant and/or co-dominant native perennial grass and forb components on the range sites.

The grazing management system will result in dormant season use in five use areas within the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment. Cattle use will not be authorized in the Ninemile Peak use area. This will further improve riparian, aspen and wildlife habitat conditions in these areas as impacts resulting from hot season grazing would be eliminated. Due to the winter use that is being implemented in the Antelope Valley and Fish Creek Valley use areas it is expected that limited use by cattle will occur in the Bellview/White Cloud Peak and Fenstermaker Wash use areas. Cattle use in these areas will be limited due to the lack of permanent stock water, combined with winter conditions.

In the areas that will be used for use by cattle, five of the sixteen key areas are not meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health. One of the five key areas is making significant progress towards the attainment of the standard. Existing livestock use was not determined to be the causal factor for the non-attainment of these standards. The grazing management system will ensure significant progress towards the attainment of the standard through deferred grazing and by meeting short-term utilization objectives on key species.

It has been determined that this grazing management system is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, Vegetation Guidelines and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines. The livestock carrying capacity will also be in conformance with the Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2.

Management Action 4

- Issue a ten-year permit for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment with the following terms and conditions.

Grazing use will be in accordance with the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Complex Final Multiple Use Decision dated _____.

Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of \$25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, but no to exceed \$250.00. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(B) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

Actual use information, for each pasture will be submitted to the authorized officer within 15 days of completing grazing use as specified on the grazing permit and/or grazing licenses.

Permittee will be required to maintain all range improvement projects for which maintenance responsibility is assigned in accordance with 43 CFR 4140.

In order to improve livestock and rangeland management on the public lands, all salt and/or mineral supplements would not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated through a written agreement or decision.

All grazing permittees shall provide reasonable access across private and/or leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(C) and (D), you must stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and protect it from your activities for 30 days or until notified by the authorized officer.

All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease

The terms and conditions of this permit may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.

Rationale

Issuance of a ten-year permit is based on the evaluation of monitoring and the evaluation of Land Use Plan objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health. The grazing stipulations for grazing in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment will result in the attainment of multiple use objectives and is consistent with the Northeastern Great Basin and Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Standards and conforms with the Guidelines. An environmental assessment has been prepared and a FONSI has been signed by the Authorized Officer. This final multiple use decision will implement the selected management actions described in the Conformance Determination and will authorize the issuance of a new ten-year grazing permit. These terms and conditions will ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing livestock grazing on public lands.

The ten-year permit and terms and conditions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and 4.1. The livestock carrying capacity will also be in conformance with the Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2.

Lucky C Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish the active permitted use from 5,080 AUMs to 3,054 AUMs for the Lucky C Allotment.

Rationale

It was determined in the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1 and 4 are met for this allotment. Standards 3, and 5 are not met, and Standard 2 is not applicable. Many of the LUP and RPS objectives were not met. The primary reason for the standards and objectives not being met is degraded rangeland conditions resulting from heavy use by wild horses and livestock during the evaluation period. Populations of wild horses in excess of the RPS objectives negatively impacted the rangeland resources in the allotment primarily in the south portion of the allotment. Furthermore, the permittee was more dependent upon the north portion of the allotment through the evaluation period.

The desired carrying capacity calculation was selected in determining the active livestock use for this allotment due to the limited occurrence of stock water resulting in poor livestock distribution. The desired carrying capacity was based on the desired weighted average utilization incorporating the areas that received moderate to severe utilization. Areas receiving no use to light use were not incorporated into the weighted average utilization due to the lack of water and

poor forage conditions. The potential carrying capacity was identified but not selected, since attainment of uniform distribution patterns in the short term would not be possible.

The active permitted use derived through the carrying capacity analysis is 405 AUMs greater than the average actual use that occurred through the evaluation period. Wild horse population levels during the evaluation period were in excess of the RPS objectives. Wild horses averaged 1,657 AUMs during the evaluation period. This represented 38% of the total use by livestock and wild horses that occurred in the allotment compared to 17% for wild horses identified in the RPS. This level of wild horse use in conjunction with the average actual use by livestock exceeded the carrying capacity of the allotment. Although the reduction in livestock use is in excess of the average actual livestock use, the total use for the allotment will be reduced to the level identified in the carrying capacity analysis.

The reduction in active permitted use in addition to the implementation of the management actions will ensure that significant progress will be made towards the attainment of Standards for Rangeland Health. Significant progress will be made when the short-term objectives for the Lucky C Allotment are achieved.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4110.3, BLM will continue to monitor the Lucky C Allotment to determine if any changes to permitted use will be required. Through future reevaluations of the allotment, if monitoring data indicates that the existing permitted use is resulting in the non-attainment of the Standards and Guidelines further changes will be made to the permit.

Based on the evaluation of monitoring data it has been determined that the livestock carrying capacity for each pasture is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, and 4.1.

Management Action 2

- Implement the following phased in grazing management system, and grazing stipulations for the Lucky C Allotment.

Interim grazing plan:

Pasture	Season Of Use	Kind of Livestock	Percent Public Land
Trail from Treasure Well to private meadows	4/15 - 4/30	Cattle	100%
Private Meadow	5/1 - 6/15	--	--
North Use Area	6/16-10/31	Cattle	100%
Yahoo Canyon	6/16-10/31	Cattle	100%
Browns Well and Antelope Valley Well	11/01-2/28	Cattle	100%

AUMs will not exceed permitted use on the North use area of 1,649 AUMs and 1,405 AUMs on the South use area for a total of 3,054 AUMs.

Grazing Stipulations for the Lucky C Allotment

1. The permittee will be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock from pasture to pasture.
2. The permittee will be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that will ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment.
3. No “double harvesting” will occur within the pastures. For example, the permittee will not be allowed to graze cattle in the spring of the grazing year then also graze in the fall of the same grazing year.
4. If utilization levels reach specified objectives in any use area or pasture the permittee will be required to remove livestock from that area, use may continue if livestock are kept in areas containing available forage. If livestock cannot be kept in proper areas, livestock removal will be required. The AUMs authorized for a use area or pastures, that are not utilized, will not be used in other rotating use areas or pastures.
5. The season of use in the Lucky C Allotment may be temporarily modified from the selected grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.
6. The permittee will be required to haul water to approved areas at the discretion of the authorized officer in order to improve livestock distribution.

Rationale

The interim grazing plan will ensure significant progress toward the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health by incorporating a reduction in permitted livestock use as determined by the carrying capacity analysis in addition to providing deferment during the critical growing season for key upland species. The stocking level for the north and south use areas was determined by applying the calculated carrying capacity to the percentage of the total area in public land acres for each use area. The north use area represents 54% of the total public land acres in the allotment. Conversely, the south use area represents 46% of the total public land acres in the allotment. As a result, of the 3,054 AUMs of permitted livestock use 1,649 AUMs would be allocated to the north use area and 1,405 would be allocated to the south use area. Based on the relationship between the number of public land acres and the carrying capacity, the stocking rate for the allotment is 37 acres/AUM.

The season of use and stocking level will ensure significant progress as defined by attainment of the short-term objectives for the Lucky C Allotment. In addition to these changes in livestock management, attaining wild horse AML will also be required to ensure the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

Through the Conformance Determination, monitoring data indicated that the RAC Standards 1 and 4 are met for this allotment. Standards 3, and 5 are not met, and Standard 2 is not applicable. Many of the LUP and RPS objectives were not met. The current permitted use is not in

conformance with the guidelines as identified in the RAC Standards and Guidelines. Livestock management and wild horse population levels have resulted in heavy and repeated utilization of areas adjacent to the limited water sources in the allotment. Furthermore, livestock management has failed to provide for growth, and reproduction of key species needed to reach long term land use plan objectives. The evaluation indicates that livestock and wild horse management are failing to achieve significant progress toward attainment of the habitat standard. The interim grazing management system will ensure significant progress by allowing key species adequate rest during the growing season while implementing a stocking level that would provide for the attainment of allowable use levels. The interim grazing plan will be in effect until the requirements identified under Phase 2 of the long-term management plan are achieved.

The grazing management system will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover and seedling establishment. This deferred livestock grazing system will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growth period, allowing forage plants to remain healthy, provide seed to repopulate the plant communities for watershed stability and long-term sustainable use for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife.

The interim management plan is in conformance with the following RAC guidelines: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines.

Management Plan Phase 2 – Implementation of pasture fencing.

Phase 2 of the management plan will be implemented upon the construction of two fences creating pastures west of Lone Mountain and around the winterfat sites in the southern portion of the allotment. Upon completion of these projects, the following periods of use would be authorized:

Pasture	Season Of Use	Kind of Livestock	Percent Public Land
Treasure Well Pasture	4/15-4/30	Cattle	100%
Trail to Private Meadows	5/1-5/15	Cattle	100%
Private Meadows	5/16-6/15	--	--
North Use Area	6/16-10/31	Cattle	100%
Yahoo Canyon/Browns Canyon	6/16-10/31	Cattle	100%
Antelope Pasture	11/1-2/28	Cattle	100%

AUMs will not exceed permitted use on the North use area of 1,649 AUMs and 1,405 AUMs on the South use area for a total of 3,054 AUMs.

Rationale

In order to improve livestock management within the allotment to facilitate the attainment of LUP objectives, long-term allotment specific objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health, the implementation of pasture fencing will be required. Two pasture fences are being to create the Treasure Well Pasture, and the Antelope Pasture. Upon completing the necessary clearances,

cooperative agreements, public consultation and NEPA, construction of these projects will provide for improved livestock distribution and the incorporation of desirable use periods that will result in the attainment of resource objectives. These fences will allow for a significant portion of the allotment to be deferred, while providing for restrictions on growing season use in spring use pastures. Phase 2 will continue to provide for deferment of upland vegetation. It is expected that the Phase 2 management plan will result in the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

The Treasure Well use area is best suited to spring use due to the ecological sites in the area. Much of this area is characterized by saline soils supporting greasewood and saltgrass vegetation that is more palatable in the spring. The two-week use period of the Treasure Well pasture would be subject to growing season utilization objectives. Achievement of the utilization objectives and this brief use period would ensure significant progress be made in this use area. The trailing period would result in incidental use of the vegetation during a short period of use in the spring, and would be subject to growing season utilization objectives, further ensuring significant progress towards the Standards for Rangeland Health. The remaining use on the allotment under Phase 2 would be deferred use, which will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover, and seedling establishment. This deferred livestock grazing system will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growth period, allowing forage plants to remain healthy, provide seed to repopulate the plant communities for watershed stability and long-term sustainable use for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife.

The estimated carrying capacity for the new pastures was derived by applying the stocking rate for the allotment of 37 acres/AUM to the number of acres of public land within each pasture.

It has been determined that Phase 2 of this management plan is in conformance with the following RAC guidelines: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines.

Management Action 3

- Place 888 AUMs into temporary suspension for a period not to exceed five years.

Rationale

The Battle Mountain Field Office received a letter from the permittee on the Lucky C Allotment during the protest period for the Proposed Multiple Use Decision requesting that BLM reconsider the carrying capacity analysis that was completed in the evaluation. The permittee requested that BLM modify the weighted average utilization derived from use pattern maps completed in 1992, 1993 and 1998 to include suitable areas that were characterized by light use. The permittee also requested that any additional AUMs that became available as a result of this exercise be placed into temporary suspension until it can be determined if additional forage will be available once the management actions included in this decision are implemented and the effects of achieving the appropriate management level (AML) for wild horses can be determined.

BLM revisited the carrying capacity analysis and determined that some light use areas could in fact be considered since management actions including an interim and final grazing system in addition to terms and conditions specific to herding of livestock and utilization of private lands would result in improved livestock distribution. The total number of AUMs to be placed in temporary suspension as a result of this analysis is determined to be 888 AUMs. Due to the nature of temporary suspension, these AUMs would only remain in this category for a period not to exceed five years. These AUMs may be returned to active status if it is determined through the analysis and evaluation of monitoring data that all of the allotment specific objectives for the Lucky C Allotment have been achieved. Following the five year period, BLM will evaluate available monitoring data to determine if any of the AUMs in temporary suspension can be returned to active use. If the short term management objectives for the Lucky C Allotment have not been achieved following the five year period, these AUMs will be removed from the grazing permit. Allotment specific objectives are detailed in Attachment 1.

The basis for placing these AUMs in temporary suspension versus completely removing them from the grazing permit at this time is based on the following:

1. In completing the carrying capacity calculations specified in the Fish Creek Complex Rangeland Health Assessment and Evaluation, suitable acres that received heavy use in 1992 and 1993 were used in calculating a desired weighted average utilization. In 1998, these same acres received light use and were not incorporated into the desired weighted average utilization. It has been determined in light of the comments received by the permittee that the acres that are suitable for livestock grazing that were included in the analysis of the 1992 and 1993 use pattern maps should have been incorporated and considered in the analysis of the 1998 use pattern map. Moreover, 1992 and 1993 were drought years and 1998 was an average year for precipitation.
2. The BLM has not established the wild horse AML until the issuance of this FMUD. As a result, BLM has not been able to conduct wild horse gathers in this allotment. High populations of wild horses have impacted vegetation resources and over utilized the forage in the Lucky C Allotment. Due to the high numbers of wild horses, the permittee has voluntarily scaled back their operation over the years to reduce grazing impacts. Upon achieving wild horse AML in the allotment, monitoring data may indicate that temporary suspended permitted use AUMs may become available within the context of the grazing system and terms and conditions specified in this decision.
3. The permittee has agreed to improve management practices including the pasturing of all livestock on private meadows during the critical growing season of key upland species, salting, herding, repairing existing wells, and water hauling all to improve livestock distribution within the allotment. If these actions are successful, additional forage may become available for use by livestock.

43 CFR 4110.3-2 (a) states that "Permitted use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, or other natural causes, or to facilitate installation, maintenance or modification of range improvements." The rationale in this case for placing 888

AUMs into temporary suspension is consistent with the grazing regulations and is within the discretion of the authorized officer.

Management Action 4

- Issue a ten year permit for the Lucky C Allotment with the following terms and conditions:

Grazing use will be in accordance with the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Complex Final Multiple Use Decision dated _____.

Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of \$25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, but no to exceed \$250.00. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(B) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

Actual use information, for each pasture will be submitted to the authorized officer within 15 days of completing grazing use as specified on the grazing permit and/or grazing licenses.

Permittee would be required to maintain all range improvement projects for which maintenance responsibility is assigned in accordance with 43 CFR 4140.

In order to improve livestock and rangeland management on the public lands, all salt and/or mineral supplements would not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated through a written agreement or decision.

All grazing permittees shall provide reasonable access across private and/or leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(C) and (D), you must stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and protect it from your activities for 30 days or until notified by the authorized officer.

All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease

The terms and conditions of this permit may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.

The permittee would be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that would ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment. The permittee would be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock.

The season of use in Lucky C Allotment may be temporarily modified from the grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health. Any use in excess of the total permitted use for the Lucky C Allotment will constitute temporary non-renewable use. The authorization of temporary non-renewable would be subject to the requirements set forth in 43 CFR 4130.6-2.

