

**BLM Elko Field Office**  
**Issues Update**  
**June 25, 2004**

**Marys River Allotment Complex Evaluation**

Individual meetings were held in February and March, 2004 