Rationale

Issuance of a ten-year permit is based on the evaluation of monitoring and the evaluation of Land Use Plan objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health. The grazing stipulations for the Lucky C Allotment will result in the attainment of multiple use objectives and is consistent with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Standards and conforms with the Guidelines. An environmental assessment has been prepared and a FONSI has been signed by the Authorized Officer. This final multiple use decision will implement the selected management actions described in the Conformance Determination and will authorize the issuance of a new ten-year grazing permit. These terms and conditions will ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing livestock grazing on public lands.

The ten-year permit and terms and conditions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and 4.1.

Romano Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish the total permitted use for the Romano Allotment at 2,887 AUMs as indicated in the table below.
- Cancel the remaining voluntary non use totaling 481 AUMs that are in the terms and conditions on the current grazing permit.
- Retain the historic suspended AUMs of 1,709.

The following table displays the permitted use by pasture within the allotment.

Pasture	AUMs
Home Seeding	220
Sullivan Seeding	233
Home Native	132
Mulligan	400
Mount Hope	410
Whistler	656
North Field	33
Mud Field	100
7 th Street	80
Valley	623
TOTAL	2,887

Rationale

In the 1997 transfer of the grazing preference, the permit was reduced from 3,368 AUMs to 2,062 AUMs. This reduction was based on use pattern map data from 1990 through 1993. Through the transfer, the permittee agreed to place 1,306 AUMs into voluntary non-use until monitoring data indicated that additional forage was available on a pasture-by-pasture basis. Currently, the regulations do not provide for long-term voluntary non-use. The regulations allow for AUMs to be in active status, temporary suspension status or voluntary non-use. Voluntary non-use must be applied for annually and may be authorized up to three years. AUMs are placed into temporary suspended use when there is likelihood that this use would be available in the near future. This would be the case in the event of fire, drought, etc.

No utilization data has been collected in the Romano Allotment since the 1997 transfer. Four pastures within the Romano Allotment including Home Native, Whistler, Mount Hope, and Mud Field were not meeting all of the RAC Standards and Guidelines. The causal factors for non-attainment of the standards in these pastures are historic livestock and wild horse use. Through the FCC Evaluation and Conformance Determination, it was determined that the Standards for Rangeland Health, Land Use Plan and Rangeland Program Summary objectives are being met in the North Field, Home Seeding, Mulligan, Sullivan Seeding, 7th Street, and Valley Pastures. It has been determined through long term monitoring data that a proportion of the voluntary non-use AUMs may be returned to the pastures that are meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health.

It was determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standard 1 is met, Standard 2 is not met, Standard 3 is partially met, Standard 4 is met, and Standard 5 is met. In addition, the LUP Plan and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Romano Allotment.

The level of use in conjunction with the management actions identified in this document including deferred use, appropriate stocking levels and mandatory water hauling will result in significant progress towards the attainment of the standards and/or maintenance of the standards where they are currently being met. In addition, significant progress would be made when

management results in the attainment of the short term monitoring objectives for the Romano Allotment identified in Attachment 1.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4110.3, BLM will continue to monitor the Romano Allotment to determine if any changes to permitted use will be required. Through future re-evaluations of the allotment, if monitoring data indicates that the existing permitted use is resulting in the non-attainment of the Standards and Guidelines further changes will be made to the permit.

It has been determined that the livestock carrying capacity for each pasture is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, and 4.1.

Management Action 2

- Implement the following grazing management system and grazing stipulations for the Romano Allotment.

Pasture	Season Of Use	Kind	Percent Public Land	Number of Livestock	AUMs
Home Seeding	05/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	270	220
Sullivan Seeding	05/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	233
Home Native	07/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	270	132
Mulligan	05/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	400
Mount Hope	07/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	270	410
7 th Street	05/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	80
Whistler	07/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	270	656
North Field	10/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	33
Mud Field	10/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	100
Valley	10/01-12/31	Cattle	100%	*	623
Total					2,887

*Livestock within the pastures is variable, not to exceed designated AUMs.

▲Any pasture used before 06/15 will not be used until after 06/15 the next year

Grazing Stipulations for the Romano Allotment

1. The permittee will be required to haul water or make water available on private land in the Mulligan, Whistler, and 7th Street pastures. Grazing use will not be authorized in these pastures unless water is made available by the permittee.
2. The permittee will be required to build riparian exclosures around the springs in the Whistler and Mount Hope Pastures prior to turnout in these pastures in 2005.
3. Livestock numbers may vary within the Sullivan Seeding, Mulligan, North Field, Mud Field, 7th Street and Valley Pastures not to exceed the AUMs of the pasture.

4. The permittee will be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock from pasture to pasture with the exception of Home Native, Mud Field, Whistler, and Mount Hope pastures.
5. The permittee will be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that would ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment.
6. Pastures that are not meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health will be deferred until after the active growing season annually. Pastures that are meeting Standards for Rangeland Health that are grazed prior to June 15th will be deferred until after June 15th the next year.
7. No “double harvesting” will occur within the pastures. For example, the permittee will not be allowed to graze cattle in the spring of the grazing year then also graze in the fall of the same grazing year.
8. If utilization levels reach specified objectives in any use area or pasture the permittee will be required to remove livestock from that area, use may continue if livestock are kept in areas containing available forage. If livestock cannot be kept in proper areas, livestock removal will be required. The AUMs authorized for a use area or pastures, that are not utilized, will not be used in other rotating use areas or pastures.
9. The season of use in each pasture may be temporarily modified from the grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.

Rationale

The season of use for the Romano Allotment will be changed from 04/15-02/28 to 05/01-12/31. The grazing management system will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover, and seedling establishment. The deferred livestock grazing system will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growth period, allowing forage plants to remain healthy, provide seed to repopulate the plant communities for watershed stability and long-term sustainable use for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Proper vegetative management maintains or improves the plant community for protection of soil and water resources. Sufficient seedling and young plant recruitment is needed to maintain and increase herbaceous species in the plant community. Healthy plant communities must be able to complete their life cycle by preventing damage during the critical growth period. Critical growth period in a plant growth cycle is when food reserves are the lowest and grazing is the most harmful. The critical growth period begins with the boot stage and closes with complete mature seed.

The deferred livestock grazing system will allow early and mid ecological status vegetative communities to improve over the long-term. The improvement of ecological condition will increase productivity, litter, soil fertility, infiltration, and nutrient cycling. The deferred livestock grazing system would reduce soil compaction and allow for moisture infiltration. Reduced soil compaction will increase the production of the dominant and/or co-dominant native perennial grass and forb components on the range sites. Significant progress will be made when management results in the attainment of the short term monitoring objectives in Attachment 1.

The Standards for Rangeland Health are not being met in the Mount Hope and Whistler pastures. The grazing system being will defer use on native vegetation in these pastures annually. It is expected that through water hauling and fall vegetative phenology, livestock distribution will be desirable. In addition, the utilization levels would be 50% by the end of the grazing season for these pastures. Refer to short term objectives in Attachment 1.

The Home Native pasture is not meeting Standards for Rangeland Health. In order to achieve significant progress a shorter grazing season is being implemented in addition to a reduction in the utilization objective for that pasture. It is expected that through water hauling in conjunction with spring grazing, livestock distribution will be desirable. Significant progress will be measured by the short-term objectives in Attachment 1. If monitoring data indicates that the utilization objective for the spring growing season is not being met, further modifications to the period of use and/or stocking level will be adjusted.

The grazing management system is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, Vegetation Guidelines and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines.

Management Action 3

- Issue a ten-year permit for the Romano Allotment with the following terms and conditions.

Grazing use will be in accordance with the Romano Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Complex Final Multiple Use Decision dated _____.

Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of \$25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, but no to exceed \$250.00. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(B) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

Actual use information, for each pasture will be submitted to the authorized officer within 15 days of completing grazing use as specified on the grazing permit and/or grazing licenses.

Permittee will be required to maintain all range improvement projects for which maintenance responsibility is assigned in accordance with 43 CFR 4140.

In order to improve livestock and rangeland management on the public lands, all salt and/or mineral supplements will not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated through a written agreement or decision.

All grazing permittees shall provide reasonable access across private and/or leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(C) and (D), you must stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and protect it from your activities for 30 days or until notified by the authorized officer.

All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease

The terms and conditions of this permit may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.

Rationale

Issuance of a ten-year permit is based on the evaluation of monitoring and the evaluation of Land Use Plan objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health. The grazing stipulations for the Romano Allotment will result in the attainment of multiple use objectives and is consistent with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Standards and conforms with the Guidelines. An environmental assessment has been prepared and a FONSI has been signed by the Authorized Officer. This final multiple use decision will implement the selected management actions described in the Conformance Determination and will authorize the issuance of a new ten-year grazing permit. These terms and conditions will ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing livestock grazing on public lands.

The ten-year permit and terms and conditions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and 4.1.

Ruby Hill Allotment

Management Action 1

- Retain the current permitted use of 1,286 AUMs for the Ruby Hill Allotment.
- The permitted sheep use will be 1,011 AUMs.
- The permitted cattle use will be retained at 275 AUMs.

Rationale

It was determined through this Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1-5, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Ruby Hill Allotment.

Although cattle are permitted for the allotment, the Ruby Hill Allotment is exclusively a sheep allotment under current management. Cattle have not been grazed in the allotment during the

evaluation period, therefore data does not exist that will support an adjustment to the permitted use for cattle. Current management has resulted in average actual livestock use of 1,034 AUMs of sheep use through the evaluation period. It was determined through the FCC Evaluation and Conformance Determination that this level of use has allowed for the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health.

The potential carrying capacity calculation was implemented for this allotment due to current water hauling, herding and the potential of additional water haul locations, resulting in improved distribution to areas currently receiving slight and light use. It has been determined that the potential carrying capacity for livestock grazing within the allotment will result in the attainment of the allotment specific objectives for the Ruby Hill Allotment as identified in Attachment 1. The carrying capacity analysis identified the potential carrying capacity for the allotment as 1,278 AUMs of livestock use. This carrying capacity was based on the 50% RPS utilization objective for growing season use. The potential carrying capacity derived through the FCC Evaluation supports retaining the current permitted use, as the difference between the two is marginal.

Sheep are herded more effectively utilizing areas that would not normally be grazed by cattle. These areas can be influenced by topography, and distance from water. Sheep would not concentrate on riparian areas due to herding and water hauls established throughout the allotment. The result is improved livestock distribution. The permittee will be required to haul water to suitable areas that have received minimal use thereby justifying grazing at the carrying capacity level. This requirement will be specified in the new terms and conditions for grazing use within the allotment. Through the evaluation period, the permittee has demonstrated that water hauling for sheep use has been an effective means of grazing management within the allotment as indicated by use pattern maps. This permitted use in conjunction with the grazing stipulations for the allotment will ensure that the allotment specific objectives for the Ruby Hill Allotment would be achieved.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4110.3, BLM will continue to monitor the Ruby Hill Allotment to determine if any changes to permitted use will be required. Through future re-evaluations of the allotment if monitoring data indicates that the existing permitted use is resulting in the non-attainment of the Standards and Guidelines further changes will be made to the permit.

It has been determined that the livestock carrying capacity for each pasture is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, and the Vegetation Guidelines.

Management Action 2

- Implement the following grazing management system and grazing stipulations for the Ruby Hill Allotment.

Pasture	Season Of Use	Kind of Livestock	Percent Public Land	Number of Livestock	AUMs
Ruby Hill Allotment	03/16-08/29	Cattle	100%	50	275
Ruby Hill Allotment	05/01-09/30	Sheep	100%	1,005	1,011

Grazing Stipulations for the Ruby Hill Allotment

1. Sheep camps will be placed a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from all permanent water.
2. Sheep camps will be moved every five days. No two (2) sheep camps will camp in the same area in a grazing season.
3. New bed grounds will be used every night. Bed ground will be a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) mile from previous bed grounds, permanent water sources, and from riparian-wetlands and aspen.
4. In addition to continuing to haul water to current water haul locations, the permittee will be required to establish new water hauls sites in areas previously receiving slight and/or light use as determined by BLM in order to improve livestock distribution. The permittee will be required to herd sheep throughout the Ruby Hill Allotment to utilize the areas that have received slight and/or light use. If it is determined that utilization objectives are being met in any area, the permittee will be required to move sheep to other areas of the allotment that have not been grazed.
5. The permittee will be required to meet with BLM prior to each grazing year in order to determine an annual grazing plan that would ensure appropriate use throughout the allotment.
6. The permittee will be allowed five days flexibility prior to and following the scheduled use dates to move livestock.
7. No "double harvesting" will occur within the pastures. For example, the permittee will not be allowed to graze cattle in the spring of the grazing year then also graze in the fall of the same grazing year.
8. When utilization levels reach specified objectives in any use area or pasture the permittee will be required to remove livestock from that area, use may continue if livestock are kept in areas containing available forage. If livestock cannot be kept in proper areas, livestock removal will be required. The AUMs authorized for a use area or pastures, that are not utilized, will not be used in other rotating use areas or pastures.
9. The season of use in the Ruby Hill Allotment may be temporarily modified from the grazing management system at the discretion of the authorized officer on an annual basis if monitoring data indicates that changes are necessary to meet multiple use objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.

Rationale

The grazing management system will allow existing upland plants to increase vigor, productivity, cover, and seedling establishment. Due to the nature of sheep grazing and herding, it is expected that a certain percentage of the allotment would be deferred annually. This will limit use on native upland rangeland during the critical growing period, allow forage plants to gain in vigor, and produce seed. Proper vegetative management maintains or improves the plant community for protection of soil and water resources. Sufficient seedling and young plant recruitment is needed to maintain and increase herbaceous species in the plant community. Healthy plant communities must be able to complete their life cycle by preventing damage during the critical growth period. Critical growth period in a plant growth cycle occurs when food reserves are the lowest and grazing is the most harmful.

The grazing system based on the frequent herding of sheep across the landscape will provide partial deferment on a rotational basis, ensure that utilization objectives are met, and provide for the attainment of riparian and habitat objectives. The improvement of ecological condition will increase productivity, litter, soil fertility, infiltration, and nutrient cycling. Use by cattle outlined in the Conformance Determination, is considered to be conservative in nature given the low stocking level of 50 cattle. As previously stated, the permittee has grazed cattle infrequently in the allotment throughout the evaluation period. If future monitoring data indicates that use by cattle fails to meet objectives for the allotment, this use may be modified. Currently, no information exists to suggest that this use would not result in the attainment of allotment specific objectives for the allotment. Refer to the allotment specific objectives located in Attachment 1.

The grazing management system is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 4.1, and BLM/WAWFA sage grouse guidelines.

Management Action 3

- Issue a ten year permit for the Ruby Hill Allotment with the following terms and conditions:

Grazing use will be in accordance with the Ruby Hill Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Complex Final Multiple Use Decision dated _____.

Failure to pay grazing bills within 15 days of the due date specified in the bill shall result in a late fee assessment of \$25.00 or 10 percent of the grazing bill, whichever is greater, but no to exceed \$250.00. Payment made later than 15 days after the due date, shall include the appropriate late fee assessment. Failure to make payment within 30 days may be a violation of 43 CFR Sec. 4140.1(B) (1) and shall result in action by the authorized officer under 43 CFR Secs. 4150.1 and 4160.1-2.

Actual use information, for each pasture will be submitted to the authorized officer within 15 days of completing grazing use as specified on the grazing permit and/or grazing licenses.

Permittee will be required to maintain all range improvement projects for which maintenance responsibility is assigned in accordance with 43 CFR 4140.

In order to improve livestock and rangeland management on the public lands, all salt and/or mineral supplements will not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or watering facility (either permanent or temporary) unless stipulated through a written agreement or decision.

All grazing permittees shall provide reasonable access across private and/or leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

The holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony (as defined at 43 CFR 10.2). Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(C) and (D), you must stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and protect it from your activities for 30 days or until notified by the authorized officer.

All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease

The terms and conditions of this permit may be modified if additional information indicates that revision is necessary to conform with 43 CFR 4180.

Rationale

Issuance of a ten-year permit is based on the evaluation of monitoring and the evaluation of Land Use Plan objectives and the Standards for Rangeland Health. The grazing stipulations for the Ruby Hill Allotment will result in the attainment of multiple use objectives and is consistent with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC standards and conforms with the guidelines. An environmental assessment has been prepared and a FONSI has been signed by the Authorized Officer. This final multiple use decision will implement the selected management actions described in the Conformance Determination and will authorize the issuance of a new ten-year grazing permit. These terms and conditions will ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing livestock grazing on public lands.

The ten-year permit and terms and conditions is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6 and 4.1.

FINAL WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Selected Management Actions for Wild Horses within the Fish Creek Complex

Following the analysis of monitoring data, an interdisciplinary team determined that the following changes in existing wild horse management are needed to ensure significant progress towards the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health approved by the Northeastern Great Basin and Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Councils, and the Shoshone-Eureka Area (SERA) RMP multiple use objectives for the Fish Creek Complex.

Therefore, I issue the following final decision for wild horse management within the Fish Creek Complex:

Arambel Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish an Appropriate Management Level range for wild horses within the Arambel Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Herd Management Area of 32 to 54 wild horses (384-648 AUMs).

Rationale

The Rangeland Program Summary established initial stocking level of 72 wild horses year long. The carrying capacity analysis suggests an AML of 54 (653 AUMs) wild horses year long. This constitutes a reduction of 18 (216 AUMs) wild horses year long from the initial stocking levels established in the RPS. This level of use by wild horses is expected to result in the attainment of the allotment specific objectives for the Arambel Allotment. In addition, the level of wild horses would continue to maintain the Land Use Plan objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health.

Monitoring data collected throughout the FCC Evaluation period indicates that 54 wild horses year long is the proper stocking level to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population. According to the use pattern maps wild horses in excess of 54 animals will result in utilization levels exceeding RPS objectives throughout the allotment. The wild horses are only able to use the Arambel Allotment in the spring, summer and fall due to heavy snow levels in the upper elevations. It should be noted that year long wild horse generally does not occur within the allotment due to winter snowfall. Furthermore, reliable water sources available season long for wild horses are lacking. The Arambel Allotment represents 18% of the Fish Creek HMA requiring wild horses to utilize adjacent allotments to fulfill their habitat requirements. The AML figure reflects the average year-long use taking into account that the wild horse populations do fluctuate greatly on a day to day basis throughout the year within the Fish Creek HMA. These fluctuations in wild horse population can be attributed to environmental conditions and inherent movement patterns. The AML would allow the year round habitat requirements of the wild horses in the Fish Creek HMA to be met.

It has been determined through the evaluation that RAC Standards 1-4, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Arambel Allotment; however, RAC Standard 5 was not being met for the allotment. The causal factors for non-attainment of the standard were wild horse populations that resulted in heavy utilization throughout the allotment in addition to exceeding capacity of available water resources.

In order to allow for improved range health conditions and upward trend throughout the allotment, AML will remain at the level established in this document until the Fish Creek HMA and Arambel Allotment are re-evaluated. Existing studies within the Fish Creek HMA and Arambel Allotment will be re-read in future years to evaluate rangeland health and trend. This information will be utilized to determine if AML should be increased or decreased to maintain thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population.

Periodic gathers will be required to maintain the wild horse population at the established AML. This will require either removing the annual increase in population each year or gathering less frequently and removing larger numbers. Removing only a few horses per year is far less desirable for the following reasons:

- 1). Gathering once a year to remove excess wild horses would be cost prohibitive and could not be accomplished with the numerous HMAs gathered annually in Nevada.
- 2). Annual gathers would have more severe impacts to herd stability and band integrity.
- 3). Frequent gathers make the animals far more difficult to capture and greatly increases the chances for more horses to be injured or killed.
- 4). The Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act require that “all management actions shall be at the minimum feasible level”.

For these reasons, the AML for the Fish Creek HMA will be established as a range, which will ensure maintenance of a thriving natural ecological balance, reduced frequency of gathers and minimal stress to the wild horse population as a result of gathers. Implementation of the AML ranges would allow 3-4 years to pass after each gather before the upper range of AML is exceeded.

An appropriate AML range for the Arambel Allotment will be between 32 and 54 wild horses. Prior to implementation of the AML through a wild horse gather, an environmental assessment and Gather Plan will be completed.

The wild horse Appropriate Management Level is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Fish Creek Ranch Allotment

Management Action 1

- Retain the Appropriate Management Level of 75 wild horses (900 AUMs) as established in the 1994 Final Multiple Use Decision for the portion of the Fish Creek Herd Management Area located within the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment. Establish an AML range of 45-75 wild horses (540-900 AUMs).

Rationale

Since the establishment of AML in 1994, AML has not been achieved despite three wild horse gathers taking place. Complete use pattern maps have not been completed since the 1994 FMUD. This was a result of minimal livestock grazing within the allotment occurring until the 2003 grazing year. Monitoring data does not exist to suggest that current AML within the HMA is not appropriate. Therefore, current AML will be maintained until more information is collected to justify a change in AML. Carrying capacity analysis will be recalculated following the 2007 grazing year. At that time wild horse AML will be reevaluated.

An AML range for the entire Fish Creek HMA will be established. Refer to the discussion under the decision for the Arambel Allotment. As such, the AML range for the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment will be between 45 and 75 wild horses for Fish Creek HMA.

The wild horse Appropriate Management Level is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7. The wild horse Appropriate Management Level will also be in conformance with the Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7.

Lucky C Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish an Appropriate Management Level range for wild horses within the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Herd Management Area **south** of U.S. Highway 50 of 19-32 wild horses (228-384 AUMs).
- In the short term, wild horses will not be managed south of U.S. Highway 50. Wild horses will be removed from this area until reliable water adequate to support the AML is available to the wild horses. Wild horses will be removed from the area during the next gather operation. When reliable waters are available in the future, the population will be allowed to increase and be managed at the AML.

- Establish an Appropriate Management Level for wild horses within the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Herd Management Area **north** of U.S. Highway 50 of 6-10 wild horses (72-120 AUMs).
- Establish Appropriate Management Level for wild horses within the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Whistler Mountain Herd Management Area of 2-4 wild horses (24-48 AUMs).

Rationale

Fish Creek HMA

The carrying capacity calculation revealed that AML for the Fish Creek HMA portion of this allotment will be established at 42 (552 AUMs) wild horses year long. This is a reduction of 36 (432 AUMs) wild horses from the initial stocking levels established in the RPS. This AML applies to portions of the HMA both north and south of U.S. Highway 50. Throughout the FCC Evaluation period, approximately 23% of the wild horses residing in the Lucky C Allotment were located in the portion of the allotment north of U.S. Highway 50. As a result, 23% of the AML will apply to the portion of the HMA north of the highway, which is 10 wild horses. The remaining 77% of the AML will apply to the portion of the Fish Creek HMA south of the highway, which is 32 wild horses.

The Lucky C Allotment represents 23% of the Fish Creek HMA and wild horses utilize adjacent allotments to fulfill their habitat requirements. The AML figure reflects the average year long use taking into account that the wild horse populations do fluctuate greatly on a day to day basis throughout the year within the Fish Creek HMA. These fluctuations in wild horse population can be attributed to environmental conditions and inherent movement patterns.

Monitoring data collected throughout the evaluation period indicates that 42 wild horses year long is the proper level to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population in the Lucky C Allotment. According to the use pattern maps wild horses in excess of 42 animals would result in utilization levels exceeding utilization objectives throughout the allotment.

It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1 and 4 are met for this allotment. Standards 3 and 5 are not met. Many of the LUP and RPS objectives were not met. Significant progress would be made with the establishment of AML for the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Fish Creek HMA. The primary reason for the standards and objectives not being met is degraded rangeland conditions as a result of heavy use by wild horses and use by livestock during the evaluation period. Populations of wild horses in excess of the RPS objectives negatively impacted the rangeland resources in the allotment primarily in the south portion of the allotment. Furthermore, the permittee was more dependant upon the north portion of the allotment through the evaluation period.

In order to allow for improved range health conditions and upward trend throughout the allotment, AML will remain at the level established in this document until such time as the Fish Creek HMA and Lucky C Allotment are re-evaluated. Existing studies within the Fish Creek

HMA and Lucky C Allotment will be re-read in future years to evaluate rangeland health and trend. This information will be utilized to determine if AML should be increased or decreased to maintain thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population.

An AML range for the entire Fish Creek HMA will be established through this FMUD. The AML range for the Lucky C Allotment will be between 19 to 32 wild horses for Fish Creek HMA **south** of U.S. Highway 50, and between 6 and 10 wild horses for the portion of the Fish Creek HMA **north** of U.S. Highway 50. However, due to the current conditions and lack of reliable water sources for wild horses in the short-term wild horses will not be managed **south** of U.S. Highway 50. Wild horses would be removed from this area until reliable water sources, adequate to support the AML, is available for wild horses. Wild horses will be removed from the area during the next gather operation. When reliable waters are available in the future, the population will be allowed to increase and be managed at the AML.

Whistler Mountain HMA

The carrying capacity calculation revealed that AML for the Whistler Mountain HMA portion of this allotment will be established at 2-4 (24-48 AUMs) wild horses year long

Monitoring data collected throughout the evaluation period indicates that 4 wild horses year long is the proper level to maintain a thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population. According to the use pattern maps wild horses in excess of 4 animals will result in utilization levels exceeding utilization objectives within the Whistler Mountain HMA. The AML figure reflects the average year long use taking into account that the wild horse populations do fluctuate greatly on a day to day basis throughout the year within the Whistler Mountain HMA. These fluctuations in wild horse population can be attributed to environmental conditions and inherent movement patterns.

The Lucky C Allotment contains 28% of the Whistler HMA, and year long use by wild horses generally does not occur within the HMA due to its size and lack of water resources. Wild horses utilize Kobeh Valley to the west of the Whistler Mountain HMA boundaries. Wild horses also move west into the Fish Creek HMA boundaries to fulfill their habitat requirements. The Whistler Mountain HMA wild horses also move north into the Roberts Mountain HMA and east into the Romano Allotment portion of the HMA to access water and forage. There are no documented water sources within the HMA boundaries (Lucky C Allotment portion), but monitoring data collected throughout the evaluation period indicated that forage was available for wild horses within the Whistler Mountain HMA.

Refer to the discussion for the Fish Creek HMA LUP objectives and RAC standards within the Lucky C Allotment. Two key areas are within the Whistler Mountain HMA. Standard 1 was met for both. Standard 3 was met for LC-5 and not met for LC-7. Wild horses and livestock were determined to be the causal factor for non-attainment of the standard.

An AML range for the entire Whistler Mountain HMA will be established through this FMUD. Refer to the discussion in the decision for the Arambel Allotment. As such, the AML range for the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Whistler HMA will be between 2 and 4 wild horses.

The wild horse Appropriate Management Levels is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Management Action 2

- Manage the northern portion of the Fish Creek HMA and the Whistler HMA in the Lucky C Allotment as a complex with the Roberts Mountain HMA, and the Romano Allotment portion of the Whistler HMA.

Rationale

Movement of wild horses between the northern portion of the Fish Creek HMA, Whistler HMA, and Roberts Mountain HMA has been documented. The Roberts Mountain HMA, Kobeh Valley, and the Whistler Mountain HMA (Lucky C and Romano Allotments) serve as one use area for the population of wild horses that inhabit these areas. Movement throughout the areas is influenced by availability of water, precipitation, forage conditions, population size, and other environmental conditions.

The Kobeh Valley Herd Area was identified as being inhabited by wild horses at the passage of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act in 1971. It was later recommended for identification as a Herd Management Area; however, this identification was not implemented in the Shoshone Eureka Resource Area Management Plan (RMP) (Shoshone - Eureka RMP Record of Decision dated 1986 and Shoshone - Eureka RMP Amendment, Record of Decision dated 1987), or the Shoshone-Eureka Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) (1988). Instead, the current HMA boundaries (Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain) were implemented. Documentation does not exist to explain the reason why the boundaries of the Kobeh Valley HA were not included.

Water resources within the boundaries of the Lucky C Allotment portion of the Fish Creek HMA and Whistler Mountain HMA north of U.S. Highway 50 are non-existent or available seasonally in very limited amounts. Wild horses usually do not remain inside of the HMA boundaries, but leave the HMA to acquire water. Several of the water sources in Kobeh Valley are wells pumped by the grazing permittee. If the permittee is not pumping water for livestock, no water may be available to the wild horses west of Whistler Mountain. In 2001, 28 wild horses were removed from the east portion of Kobeh Valley due to lack of water.

Managing the area as a complex with the Roberts Mountain HMA will improve the management of the wild horses. Census and gather activities would be applied to the complex north of U.S. Highway 50 in the Lucky C, Romano, Three Bars and Roberts Mountain allotments, improving effectiveness and accuracy as the entire use area will be gathered or censused at the same time.

Additionally, managing the northern portion of the Fish Creek HMA and the Whistler Mountain HMA with the Roberts Mountain HMA as a complex will ensure that the year round requirements of the wild horses are met. Managing the population at the AMLs identified above

will ensure that the wild horse population does not exceed the capacity of the limited available waters. This decision would not involve managing wild horses outside existing HA boundaries.

The management actions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Romano Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish an Appropriate Management Level range for wild horses in the Whistler Mountain Herd Management Area located within the Romano Allotment of 12-20 wild horses (144-240 AUMs).

Rationale

Based on the analysis of available monitoring data including precipitation data, wild horse census data, vegetation monitoring data and knowledge pertaining to wild horse movement patterns and distribution throughout multiple HMAs, the AML for the Romano Allotment is determined to be 20 wild horses (120 AUMs). AML has not been previously established for the allotment.

The Romano Allotment represents 72% of the Whistler Mountain HMA; however, the wild horses have been documented to use portions of the Roberts Mountain HMA and Kobeh Valley area to meet their habitat requirements. The Whistler Mountain HMA is adjacent to the Roberts Mountain HMA, which influences the amount of wild horses within the Romano Allotment. Removal operations and population levels in the Roberts Mountain HMA have affected movement patterns and the population of wild horses in the Whistler Mountain HMA. The population since 1992 has varied considerably due to these movement patterns.

The Romano Allotment is only a portion of the total use area utilized by wild horses. The AML of 20 wild horses would reflect the average year long use taking into account that the wild horse populations do fluctuate greatly on a day to day basis throughout the year within the Whistler Mountain HMA. These fluctuations in wild horse population can be attributed to environmental conditions and movement patterns.

Wild horse populations in the early 1990's were in excess of initial stocking levels as defined by the RPS. These high populations of wild horses were documented to be causal factors for heavy use within the Whistler Mountain portion of Romano Allotment. Documentation further noted that Hash Spring and Trap Corral Spring were heavily utilized by wild horses.

It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1 is met, Standard 2 is not met, Standard 3 is partially met, Standard 4 is met, and Standard 5 is met. In addition, the LUP Plan and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Romano Allotment.

According to available census data, the average year round population of wild horses throughout the majority of the evaluation period in the Whistler Mountain HMA was 20-25 wild horses. Analysis of the available monitoring data indicates that the initial stocking level of 20 wild horses is appropriate ensuring a thriving, natural, ecological balance for a healthy wild horse population. In addition, an AML of 20 wild horses will ensure that Standards for Rangeland Health are maintained and significant progress is made towards attainment of the Standards.

In order to allow for improved range health conditions and upward trend throughout the allotment, AML will remain at the level established in this document until such time as the Whistler Mountain HMA and Romano Allotment are re-evaluated. Existing studies within the Whistler Mountain HMA and Romano Allotment will be re-read in future years to evaluate rangeland health and trend. This information will be utilized to determine if AML should be increased or decreased to maintain thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population.

An AML range for the entire Whistler Mountain HMA will be established through this FMUD. Refer to the discussion for the decision for the Arambel Allotment. As such, the AML range for the Romano Allotment would be between 12 and 20 wild horses for Whistler Mountain HMA.

The wild horse Appropriate Management Level is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Management Action 2

- Manage the Whistler Mountain HMA and the Lucky C Allotment portions of the Fish Creek HMA as a complex with the Roberts Mountain HMA.

Rationale

Movement of wild horses between the northern portion of the Fish Creek HMA, Whistler Mountain HMA and Roberts Mountain HMA has been documented. The Roberts Mountain HMA, Kobeh Valley, and the Whistler Mountain HMA (Lucky C and Romano Allotments) serve as one use area for the population of wild horses that inhabit these areas. Movement throughout the areas is influenced by availability of water, precipitation, forage conditions, population size, and other environmental conditions.

The Kobeh Valley Herd Area was identified as being inhabited by wild horses at the passage of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act in 1971. It was later recommended for identification as a Herd Management Area; however, this identification was not implemented in the Shoshone Eureka Resource Area Management Plan (RMP) (Shoshone - Eureka RMP Record of Decision dated 1986 and Shoshone - Eureka RMP Amendment, Record of Decision dated 1987), or the Shoshone-Eureka Rangeland Program Summary (RPS) (1988). Instead, the current

HMA boundaries (Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain) were implemented. Documentation does not exist to explain the reason why the boundaries of the Kobeh Valley HA were not included.

Managing the Whistler Mountain HMA as a complex with the Roberts Mountain HMA will improve the management of the wild horses. Census and gather activities would be applied to the complex north of U.S. Highway 50 in the Lucky C, Romano, Three Bars and Roberts Mountain allotments, improving effectiveness and accuracy as the entire use area will be gathered or censused at the same time.

Additionally, managing the Whistler Mountain and the Roberts Mountain HMA as a complex will ensure that the year round requirements of the wild horses are met. Managing the population at the AMLs identified above will ensure that the wild horse population did not exceed the capacity of the limited available waters. This decision would not involve managing wild horses outside existing HA boundaries.

The management actions are in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Ruby Hill Allotment

Management Action 1

- Establish an Appropriate Management Level range for wild horses within the Ruby Hill Allotment portion of the Fish Creek Herd Management Area of 5-9 wild horses (60-108 AUMs).

Rationale

The Rangeland Program Summary established initial stocking levels for wild horses at 10 (120 AUMs) year long. The carrying capacity analysis revealed 9 (108 AUMs) wild horses year long. This will be a reduction of 1 (12 AUMs) wild horse year long from the initial stocking levels established in the RPS.

It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1-5, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Ruby Hill Allotment. Wild horses do not generally utilize the Ruby Hill Allotment, and only incidental use occurs. The allotment represents 4% of the Fish Creek HMA requiring wild horses to utilize adjacent allotments to fulfill their habitat requirements. Analysis of the available monitoring data indicates that the stocking level of 9 wild horses is appropriate, ensuring a thriving natural ecological balance for a healthy wild horse population. In addition, an AML of 9 wild horses will ensure that Standards for Rangeland Health are maintained. The AML figure reflects the average year long use taking into account that the wild horse populations do fluctuate greatly on a day to day basis throughout the year within the Fish Creek HMA. These fluctuations in wild horse population can be attributed to environmental conditions and inherent movement patterns.

In order to allow for improved range health conditions and upward trend throughout the allotment, AML would remain at the level established in this document until the Fish Creek HMA and Ruby Hill Allotment are re-evaluated. Existing studies within the Fish Creek HMA and Ruby Hill Allotment will be re-read in future years to evaluate rangeland health and trend. This information will be utilized to determine if AML should be increased or decreased to maintain thriving natural ecological balance and a healthy wild horse population.

An AML range for the entire Fish Creek HMA would be established through this FMUD. Refer to the discussion in the decision for the Arambel Allotment. As such, the AML range for the Ruby Hill Allotment would be between 5 and 9 wild horses.

The wild horse Appropriate Management Level is in conformance with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Guidelines including 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.6, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

FINAL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DECISION

Selected Management Actions for Wildlife within the Fish Creek Complex

Following the analysis of monitoring data, an interdisciplinary team determined that the following changes in existing wildlife management are needed to ensure significant progress towards the attainment of the Standards for Rangeland Health approved by the Northeastern Great Basin and Mojave/Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Councils, and the Shoshone-Eureka Area (SERA) RMP multiple use objectives for the Fish Creek Complex.

Therefore, I issue the following decision for wildlife management within the Fish Creek Complex:

Arambel Allotment

Management Action 1

- Increase the current short-term forage allocation of big game from 1,400 AUMs to the long term RMP/RPS allocation of 1,450 AUMs.

Rationale

The RPS identified a range of short and long-term reasonable numbers of wildlife use between 1,400 and 1,450 AUMs. It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1-4, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Arambel Allotment. As a result, the wildlife use identified in the RPS remains appropriate to achieve management objectives for the allotment.

Fish Creek Ranch Allotment

Management Action 1

- Retain long-term reasonable numbers of 3,199 AUMs for wildlife in the Fish Creek Ranch Allotment.

Rationale

Monitoring data indicated that Standards for Rangeland Health were making significant progress at the majority of the key areas in addition to the riparian areas within the allotment. Therefore, the 3,199 AUMs that were allocated to wildlife in the 1994 FMUD is appropriate.

Lucky C Allotment

Management Action 1

- Existing short-term allocation of 570 AUMs would remain in effect until habitat standards are met. When habitat standards and objectives are met, allocation of big game forage shall increase from 570 AUMs to the long-term allocation of 673.

Rationale

Standard 3 has not been met; therefore, it has been determined that short term allocation will be retained until Standards for Rangeland Health are met throughout the allotment.

Romano Allotment

Management Action 1

- Existing short-term allocation of 519 AUMs will remain in effect until habitat standards are met. When habitat standards and objectives are met, allocation of big game forage shall increase from 519 AUMs to the long-term allocation of 533.

Rationale

It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 2, and 3, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are not fully met throughout the Romano Allotment. It has been determined that the short term allocation for wildlife will be retained until Standards for Rangeland Health are met throughout the allotment.

Ruby Hill Allotment

Management Action 1

- Increase the current RMP/RPS short-term allocation of forage for big from 82 AUMs to the long term RMP/RPS allocation of 85 AUMS.

Rationale

The RPS identified a range of short and long-term reasonable numbers of wildlife use between 82 and 85 AUMs. It has been determined through the Conformance Determination that RAC Standards 1-5, LUP Plan objectives, and RPS objectives are being met throughout the Ruby Hill Allotment. As a result, the wildlife use identified in the RPS remains appropriate to achieve management objectives for the allotment.

DECISION AUTHORITY

The authority for this decision is contained in Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) including, but not limited to the following:

§4100.0-8 Land use plans.

The authorized officer shall manage livestock grazing on public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield, and in accordance with applicable land use plans. Land use plans shall establish allowable resource uses (either singly or in combination), related levels of production or use to be maintained, areas of use, and resource condition goals and objectives to be obtained. The plans also set forth program constraints and general management practices needed to achieve management objectives. Livestock grazing activities and management actions approved by the authorized officer shall be in conformance with the land use plan as defined at 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b).

[53 FR 10233, Mar. 29, 1988]

§4110.3 Changes in permitted use.

The authorized officer shall periodically review the permitted use specified in a grazing permit or lease and shall make changes in the permitted use as needed to manage, maintain or improve rangeland productivity, to assist in restoring ecosystems to properly functioning condition, to conform with land use plans or activity plans, or to comply with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part. These changes must be supported by monitoring, field observations, ecological site inventory or other data acceptable to the authorized officer.

[60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4110.3-2 Decreasing permitted use.

(a) Permitted use may be suspended in whole or in part on a temporary basis due to drought, fire, or other natural causes, or to facilitate installation, maintenance, or modification of range improvements.

(b) When monitoring or field observations show grazing use or patterns of use are not consistent with the provisions of subpart 4180, or grazing use is otherwise causing an unacceptable level or pattern of utilization, or when use exceeds the livestock carrying capacity as determined through monitoring, ecological site inventory or other acceptable methods, the authorized officer shall reduce permitted grazing use or otherwise modify management practices.

[53 FR 10234, Mar. 29, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4110.3-3 Implementing reductions in permitted use.

(a) After consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected permittee or lessee, the State having lands or managing resources within the area, and the interested public, reductions of permitted use shall be implemented through a documented agreement or by decision of the authorized officer. Decisions implementing §4110.3-2 shall be issued as proposed decisions pursuant to §4160.1, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) When the authorized officer determines that the soil, vegetation, or other resources on the public lands require immediate protection because of conditions such as drought, fire, flood, insect infestation, or when continued grazing use poses an imminent likelihood of significant resource damage, after consultation with, or a reasonable attempt to consult with, affected permittees or lessees, the interested public, and the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, the authorized officer shall close allotments or portions of allotments to grazing by any kind of livestock or modify authorized grazing use notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section. Notices of closure and decisions requiring modification of authorized grazing use may be issued as final decisions effective upon issuance or on the date specified in the decision. Such decisions shall remain in effect pending the decision on appeal unless a stay is granted by the Office of Hearings and Appeals in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21.

[60 FR 9963, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4130.3 Terms and conditions.

Livestock grazing permits and leases shall contain terms and conditions determined by the authorized officer to be appropriate to achieve management and resource condition objectives for the public lands and other lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and to ensure conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part.

[60 FR 9966, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4130.3-1 Mandatory terms and conditions.

(a) The authorized officer shall specify the kind and number of livestock, the period(s) of use, the allotment(s) to be used, and the amount of use, in animal unit months, for every grazing permit or lease. The authorized livestock grazing use shall not exceed the livestock carrying capacity of the allotment.

(b) All permits and leases shall be made subject to cancellation, suspension, or modification for any violation of these regulations or of any term or condition of the permit or lease.

(c) Permits and leases shall incorporate terms and conditions that ensure conformance with subpart 4180 of this part.

[49 FR 6453, Feb. 21, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 10234, Mar. 29, 1988. Redesignated at 60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995, and amended at 60 FR 9966, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4130.3-2 Other terms and conditions.

The authorized officer may specify in grazing permits or leases other terms and conditions which will assist in achieving management objectives, provide for proper range management or assist in the orderly administration of the public rangelands. These may include but are not limited to:

(a) The class of livestock that will graze on an allotment;

(b) The breed of livestock in allotments within which two or more permittees or lessees are authorized to graze;

(c) Authorization to use, and directions for placement of supplemental feed, including salt, for improved livestock and rangeland management on the public lands;

(d) A requirement that permittees or lessees operating under a grazing permit or lease submit within 15 days after completing their annual grazing use, or as otherwise specified in the permit or lease, the actual use made;

(e) The kinds of indigenous animals authorized to graze under specific terms and conditions;

(f) Provision for livestock grazing temporarily to be delayed, discontinued or modified to allow for the reproduction, establishment, or restoration of vigor of plants, provide for the improvement of riparian areas to achieve proper functioning condition or for the protection of other rangeland resources and values consistent with objectives of applicable land use plans, or to prevent compaction of wet soils, such as where delay of spring turnout is required because of weather conditions or lack of plant growth;

(g) The percentage of public land use determined by the proportion of livestock forage available on public lands within the allotment compared to the total amount available from both public lands and those owned or controlled by the permittee or lessee; and

(h) A statement disclosing the requirement that permittees or lessees shall provide reasonable administrative access across private and leased lands to the Bureau of Land Management for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.

[49 FR 6453, Feb. 21, 1984; 49 FR 12704, Mar. 30, 1984. Redesignated at 60 FR 9965, Feb. 22, 1995, and amended at 60 FR 9966, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4130.3-3 Modification of permits or leases.

Following consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the affected lessees or permittees, the State having lands or responsible for managing resources within the area, and the interested public, the authorized officer may modify terms and conditions of the permit or lease when the active use or related management practices are not meeting the land use plan, allotment management plan or other activity plan, or management objectives, or is not in conformance with the provisions of subpart 4180 of this part. To the extent practical, the authorized officer shall provide to affected permittees or lessees, States having lands or responsibility for managing resources within the affected area, and the interested public an opportunity to review, comment and give input during the preparation of reports that evaluate monitoring and other data that are used as a basis for making decisions to increase or decrease grazing use, or to change the terms and conditions of a permit or lease.

[60 FR 9966, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4160.3 Final decisions.

(a) In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision.

(b) Upon the timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider her/his proposed decision in light of the protestant's statement of reasons for protest and in light of other information pertinent to the case. At the conclusion to her/his review of the protest, the authorized officer shall serve her/his final decision on the protestant or her/his agent, or both, and the interested public.

(c) A period of 30 days following receipt of the final decision, or 30 days after the date the proposed decision becomes final as provided in paragraph (a) of this section, is provided for filing an appeal and petition for stay of the decision pending final determination on appeal. A

decision will not be effective during the 30-day appeal period, except as provided in paragraph (f) of this section. See §§4.21 and 4.470 of this title for general provisions of the appeal and stay processes.

(d) When the Office of Hearings and Appeals stays a final decision of the authorized officer regarding an application for grazing authorization, an applicant who was granted grazing use in the preceding year may continue at that level of authorized grazing use during the time the decision is stayed, except where grazing use in the preceding year was authorized on a temporary basis under §4110.3-1(a). Where an applicant had no authorized grazing use during the previous year, or the application is for designated ephemeral or annual rangeland grazing use, the authorized grazing use shall be consistent with the final decision pending the Office of Hearings and Appeals final determination on the appeal.

(e) When the Office of Hearings and Appeals stays a final decision of the authorized officer to change the authorized grazing use, the grazing use authorized to the permittee or lessee during the time that the decision is stayed shall not exceed the permittee's or lessee's authorized use in the last year during which any use was authorized.

(f) Notwithstanding the provisions of §4.21(a) of this title pertaining to the period during which a final decision will not be in effect, the authorized officer may provide that the final decision shall be effective upon issuance or on a date established in the decision and shall remain in effect pending the decision on appeal unless a stay is granted by the Office of Hearings and Appeals when the authorized officer has made a determination in

accordance with §4110.3-3(b) or §4150.2(d). Nothing in this section shall affect the authority of the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals or the Interior Board of Land Appeals to place decisions in full force and effect as provided in §4.21(a)(1) of this title.

[43 FR 29067, July 5, 1978, as amended at 46 FR 5791, Jan. 19, 1981; 47 FR 41713, Sept. 21, 1982; 47 FR 46702, Oct. 20, 1982; 49 FR 6455, Feb. 21, 1984; 49 FR 12705, Mar. 30, 1984; 60 FR 9969, Feb. 22, 1995;

§4160.4 Appeals

Any person whose interest is adversely affected by a final decision of the authorized officer may appeal the decision for the purpose of a hearing before an administrative law judge by following the requirements set out in §4.470 of this title. As stated in that part, the appeal must be filed within 30 days after the date the proposed decision becomes final as provided in §4160.3 (a). Appeals and petitions for a stay of the decision shall be filed as the office of the authorized officer. The authorized officer shall promptly transmit the appeal and petition for stay and the accompanying administrative record to ensure their timely arrival at the Office of Hearings and Appeals.

[60 FR 9969, Feb.22, 1995, as amended at 61 FR 4227, Feb.5, 1996]

§4180.1 Fundamentals of rangeland health.

The authorized officer shall take appropriate action under subparts 4110, 4120, 4130, and 4160 of this part as soon as practicable but not later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management needs to be modified to ensure that the following conditions exist.

(a) Watersheds are in, or are making significant progress toward, properly functioning physical condition, including their upland, riparian-wetland, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance

with climate and landform and maintain or improve water quality, water quantity, and timing and duration of flow.

(b) Ecological processes, including the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow, are maintained, or there is significant progress toward their attainment, in order to support healthy biotic populations and communities.

(c) Water quality complies with State water quality standards and achieves, or is making significant progress toward achieving, established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.

(d) Habitats are, or are making significant progress toward being, restored or maintained for Federal threatened and endangered species, Federal Proposed, Category 1 and 2 Federal candidate and other special status species.

[60 FR 9969, Feb. 22, 1995]

§4180.2 Standards and guidelines for grazing administration.

(c) The authorized officer shall take appropriate action as soon as practicable but not later than the start of the next grazing year upon determining that existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on public lands are significant factors in failing to achieve the standards and conform with the guidelines that are made effective under this section. Appropriate action means implementing actions pursuant to subparts 4110, 4120, 4130, and 4160 of this part that will result in significant progress toward fulfillment of the standards and significant progress toward conformance with the guidelines. Practices and activities subject to standards and guidelines include the development of grazing-related portions of activity plans, establishment of terms and conditions of permits, leases and other grazing authorizations, and range improvement activities such as vegetation manipulation, fence construction and development of water.

§4700.0-6 Policy

(a) Wild horse and burros shall be managed as self-sustaining populations of healthy animals in balance with other uses and the productive capacity of their habitat.

(b) Wild horses and burros shall be considered comparably with other resource values in the formulation of land use plans

(c) Management activities affecting wild horses and burros shall be undertaken with the goal of maintaining free-roaming behavior.

(d): In administering these regulations, the authorized officer shall consult with Federal and State wildlife agencies and all other affected interests, to involve them in planning for and management of wild horses and burros on the public lands.

§4710.3-1 Herd Management Areas

Herd management areas shall be established for the maintenance of wild horse and burro herds. In delineating each herd management area, the authorized officer shall consider the appropriate management level for the herd, the habitat requirements of the animals, the relationships with other users of the public and adjacent private lands, and the constraints contained in 4710.4. The authorized officer shall prepare a herd management area plan, which may cover one or more herd management areas.

§4710.4 Constraints on Management

Management of wild horses and burros shall be undertaken with the objective of limiting the animals' distribution to herd areas. Management shall be at the minimum level necessary to attain the objectives identified in approved land use plans and herd management area plans.

§4720.1 Removal of excess animals from public lands

Upon examination of current information and a determination by the authorized officer that an excess of wild horses or burros exists, the authorized officer shall remove the excess animal immediately in the following order.

- (a) Old, sick, or lame animals shall be destroyed in accordance with subpart 4730 of this title;
- (b) Additional excess animals for which an adoption demand by qualified individuals exists shall be humanely captured and made available for private maintenance in accordance with subpart 4750 of this title; and
- (c) Remaining excess animals for which no adoption demand by qualified individuals exists shall be destroyed in accordance with subpart 4730 of this part.

§4770.3 Administrative Remedies

- (a) Any person who is adversely affected by a decision of the authorized officer in the administration of these regulations may file an appeal. Appeals and petitions for stay of a decision of the authorized officer must be filed within 30 days of receipt of the decision in accordance with 43 CFR part 4.

[59 FR 7643, Feb. 16, 1994]

APPEAL PROCEDURES

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.4, any person whose interest is adversely affected by a final grazing decision of the authorize officer may appeal the decision for the purpose of a hearing before an administrative law judge. The appeal must be filed within 30 days after receipt of the final decision. Appeals and petitions for a stay of the decision shall be filed at the office of the authorized officer (John Winnepenninkx, 50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, NV 89820). Additionally the person appealing must serve a copy on any person named in the decision as listed at the end of this decision and the Office of the Solicitor, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-2753, Sacramento, CA 95825-1890 within 15 days of filing the appeal and petition for stay. In accordance with 43 CFR 4.470, the appeal shall state the reason, clearly and concisely, why the appellant thinks the final decision of the authorized officer is in error.

Within 30 days of receipt of this wild horse and wildlife decision, you have the right to appeal to the Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with regulations at 43 CFR 4.4 and 43 CFR 4770.3. If an appeal is taken, you must follow the procedures outlined in the enclosed, "Information on Taking Appeals to the Board of Land Appeals". Please also provide

this office with a copy of your Statement of Reasons. An appeal should be in writing and specify the reasons, clearly and concisely, as to why you think the decision is in error.

In addition, within 30 days of receipt of these decisions you have a right to file a petition for a stay (suspension) of the decision together with your appeal in accordance with the regulations at 43 CFR 4.21. A petition for stay, if filed, must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and,
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

The appellant requesting a stay bears the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

In the case of the wild horses and wildlife decisions, the petition for stay must be served upon the same parties identified in items 2, 3, and 4 of the enclosed form titled "Information on Taking Appeals to the Board of Land Appeals".

Any person named in the decision from which an appeal is taken (other than the appellant) who wishes to file a response to the petition for a stay may file with the Hearings Division a motion to intervene in the appeal, together with the response, within 10 days after receiving the petition. Within 15 days after filing the motion to intervene and response, the person must serve copies on the appellant, the Office of the Solicitor and any other person named in the decision (43 CFR 4.472(b)).

AUTHORIZED OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

If future monitoring indicates that SERA Land Use Plan objectives, RPS objectives, allotment specific objectives and RAC Standards for Rangeland Health are not being achieved, further adjustments will be made accordingly. Likewise, if future monitoring indicates that RAC Standards, LUP, and RPS objectives are being met, and that increase in the number of AUMs are warranted, this decision will be evaluated and amended as appropriate.

This decision is consistent with 43 CFR 4180 and Mojave/Southern Great Basin RAC and the Northeastern Great Basin RAC Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health and Healthy Wild Horse and Burro Populations.



John F. Winnepenninkx
Assistant Field Manager
Renewable Resources



Date

Fish Creek Complex FMUD Interested Parties List

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

INFORMATION ON TAKING APPEALS TO THE BOARD OF LAND APPEALS

DO NOT APPEAL UNLESS

- 1. This decision is adverse to you,
AND
- 2. You believe it is incorrect

IF YOU APPEAL, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED

1. NOTICE OF APPEAL Within 30 days file a *Notice of Appeal* in the office which issued this decision (see 43 CFR Secs. 4.411 and 4.413). You may state your reasons for appealing, if you desire.

2. WHERE TO FILE NOTICE OF APPEAL . . . U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Battle Mountain Field Office
50 Bastian Road
Battle Mountain, NV 89820

SOLICITOR - ALSO COPY TO . . . U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Field Solicitor
6201 Federal Building
125 S. State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1180

3. STATEMENT OF REASON Within 30 days after filing the *Notice of Appeal*, file a complete statement of the reasons why you are appealing. This must be filed with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Board of Land Appeals, 4015 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22203 (see 43 CFR 4.412 and 4.413). If you fully stated your reasons for appealing when filing the *Notice of Appeal*, no additional statement is necessary.

SOLICITOR - ALSO COPY TO . . . U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Field Solicitor
6201 Federal Building
125 S. State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1180

4. ADVERSE PARTIES Within 15 days after each document is filed, each adverse party named in the decision and the Regional Solicitor or Field Solicitor having jurisdiction over the State in which the appeal arose must be served with a copy of: (a) the *Notice of Appeal*, (b) the Statement of Reasons, and (c) any other documents files (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.413). Service will be made upon the Associate Solicitor, Division of Energy and Resources, Washington, D.C. 20240, instead of the Field or Regional Solicitor when appeals are taken from decisions of the Director (WO-100).

5. PROOF OF SERVICE Within 15 days after any document is served on an adverse party, file proof of that service with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, Virginia 22203. This may consist of a certified or registered mail "Return Receipt Card" signed by the adverse party (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.401 (c) (2)).

Unless these procedures are followed your appeal will be subject to dismissal (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.402). Be certain that all communications are identified by serial number of the case being appealed.

NOTE. *A document is not filed until it is actually received in the proper office (see 43 CFR Sec. 4.401 (a)).*

SUBPART 1821.2--OFFICE HOURS; TIME AND PLACE FOR FILING

Sec. 1821.2-1 *Office hours of State Offices.* (a) State Offices and the Washington Office of the Bureau of Land Management are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records during the hours specified in this paragraph on Monday through Friday of each week, with the exception of those days where the office may be closed because of a national holiday or Presidential or other administrative order. The hours during which the State Office and the Washington Office are open to the public for the filing of documents and inspection of records are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., standard time or daylight savings time, whichever is in effect at the city in which each office is located.

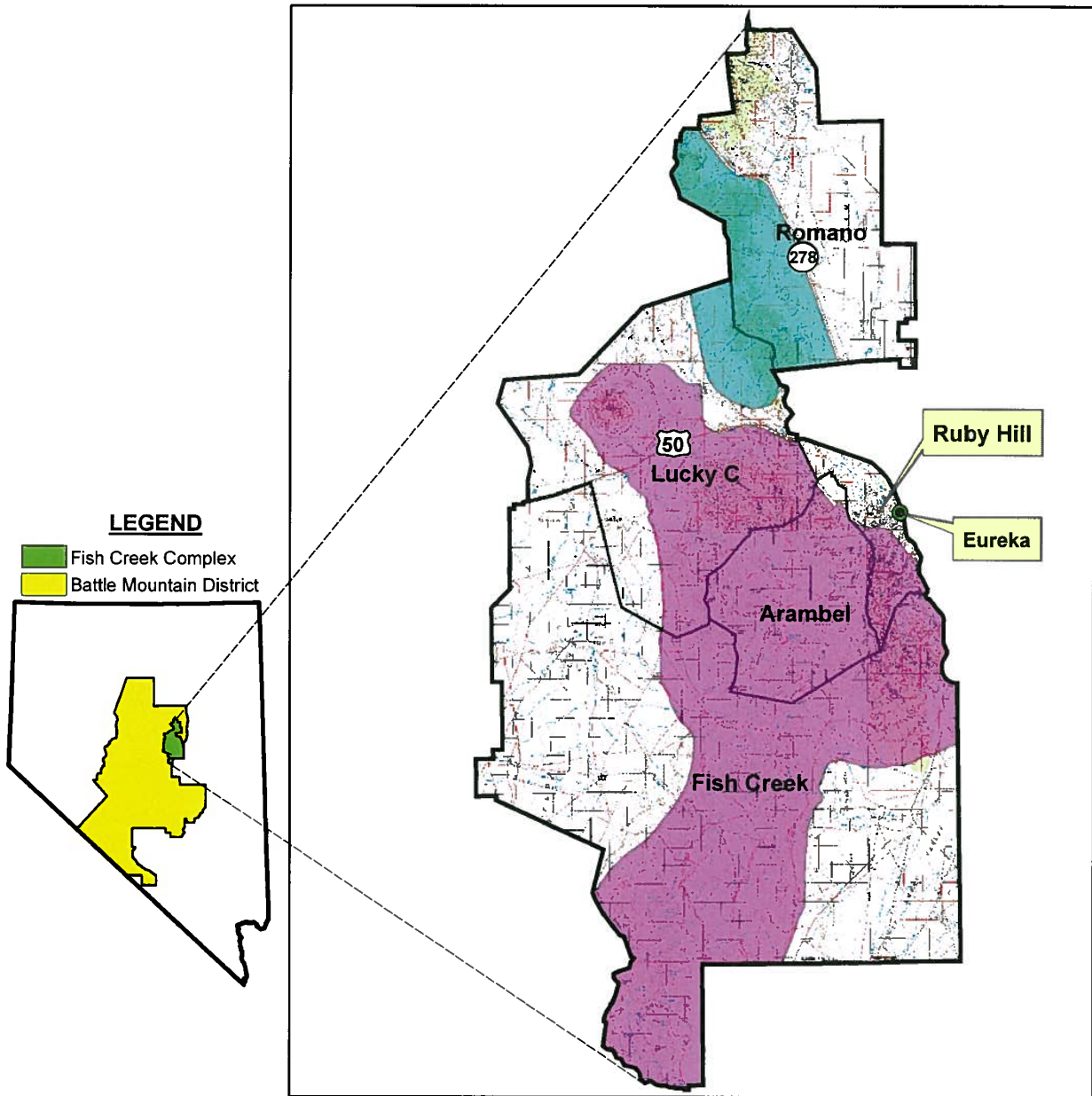
Sec. 1821.2(d) Any documents required or permitted to be filed under the regulations of this chapter, which is received in the State Office or the Washington Office, either in the mail or by personal delivery when the office is not open to the public shall be deemed to be filed as of the day and hour the office next opens to the public.

(e) Any document required by law, regulations, or decision to be filed within a stated period, the last day of which falls on a day the State Office or the Washington Office is officially closed, shall be deemed to be timely filed if it is received in the appropriate office on the next day the office is open to the public.

* * * * *

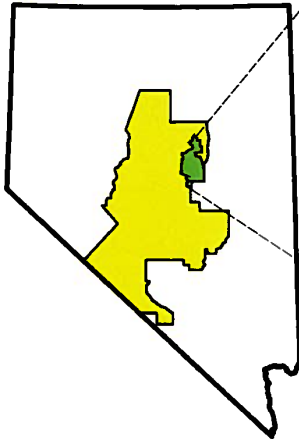


FISH CREEK COMPLEX HERD MANAGEMENT AREAS



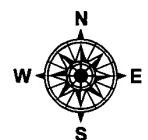
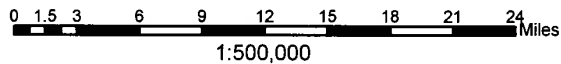
LEGEND

- Fish Creek Complex
- Battle Mountain District



LEGEND

- Fish Creek Complex Boundary
- Allotment Boundary
- Whistler H.M.A.
- Fish Creek H.M.A.



"No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data."

ATTACHMENT 1

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX

RIPARIAN-WETLAND OBJECTIVES FOR THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX

- **Key Species:**
 - **Herbaceous:** Sedge, rush, bluegrass, hairgrass, cattail, clovers, dandelions, false dandelions, watercress, monkey flowers, and other obligate, facultative-wetland or facultative grass, forb, or grass-like species.
 - **Woody/browse species:** Willow, aspen, cottonwood, current spp., red-osier dogwood, water birch and other obligate facultative-wetland or facultative woody/browse species.
- **Short-term Objectives** to meet RAC Standard 2 for Riparian-Wetland Sites, which includes retaining bank stability, filtering sediment load, and dissipating flood energy. *Significant progress toward meeting the standard would be made when the following short term objectives are achieved:*
 - Utilization of key herbaceous species shall be limited to a minimum 4 inch stubble height by July 31st of each year. Utilization of herbaceous key species shall be limited to a 6 inch stubble height by the end of the growing season, if grazing starts or extends past July 31st.
 - Utilization of woody or browse key species shall be limited to 30% by the end of the growing season. {Note: woody species monitoring will be the number of available shoots/ leaders grazed divided by the total number of shoots/leaders per plant.}
 - Stream bank shearing and trampling shall be limited to 15% (15 feet in 100 feet of bank).
- **Long-Term Objectives**
 - Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) is the minimum NEGB & Mojave RAC Standard for Riparian and wetland areas.
 - Maintain or improve both herbaceous and woody species (as appropriate for the site) in a healthy and vigorous condition and facilitate their ability to reproduce and maintain different age classes in the riparian-wetlands plant community.

RATIONALE:

Importance of Riparian-Wetland Habitats: Animals that use and depend on riparian-wetlands within the allotment include pronghorn, sage grouse, mule deer, wild horses, cattle, domestic sheep, elk, numerous bird species and small mammals, insects, and other species. While riparian-wetlands make up less than 1% of the total land area, 79% of terrestrial wildlife species in the Great Basin are dependent on riparian areas during at least a portion of their life cycle.

Utilization: Stubble height (residual vegetation) can be an excellent tool for warning of impending damage to riparian areas (Hall and Bryant 1995). The objective is to leave sufficient plant residue to protect banks, filter sediment, and dissipate flood energy during runoff events (USDI, 1997); and to ensure sufficient forage biomass to meet the requirements of plant vigor of desired species.

Studies by Clary et al. (1996), Rumsey (1996), Gray et al. (1997), and others found that during high flows, stubble heights below 1-inch, collected significantly less sediment than sediment deposited on unclipped and on 3 and 6 inch heights, which were not significantly different from each other (Skinner 1998).

In addition to the minimal stubble height needed to collect sediment, Clarey (1995) found that a 10 cm (4-inches) minimum stubble height was required to ensure full biomass production in mountain sedge communities. Clarey and Webster (1989) recommend that a minimum herbage stubble height

of 6 inches be present on all streamside areas at the end of the growing season, or at the end of the grazing season if grazing occurs after frost in the fall, to meet the requirements of plant vigor maintenance, bank protection, and sediment entrapment.

Stubble heights that protect riparian-wetland areas vary by plant species, but as a rule, Sedge and rush can be grazed to a minimum of 4-inch stubble height by the end of July in most mountain locations and bluegrasses and tufted hair grasses at 3-inch stubble height. This assumes that some regrowth will occur after grazing has ceased on plants located near the waters edge and that plants such as bluegrass growing on the upper flood plains, which receive less moisture, will remain dormant during most years. The 4-6 inch stubble height may seem restrictive to some, but a study by Kinney and Clary (1994) found that Nebraska sedge, a common *Carex* species, grazed to 6-inches is approximately 50% of the total biomass of an 18-inch plant. A 4-inch stubble height on an 18 inch plant would equal utilization greater than 50%.

Due to the extreme variation in precipitation and snow pack in the Shoshone-Eureka Resource Area, it is understood that riparian species may not attain full growth and vigor during less than average rainfall years or drought. To monitor this effect, cages will be used, where possible, to compare ungrazed and grazed leaf height. The primary objective of this method is to retain 4-6 inches of stubble height at the end of the growing season to maintain plant health and riparian function, regardless of height obtained due to climatic variation.

Riparian Browse Utilization: In addition to providing wildlife habitat (cover and forage), willows, aspen, and cottonwoods provide extensive root mass and woody debris that provides for stream stabilization. This is particularly true for extremely steep confined streams, where there is insufficient space within the channel for the formation of point-bars. In these situations, large woody debris and willow root mass are the controlling factors, preventing large scale erosion.

Willows or aspen stands that have only one age class are susceptible to loss due to age. This is particularly true of aspen. Aspen has a short lifespan and if not allowed to regenerate through root sprouting will result in an even age stand, which will eventually die out if not allowed to reproduce.

Streams controlled by large woody debris require a varied age classes of woody species. Trees that randomly fall into the stream channel provide stream stability for only so long as the woody debris will deteriorate over time. A varied age class is needed to provide woody debris over the life and the length of the stream.

The survival of willow and plants providing woody debris is essential to stream function, on extreme slopes. The seasons of use and utilization percentage were developed to achieve this goal.

PFC: NEGB RAC Standard 2 states, "Riparian and wetland areas will exhibit a properly functioning condition and achieve state water quality criteria." As described under Standard 2, this is the minimum standard for all riparian-wetland sites.

Stream bank shear: Bare unvegetated stream or pond banks provide nick points for erosion. Bank shear monitored will be that caused by livestock, wild horses, wildlife, or by man.

WILDLIFE UPLAND BROWSE HABITAT OBJECTIVES FOR THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX

- **Key Species:** Antelope bitterbrush, serviceberry, elderberry, snowberry, current spp., curlleaf mountain mahogany, willow, aspen, winterfat, shadscale, bud sagebrush, ephedra, mountain silver sagebrush, and all other sagebrush species.
- **Short-term Objectives**
 - Utilization of key woody browse species shall not to exceed 30% at the end of grazing. *{Note: woody (aspen, elderberry, serviceberry, etc.) species utilization will be determined by counting the number of available shoots/leaders grazed divided by the total number of shoots/leaders per plant counted from ground level to two meters (6 ft) in height}*
 - Utilization of key shrub browse species shall be no greater than 25% during the critical growth period, and no more than 50% following the end of the growing season.
 - **Utilization:** When spring, early summer grazing is permitted numerous researchers (Blaisdell and Holmgren 1984; Cook, 1977,; Holchek, 1988, 1993, 1993b; and Valentine, 1970) over the years have recommend reducing utilization to improve range condition. Depending on the condition of the rangeland, reductions of 25% - 40% are recommended for grazing during periods of key plant growth. After key species have gone dormant, utilization should not exceed 50%.
- **Long-term Objectives**
 - Achieve diverse age classes for all key browse species as appropriate to the ecological site.
 - Achieve a minimum of 1,500 aspen saplings per acre evenly distributed. *{Note: A quick and inexpensive visual first step method that can be used to evaluate the condition of an aspen stand is to view the stand at a distance. If you can see the base of the trees and/or through an aspen stand, that generally indicates the clone has not regenerated in many years and is in poor ecological condition. Conversely, if at a distance, you cannot see through the stand, that usually is an indication the clone has produced an abundance of new aspen saplings and is in good to excellent ecological condition}. Monitoring of aspen stands, not meeting the above visual method or which are questionable, shall consist of permanently established transects and counting the number of stems. This can be extrapolated to total number of stems per acre.*
 - In the event of wildfire, where fire kills aspen stands, eliminate grazing for 3-5 years or until aspen sprouts, have reached a height of 7 ft or more.
 - Maintain or increase browse species to appropriate levels for the ecological site.

RATIONALE:

Utilization: When the green herbaceous forage has cured out and gone to seed, livestock switch to either riparian or browse vegetation. This occurs around July 15th (+/- 2 weeks) depending on climatic conditions. Existing grazing systems that remove cattle by July 31st have resulted in an increase in aspen, serviceberry, mountain mahogany, willow, and other woody species.

Diverse age class: Aspen, elderberry, serviceberry and other root sprouting species have limited reproduction under hot season grazing. In order for browse plants to achieve a healthy condition, diverse age classes are necessary for continued survival.

Aspen Stems per acre: Quaking aspen communities provide habitat to a variety of wildlife species, yet are limited in distribution through the Complex. In many areas in the District, aspen are in decline or have actually become extinct. In the District, the major cause of aspen decline or loss is due to concentrated, heavy livestock grazing.

Succulent new aspen sprouts (suckers) are highly desirable to foraging ungulates and especially cattle. Where grazing is year-round or un-restricted, cattle and sheep effectively negate or severely restrict aspen regeneration and recruitment by browsing the suckers. This can lead to the actual extinction of the communities through death of the aspen clones (Kay, 2001).

Dr. Charles Kay, Wildlife Ecologist, of Wildlife Management Services, analyzed more than 300 separate aspen sites and exclosures in the Battle Mountain and Elko Field Offices from 2000 to 2002. He did not establish any plots in the FCC, but his findings and technical recommendations are, nevertheless, applicable to the FCC.

In his report to the BMFO in 2001, he states that, "Many aspen stands in central Nevada have not produced new stems greater than 2 m (6ft) tall in more than 100 years and many stands are in very poor condition". He further explains that these conditions are not a result of climatic variation, fire suppression, forest succession (encroachment) or browsing by mule deer. "Instead, the condition of individual aspen communities is related to past and present levels of livestock grazing. That is, aspen is declining throughout most of central Nevada due to repeated browsing of aspen suckers by cattle and/or domestic sheep". He goes on to say that to reverse this decline, it will be necessary to closely manage livestock use.

In his "Aspen Management Guidelines for BLM Lands in North-Central Nevada", 2002, Kay gives the following guidelines and technical recommendations which are relevant to maintaining healthy stands and/or restoring/improving degraded aspen stands in the FCC:

(1) Change the seasonal use to elimination hot-season grazing. If this is not possible, permanently fence stands to eliminate grazing.

(2) Temporary reduction or elimination (i.e. 3-5 years) of livestock grazing can rest the aspen stands and allow for more normal regeneration and recruitment.

(3) Recommend a minimum of 1,500 saplings/acre, especially in areas subject to high levels of ungulate herbivory. The aspen saplings should be distributed evenly throughout the stand. *[Note: Minimum saplings/acre recommendation is based on Dr. Kay's analyses of more than 2,000 aspen stands.]*

[Note: Also, see discussion under Riparian-Wetland Recommendations, Riparian Browse Utilization.]

SAGE GROUSE & OTHER SAGEBRUSH OBLIGATE SPECIES HABITAT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Key Species:**
 - **Sagebrush species:** Wyoming big sagebrush, mountain big sagebrush, mountain silver sagebrush, Great Basin big sagebrush, black sagebrush, and low sagebrush.
 - **Grasses:** Tall, deep-rooted, high producing, grass species identified in the ecological site descriptions as the dominant and co-dominant grass species for the site. For example Indian ricegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needlegrasses, basin wildrye, creeping wildrye, etc..
 - **Forbs:** Succulents such as hawksbeard (*Crepis acuminata*), clover (*Trifolium spp*) yarrow (*Achillea spp.*), hairy catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), dandelion (*Taraxacum spp.*), aster (*Aster spp.*), milk vetch (*Astragalus spp.*), biscuitroot (*Lomatium spp.*), and phlox (*Phlox spp.*), etc.
- **Short-term Objectives**
 - Achieve PFC in all riparian-wetland habitats. After achieving PFC, limited grazing may prove to be beneficial for sage grouse. Graze on a limited experimental basis.
 - Improve the ecological site condition of stream floodplains to 50% or more of site potential for dominant and co-dominant grasses and forbs.
 - Management actions and objectives will conform, to the extent possible, to the *Management Guidelines for Sage Grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystems In Nevada* (BLM 2000) and to *Guidelines to Manage Sage Grouse Populations and Their Habitats* (Connelly et. al. 2000) also known as the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFAWA) *Guidelines for Sage Grouse Management*, until augmented or superseded by the State of Nevada's South Central Nevada Sage Grouse Conservation Plan, which is now under development. Some of those recommendations are as follows:
 - For non-migratory populations consider the lek the center of year-round activity and protect suitable habitat within ≤ 3 miles of all occupied leks.
 - For migratory populations consider the lek the center of year-round activity and protect suitable habitat within ≤ 11 miles of all occupied leks.
 - Avoid removing sagebrush within 300 yards of sage grouse foraging areas such riparian-wetlands, meadows and farmland.
- **Long-term Objectives**

Management actions and objectives will conform, to the extent possible, to the *Management Guidelines for Sage Grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystems In Nevada* (BLM 2000) and to *Guidelines to Manage Sage Grouse Populations and Their Habitats* (Connelly et. al. 2000) also known as the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFAWA) *Guidelines for Sage Grouse Management*, until augmented or superseded by the State of Nevada's South Central Nevada Sage Grouse Conservation Plan, which is now under development. Some of those recommendations are as follows:

 - Manage nesting and brood-rearing habitats to support 15-25% shrub canopy cover with a height of 15-31 inches and perennial herbaceous cover averaging ≥ 7 inches in height with ≥ 10 -15% canopy cover for grasses and ≥ 5 -10% for forbs and a diversity of forbs during spring appropriate to the ecological site. If average height of sagebrush is > 30 inches, herbaceous cover may need to be substantially greater than 7 inches, to provide this protection.

- During periods of drought (≥ 2 consecutive years with 75% of normal precipitation), reduce stocking rates or change management practice for livestock, wild horses, and wild ungulates, if cover requirements during the nesting and brood-rearing periods are not met.

RATIONALE:

Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) is the minimum NEGB & Mojave RAC Standard for Riparian and wetland areas. Riparian-wetlands and stream floodplains provide important summer brood rearing habitat for sage grouse.

BLM protects, by policy (see 6840 section of the BLM Manual), *special status* plant and animal species to ensure that no action authorized on the public lands jeopardizes any species designated as threatened, endangered, or candidate by the USFWS under ESA; or that any species designated as “sensitive” by the state of Nevada, or by the Nevada BLM State Director. This policy conforms to the requirements of the ESA, SERA LUP and RAC Standard 3. See section 1 for discussion on pending petitions to list sage grouse as endangered species.

GENERAL WILDLIFE HABITAT OBJECTIVES FOR THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX

- **Key Species:** All native perennial plant species.
- **Long-term Objectives**
 - **Ferruginous Hawk:** Protect lone juniper trees, which overlook large open areas on alluvial fans. Prevent disturbance to nesting sites to the extent possible. Ferruginous hawks are particularly sensitive to (intolerant of) nest disturbance, and are more likely than most raptor species to abandon an active nest.
 - **Goshawk:** In the Great Basin, nesting occurs most frequently in aspen stands located within sight of running water. Where aspen are located along stream courses, increase aspen regeneration and number of age classes. Do not allow removal of mature trees. Follow utilization objectives as described under Riparian Habitat.
 - **Pygmy rabbit:** Protect and improve basin big sagebrush habitat and associated understory. Continue inventory and monitoring habitat.
 - **Blue Grouse:** Protect and improve forage component of habitat. Emphasis should be placed on improving riparian habitat condition and protection of elderberry trees. Follow utilization objectives described under Riparian and Wildlife Browse Habitat.

RATIONALE:

BLM protects, by policy (see 6840 section of the BLM Manual), *special status* plant and animal species to ensure that no action authorized on the public lands jeopardizes any species designated as threatened, endangered, or is a candidate for listing by the USFWS; or any species designated as “sensitive” by the state of Nevada, or by the Nevada BLM State Director.

WILD HORSE OBJECTIVES FOR THE FISH CREEK COMPLEX

- **Key Species:** All key perennial species as identified in the Key Management Area Objectives for those key areas located within the HMAs
- **In addition to those allotment specific short and long term objectives identified for each key area, the following management and monitoring objectives are proposed:**
 - Improve the forage component of wild horse habitat. Emphasize improving habitat as indicated by achieving desired plant community objectives within the HMA.
 - Manage the portion of the Fish Creek HMA north of U.S. Highway 50 as a complex with Whistler Mountain and Roberts Mountain HMAs since the wild horses move freely between these areas.
 - Manage the Fish Creek HMA south of U.S. Highway 50 as a complex with the Sevenmile HMA since the wild horses move freely between these areas.
 - Manage the Fish Creek and Whistler HMA AML as a population range where the upper limit of the range is the level where the optimum number of wild horses can exist without causing resource degradation. The lower limit of the range would be based on the historical documented annual rates of increase between gather cycles as determined through inventory monitoring.
 - Rangeland monitoring within the HMAs would be accomplished with the goal of obtaining data specific to areas utilized by wild horses that would be used to modify AML and propose future management actions.
 - Manage the Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain HMAs population to preserve and enhance physical and biological characteristics that are of historical significance to the herd: these traits include:
 - Colors, which include the historic colors of the herd.
 - Fish Creek HMA: primarily roan colorations in addition to the typical colors associated with wild horses such as brown, black, palomino and bay.
 - Whistler Mountain HMA: Colors similar to those of Roberts Mountain HMA such as buckskin, palomino, chestnut and dun
 - Fish Creek HMA: Curly characteristics of the hair coat.
 - Maintain sex ratios and age structures, which will allow for the continued physical, reproductive and genetic health of the Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain HMAs.
 - Preserve and maintain a healthy and viable wild horse population that will survive and be successful within the HMA during poor years when elements of the habitat are limiting due to severe winter conditions, drought, or other uncontrollable and unforeseeable environmental influences to the herd.
 - Preserve the characteristic wild free-roaming behavior of wild horses within the Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain HMAs by limiting management actions that would prohibit wild horse access to portions of the HMAs or restrict historical patterns of use
 - Where fences are needed within HMAs to meet other resources objectives, fences will be planned so as to not restrict movement patterns of wild horses. An example

would be the construction of carefully planned drift fences, which allow wild horses to maintain historic patterns of use within the HMA. Fences built within the HMA will include posts with white tops to provide visual warning and prevent injury and death to wild horses.

RATIONALE:

Implementation of these objectives would ensure the long term health of the wild horses and their habitat within the Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain HMAs, while maintaining historic characteristics as well as characteristics to enhance adoptability of the wild horses. Preserving historic patterns of movement would allow the year round habitat, forage and water needs of the wild horses to be met. As a result, wild horse condition would be maintained and emergency gathers avoided.

Managing the Fish Creek and Whistler Mountain as complexes with adjacent HMAs would facilitate efficient and accurate census and inventory and improve the success of wild horse gathers. Management of the AML as a range will ensure resource degradation is prevented and that the minimal stress is experienced to wild horses through wild horse gathers. These objectives would be implemented through future wild horse gathers and incorporated into a wild horse Herd Management Area Plan (HMAP).

ARAMBEL ALLOTMENT KEY MANAGEMENT AREA OBJECTIVES

AR-1 (South of McCullough Springs)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and thickspike wheatgrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, and thickspike wheatgrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-1. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and thickspike wheatgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, and thickspike wheatgrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community (DPC).

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	49	18	18-40	40
Total Forbs	0	0.8	0.8-5	5
Total Shrubs	51	82	55-82	55
Invaders	0	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

The low stature of thickspike wheatgrass makes it more palatable than most wheatgrasses. Due to the rhizomes thickspike wheatgrass is more tolerant to heavy grazing and trampling, however if heavy grazing continues it can be replaced by other grasses and shrubs.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-1 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-1 would be attainable with proper livestock management, and maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-2 (East of Dry Lake)

Key Species: Thurber's needlegrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Thurber's needlegrass and bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-2. Utilization of Thurber's needlegrass and bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Thurber's needlegrass and bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	54	28	28-65	65
Total Forbs	18	11	10-11	10
Total Shrubs	28	61	25-61	25
Invaders	0	0.3	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Thurber's needlegrass is valuable forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Thurber's needlegrass produces a large amount of leafage. It is most palatable in the spring and early summer while the plants are young and succulent. Livestock have been recognized as detrimental to the maintenance of Thurber's needlegrass if heavy grazing occurs.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-2 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-2 would be attainable with proper livestock management, and maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-3 (Spring Valley Summit Mahogany)

Key Species: Bluebunch wheatgrass, and Idaho fescue

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-3. Utilization of bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 1998	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	32	32-55	55
Total Forbs	9	9-10	10
Total Shrubs	59	35-59	35
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Bluebunch wheatgrass is not the most preferred species, but can be a critical source of feed. Moderate grazing can be tolerated, however lightly grazed plants produce more than ungrazed plants. Bluebunch wheatgrass is sensitive during active growth to defoliation.

Grazing can stimulate Idaho fescue's vitality and play a beneficial role in the plant community's stability. Timing of grazing is vital to Idaho fescue and moderate use can be beneficial to the area. The amount of use that Idaho fescue can sustain without adversely affecting vigor is dependent on numerous conditions. Under heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife Idaho fescue will decrease.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-3 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-3 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-4 (Dry Lake)

Key Species: Rush/Sedge

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of rush/sedge would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-4. Utilization of rush/sedge not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of rush/sedge.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	72	10	25-80	80
Total Forbs	0	0	5-15	15
Total Shrubs	28	90	5-50	5
Invaders	T	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Sedge and rush are an important forage species for livestock. It is important nesting, hiding, and feeding cover for shorebirds and waterfowl. Palatability varies widely for rush. Rush increases with grazing; however, because it is often found in wet habitats, damage from trampling is possible.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-4 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-4 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-5 (Four Corners Seeding)

Key Species: Crested wheatgrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of crested wheatgrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-5. Utilization of crested wheatgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of crested wheatgrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 1998	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	100	85-100	60
Total Forbs	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	0	0-15	35
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Crested wheatgrass utilization light to moderate (21-60%) grazing, depending upon the season of use, invigorates a crested wheatgrass stand and extends its life. Allowable use of 70% for annually deferred pastures is appropriate to maintain the productivity of the site. Season-long, heavy grazing of crested wheatgrass would result in the increase of shrubs such as sagebrush and rabbitbrush and may speed up the re-invasion of sagebrush or of weeds such as Russian thistle. Severe grazing of crested wheatgrass reduces production, plants die and stand quality suffers.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential. Even though the production transect did not reflect shrubs within the seeding the frequency transect indicated that Wyoming big sagebrush represented 14.5% frequency within the seeding.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-5 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-5 would be attainable with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-6 (Spring Valley Summit)

Key Species: Letterman’s needlegrass, Spike fescue, and Western wheatgrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Letterman’s needlegrass, spike fescue and western wheatgrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-6. Utilization of Letterman’s needlegrass, spike fescue and western wheatgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Letterman’s needlegrass, spike fescue and western wheatgrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	27	27-60	60
Total Forbs	41	10-41	10
Total Shrubs	32	30-32	30
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Letterman’s needlegrass provides important forage for many species of wildlife and domestic livestock. It begins growth early in the year and like most needlegrasses remains green throughout a relatively long growing season. This pattern of development enables animals to use it when many other grasses are unavailable.

Spike fescue is considered palatable for livestock during the spring but becomes less palatable as it matures. It is rated good to fair for livestock and wild horses. Livestock graze spike fescue during the spring but use it only scarcely after midsummer. Productivity is low, since this species most often occurs in scattered bunches.

Western wheatgrass can tolerate moderate grazing but is damaged by close spring grazing. Heavy grazing "may be tolerated, but production will be lowered considerably by this practice". When mixed with taller or more palatable species, it often increases. When it is mixed with shorter grasses and warm-season species, western wheatgrass decreases when grazed early in the spring. Continuous early spring grazing of mixed stands can result in nearly pure stands of western wheatgrass.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-6 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-6 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-7 (West of Dry Lake)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, and western wheatgrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail and western wheatgrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-7. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail and western wheatgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirreltail and western wheatgrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	22	22-65	65
Total Forbs	17	10-17	10
Total Shrubs	60	25-60	25
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock as well as wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bluebunch wheatgrass is not the most preferred species, but can be a critical source of feed. Moderate grazing can be tolerated, however lightly grazed plants produce more than ungrazed plants. Bluebunch wheatgrass is sensitive during active growth to defoliation.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Western wheatgrass can tolerate moderate grazing but is damaged by close spring grazing. Heavy grazing "may be tolerated, but production will be lowered considerably by this practice". When mixed with taller or more palatable species, it often increases. When it is mixed with shorter grasses and warm-season species, western wheatgrass decreases when grazed early in the spring. Continuous early spring grazing of mixed stands can result in nearly pure stands of western wheatgrass.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-7 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-7 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

AR-8 (Spring Valley Summit Browse)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, Thurber's needlegrass and bitterbrush.

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, and Thurber's needlegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-8. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and Thurber's needlegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.
- Utilization of antelope bitterbrush not to exceed 25% of current year's growth by sheep.

Long-term Objectives

- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	37	20	20-40	40
Total Forbs	3	1	1-10	10
Total Shrubs	54	75	50-75	50
Invaders	0.6	2	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Thurber's needlegrass is valuable forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Thurber's needlegrass produces a large amount of leafage. It is most palatable in the spring and early summer while the plants are young and succulent. Livestock have been recognized as detrimental to the maintenance of Thurber's needlegrass if heavy grazing occurs.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-8 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for AR-8 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives.

AR-9 (North Arambel)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area AR-9. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2001	2002		
Total Grasses	8	11	11-50	50
Total Forbs	6	10	5-10	5
Total Shrubs	85	79	45-79	45
Invaders	1	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for AR-9 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for AR-9 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

FISH CREEK KEY MANAGEMENT AREA OBJECTIVES

1-FC (NE of Fish Creek Ranch)

Key Species: Winterfat and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 1-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	0	0.4	0.4-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	90	97	65-97	65
Invaders	10	2	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 1-FC would allow grasses, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 1-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

2-FC (SE Little Smoky Valley)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 2-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.
-

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	0	0	*	30
Total Forbs	0	0	*	5
Total Shrubs	0	0	*	65
Invaders	100	100	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 2-FC would allow grasses, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species.

* At the current condition, establishment of a Desired Plant Community is not possible. This site needs evaluated for the potential of a rehabilitation process. It has been determined that the site has reached a threshold and would not recover without a rehabilitation project due to the vast amount of invasive species and production of halogeton. A site specific analysis including NEPA and archeological clearances would be conducted before project initiation.

3-FC (NW of Fish Creek Ranch)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 3-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	0	0	*	30
Total Forbs	0	0	*	5
Total Shrubs	0.1	0.6	*	65
Invaders	99.9	98.6	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 3-FC would allow grasses, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species.

* At the current condition, establishment of a Desired Plant Community is not possible. This site needs evaluated for the potential of a rehabilitation process. It has been determined that the site has reached a threshold and would not recover without a rehabilitation project due to the vast amount of invasive species and production of halogeton. A site specific analysis including NEPA and archeological clearances would be conducted before project initiation.

4-FC (SW of Fish Creek Ranch)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 4-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	1	6	6-30	30
Total Forbs	T	T	T-5	5
Total Shrubs	87	94	65-94	65
Invaders	12	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 4-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 4-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

5-FC Enclosure (Outside)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 5-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	47	16	16-30	30
Total Forbs	0.6	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	52	84	65-84	65
Invaders	0	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock and wild horse use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 5-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 5-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

6-FC (Sullivan Wash)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 6-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	16	16-30	30
Total Forbs	11	5-11	5
Total Shrubs	38	38-65	65
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 6-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 6-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

7-FC (South Antelope Valley)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 7-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	0	0.9	0.9-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	95	96	65-96	65
Invaders	5	3	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 7-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 7-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, and maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

8-FC (Near Ardans Well)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 8-FC. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	2	2-30	30
Total Forbs	T	T-5	5
Total Shrubs	98	65-98	65
Invaders	0.2	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock and wild horse use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 8-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 8-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

9-FC (Ninemile Peak)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 9-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	13	2	5-15	50
Total Forbs	0	1	1-5	5
Total Shrubs	88	97	45-75	45
Invaders	0	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild hores in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 9-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 9-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

10-FC (NW of Fish Creek Ranch)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 10-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	33	33-50	50
Total Forbs	2	2-5	5
Total Shrubs	66	45-66	45
Invaders	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 10-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 10-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintain appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

11-FC (SE Antelope Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 11-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	9	9-50	50
Total Forbs	T	T-5	5
Total Shrubs	91	45-91	45
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 11-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for 11-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintain appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

12-FC (North Antelope Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 12-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	0.3	*	50
Total Forbs	0.2	*	5
Total Shrubs	99	*	45
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 12-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved.

* At the current condition, establishment of a Desired Plant Community is not possible. This site needs evaluated for the potential of a rehabilitation process. It has been determined that the site has reached a threshold and would not recover without a rehabilitation project due to the vast amount of invasive species and production of halogeton. A site specific analysis including NEPA and archeological clearances would be conducted before project initiation.

13-FC (North Antelope Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 13-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	T	*	50
Total Forbs	0.5	*	5
Total Shrubs	99.5	*	45
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 13-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved.

* At the current condition, establishment of a Desired Plant Community is not possible. This site needs evaluated for the potential of a rehabilitation process. It has been determined that the site has reached a threshold and would not recover without a rehabilitation project due to the vast amount of invasive species and production of halogeton. A site specific analysis including NEPA and archeological clearances would be conducted before project initiation.

14-FC (UplandBrowse)

Key Species: Bluebunch wheatgrass, and Thurber's needlegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurber's needlegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area 14-FC. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	8	8-40	40
Total Forbs	7	7-10	10
Total Shrubs	85	50-85	50
Invaders	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Bluebunch wheatgrass is not the most preferred species, but can be a critical source of feed. Moderate grazing can be tolerated, however lightly grazed plants produce more than ungrazed plants. Bluebunch wheatgrass is sensitive during active growth to defoliation.

Thurber's needlegrass is valuable forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Thurber's needlegrass produces a large amount of leafage. It is most palatable in the spring and early summer while the plants are young and succulent. Livestock have been recognized as detrimental to the maintenance of Thurber's needlegrass if heavy grazing occurs.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for 14-FC would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for 14-FC would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, and achieving utilization objectives.

Fish Creek Ranch Enclosure #1 (Outside)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area Enclosure #1. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	2000	2001		
Total Grasses	12	22	22-30	30
Total Forbs	4	9	5-9	5
Total Shrubs	36	68	65-68	65
Invaders	48	0	0	

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for Enclosure #1 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for Enclosure #1 would be attainable with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

Fish Creek Ranch Exclosure #2 (Outside)

Key Species: Winterfat, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of winterfat and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area Exclosure #2. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of winterfat and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	26	26-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	65	65	65
Invaders	9	0	

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for Exclosure #2 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for Exclosure #2 would be attainable with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LUCKY C ALLOTMENT KEY MANAGEMENT AREA OBJECTIVES

LC-1 (East Antelope Valley Road)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-1. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	31	2	20-50	50
Total Forbs	T	0.5	0.5-5	5
Total Shrubs	69	97	45-75	45
Invaders	0	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-1 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-1 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-2 (East Antelope Valley Road)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, and winterfat

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail and winterfat would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-2. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail and winterfat.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	0.1	6	12-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	24	72	65-72	65
Invaders	76	22	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock and wild horse use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-2 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-2 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-3 (Mid Antelope Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-3. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	23	1	15-50	50
Total Forbs	0	T	T-5	5
Total Shrubs	77	99	45-80	45
Invaders	0	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-3 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-3 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-4 (West of Lone Mountain)

Key Species: Inland saltgrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Inland saltgrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-4. Utilization of Inland saltgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Inland saltgrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	51	63	35-63	35
Total Forbs	0	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	49	37	50-60	60
Invaders	0	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Inland saltgrass is an increaser and resistant to grazing and trampling; however, due to the harsh foliage it is generally not preferred by cattle.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-4 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-4 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-5 (NE Kobeh Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-5. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	80	29	29-55	55
Total Forbs	0	9	5-10	10
Total Shrubs	18	61	35-61	35
Invaders	2	0.3	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-5 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for LC-5 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-6 (East of Lone Mountain)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-6. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition		Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
	1998	2001		
Total Grasses	37	14	35-55	55
Total Forbs	0	3	3-10	10
Total Shrubs	61	84	35-70	35
Invaders	1	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-6 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for LC-6 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-7 (East Kobeh Valley)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-7. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition 1998	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	19	19-50	50
Total Forbs	8	5-8	5
Total Shrubs	73	45-65	45
Invaders	0	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-7 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-7 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-8 (Antelope Valley Foothills)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, Needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-8. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	5	20-50	50
Total Forbs	1	3-5	5
Total Shrubs	93	45-70	45
Invaders	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-8 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-8 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

LC-9 (North of Lone Mountain)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, Needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area LC-9. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Sandberg bluegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2002	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	3	20-50	50
Total Forbs	2	3-5	5
Total Shrubs	95	45-77	45
Invaders	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrammelled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for LC-9 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC for LC-9 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

ROMANO ALLOTMENT KEY MANAGEMENT AREA OBJECTIVES

RO-1 (Mud Pasture)

Key Species: Basin wildrye

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Basin wildrye would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-1. Utilization of Basin wildrye not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Basin wildrye.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	33	45-80	80
Total Forbs	0	1-5	5
Total Shrubs	67	15-45	15

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

The abundant production of basin wildrye makes it a valuable source of forage for livestock and wildlife in early spring and fall. Basin wildrye produces nutritious green leaves and is highly palatable in early spring and fall. These factors make Basin wildrye susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-1 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-2 (Whistler Pasture)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-2. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	12	12-55	55
Total Forbs	1	1-10	10
Total Shrubs	87	35-87	35

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. It is more palatable during the spring. As the grazing season progresses and the plant becomes dormant, utilization of Sandberg bluegrass generally decreases as other more palatable species are sought after. Therefore, utilization during the active growing season is a major consideration. The growing season utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-2 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate management levels for wild horses, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-3 (Whistler Pasture)

Key Species: Needleandthread, Indian ricegrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-3. Utilization of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of needleandthread, Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	19	40-55	55
Total Forbs	Trace	3-10	10
Total Shrubs	52	35-45	35
Invader	29	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needle and thread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short spars foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. It is more palatable during the spring. As the grazing season progresses and the plant becomes dormant, utilization of Sandberg bluegrass generally decreases as other more palatable species are sought after. Therefore, utilization during the active growing season is a major consideration. The growing season utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-3 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate management levels for wild horses, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-4a (Sullivan Seeding)

Key Species: Crested wheatgrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-4a. Utilization of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 60% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	31	31-50	50
Total Forbs	1	1-5	5
Total Shrubs	57	45-57	45
Invader	11	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Crested wheatgrass utilization light to moderate (21-60%) grazing, depending upon the season of use, invigorates a crested wheatgrass stand and extends its life. Allowable use of 70% for annually deferred pastures is appropriate to maintain the productivity of the site. Season-long, heavy grazing of crested wheatgrass would result in the increase of shrubs such as sagebrush and rabbitbrush and may speed up the re-invasion of sagebrush or of weeds such as Russian thistle. Severe grazing of crested wheatgrass reduces production, plants die and stand quality suffers.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-4 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO -5 (7th Street Pasture)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-5. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	33	33-55	55
Total Forbs	4	4-10	10
Total Shrubs	61	35-61	35
Invader	2	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needle and thread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-5 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-6 (Valley Pasture)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-6. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	22	22-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	62	62-65	65
Invader	16	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-6 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-7 (Home Seeding)

Key Species: Crested wheatgrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-7. Utilization of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of crested wheatgrass and Sandberg bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	34	34-55	55
Total Forbs	1	1-5	5
Total Shrubs	62	45-62	45
Invader	3	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Crested wheatgrass utilization light to moderate (21-60%) grazing, depending upon the season of use, invigorates a crested wheatgrass stand and extends its life. Allowable use of 70% for annually deferred pastures is appropriate to maintain the productivity of the site. Season-long, heavy grazing of crested wheatgrass would result in the increase of shrubs such as sagebrush and rabbitbrush and may speed up the re-invasion of sagebrush or of weeds such as Russian thistle. Severe grazing of crested wheatgrass reduces production, plants die and stand quality suffers.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-7 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-8 (Home Native Pasture)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, and bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-8. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 40% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	24	35-55	55
Total Forbs	1	1-10	10
Total Shrubs	75	35-70	35

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needle and thread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needle and thread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-8 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species.

RO-9 (Whistler Pasture)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Needleandthread

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-9. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and needleandthread.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	9	9-55	55
Total Forbs	5	5-10	10
Total Shrubs	86	35-70	35

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short spars foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-9 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate management levels for wild horses, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-10 (Valley Pasture)

Key Species: Winterfat, Indian ricegrass, and Bottlebrush squirreltail

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-10. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.
- Utilization of winterfat would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-10. Utilization of winterfat not to exceed 25% during the active growth period, and not exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Winterfat, Indian ricegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	4	4-30	30
Total Forbs	0	0-5	5
Total Shrubs	92	65-92	65
Invader	4	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Winterfat is important forage for livestock and wildlife in the winter when forage is scarce. Palatability of winterfat is highest during periods of active growth. Abusive livestock use has reduced or eliminated winterfat in some areas. Early spring and late winter grazing is detrimental to winterfat. Early winter grazing is beneficial to winterfat for survival and recruitment during drought.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrampled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-10 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-11 (Whistler Pasture)

Key Species: Needleandthread, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of needleandthread and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-11. Utilization of needleandthread and Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of needleandthread and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	23	35-55	55
Total Forbs	9	5-10	10
Total Shrubs	52	35-45	35
Invader	16	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needle and thread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-11 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate management levels for wild horses, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RO-12 (Mount Hope Pasture)

Key Species: Thurber’s needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needleandthread, and Indian ricegrass

Short-term Monitoring

- Utilization of Thurber’s needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needleandthread and Indian ricegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RO-12. Utilization of Thurber’s needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needleandthread and Indian ricegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Monitoring

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Thurber’s needlegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needleandthread, and Indian ricegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	3	25-55	55
Total Forbs	3	5-10	10
Total Shrubs	83	35-70	35
Invader	11	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Thurber’s needlegrass is valuable forage for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Thurber’s needlegrass produces a large amount of leafage that is usually good, although not choice, palatability for all classes of livestock. It is most palatable in the spring and early summer while the plants are young and succulent. As the species matures, the leaves become tough, but are still grazed. Thurber’s needlegrass is susceptible to livestock grazing and fire. Defoliation during the boot stage can reduce production and root mass and lower the competitive ability of the grass. A grazing system which allows seed production, trampling of plant seed and a non-use period may increase the establishment of new plants in the interspaces.

Bluebunch wheatgrass seedlings are considered to be weak. Once established, mature bluebunch wheatgrass plants feature extensive root systems making the grass an excellent soil stabilizer. Bluebunch wheatgrass is tolerant to moderate grazing only during its nongrowing period. The plant is extremely sensitive to defoliation during its active growth cycle. Even grazing by small animals can negatively affect the vigor of the plants. Appropriate grazing management can alleviate degradation problems.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needle and thread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock and wild horses in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short spars foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objective to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative condition of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RO-12 would allow grass, forb, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grass would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for pronghorn antelope and other wildlife. The DPC objective for shrubs would ensure an optimal habitat for non game-species. DPC is expected to occur with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate management levels for wild horses, not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for key plant species.

RUBY HILL ALLOTMENT KEY MANAGEMENT AREA OBJECTIVES

RH-1 (Near Four Corners Seeding)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, Needleandthread, Bottlebrush squirreltail, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RH-1. Utilization of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, bottlebrush squirreltail and Sandberg bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community.

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	12	12-55	55
Total Forbs	4	4-10	10
Total Shrubs	84	35-84	35
Invaders	T	0	0

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Needleandthread is green in the early spring and is susceptible to overgrazing if other forage is not available. Needleandthread becomes dormant in the summer and will green up again in the fall if moisture levels are adequate. The plant is susceptible to over grazing from June 1 to July 31.

Bottlebrush squirreltail increases in abundance when moderately grazed or protected on the foothills of intermountain winter ranges. Moderate trampling by livestock in big sagebrush rangelands has been known to enhance seedling emergence compared to untrammled conditions. Heavy trampling resulting from excess stocking or poor livestock distribution, destroys germination sites and significantly reduces germination, whereas moderate trampling may enhance germination.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RH-1 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved.

RH-2 (New York/Windfall Canyon Browse)

Key Species: Bluebunch wheatgrass, Thurber's needlegrass and bitterbrush.

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurber's needlegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RH-2. Utilization of Thurber's needlegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.
- Utilization of antelope bitterbrush not to exceed 25% of current year's growth by livestock.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurber's needlegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition 2001	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses	5	5-40	40
Total Forbs	6	6-10	10
Total Shrubs	78	50-78	50

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Bluebunch wheatgrass is not the most preferred species, but can be a critical source of feed. Moderate grazing can be tolerated, however lightly grazed plants produce more than ungrazed plants. Bluebunch wheatgrass is sensitive during active growth to defoliation.

Thurber's needlegrass is valuable forage for livestock, wild horses and wildlife. Thurber's needlegrass produces a large amount of leafage. It is most palatable in the spring and early summer while the plants are young and succulent. Livestock have been recognized as detrimental to the maintenance of Thurber's needlegrass if heavy grazing occurs.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RH-2 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock, wild horses, and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved. The DPC for RH-2 would be attainable with proper livestock management, maintaining appropriate wild horse levels, and not exceeding utilization objectives and ensuring frequency objectives are being met for plant species.

RH-3 (North Ruby Hill)

Key Species: Indian ricegrass, and Sandberg bluegrass

Short-term Objectives

- Utilization of Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass would be measured after the grazing season at the Key Management Area RH-3. Utilization of Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass not to exceed 50% by the end of the grazing year.

Long-term Objectives

- Achieve a statistically significant increase in frequency of Indian ricegrass and Sandberg bluegrass.
- Maintain or improve ecological condition consistent with the Desired Plant Community.
- Meet the following Desired Plant Community

	Current Percent Composition	Desired Plant Community	Percent Composition Site Potential at PNC
Total Grasses		20	55
Total Forbs		5	10
Total Shrubs		75	35

RATIONALE:

Utilization: The utilization objective is consistent with the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and is appropriate to increase plant vigor, allow plants to set seed and ensure that plants are able to store carbohydrates and replenish root reserves.

Indian ricegrass produces succulent, nutritious new green leaves and is highly palatable to all classes of livestock in both green and cured condition. It supplies a source of green feed before most native grasses have produced much new growth. These factors make Indian ricegrass susceptible to heavy grazing by livestock and wildlife. Heavy grazing (61-80%) of Indian ricegrass annually during the growing season sharply reduces the vigor and decreases the stand. Plants that do survive exhibit poor vigor with short sparse foliage and dead centers and may produce no litter or flower stalks.

Sandberg bluegrass is a palatable species, but its production is closely tied to weather conditions. The utilization objective for Sandberg bluegrass would allow the plant to develop reserve forage to alleviate impacts caused by drought and increase plant vigor.

Frequency: Attainment of the frequency objectives to increase the occurrence of the key species would indicate that these plants have increased in the plant community. The increase in the occurrence of these key species would indicate that management actions are sufficient to improve the vegetative conditions of the site relative to its capability and/or potential.

Desired Plant Community: DPC for RH-3 would allow grass, forbs, and shrub species to occur in the plant community in a manner that would best provide for the multiple uses in the allotment while representing a condition state that will be consistent with meeting or making progress towards the attainment of the standards for rangeland health. The DPC for grasses would provide a sustainable/healthy habitat for livestock and wildlife. The DPC objective for forbs would ensure that perennial forbs were available for sage grouse, pronghorn antelope and other non-game species. The DPC objective for shrubs would allow for sage grouse cover requirements (15-25%) to be achieved.

The poor forage diversity would not be improved with a change in livestock management. To achieve the long-term goals for RH-3 to provide quality habitat for sage grouse and other non-game species a vegetation manipulation may be required. A site specific analysis including NEPA and archeological clearances would be conducted before project initiation. WAFWA Guidelines to Manage Sage Grouse Populations and their Habitat would be used as a basis for the project implementation.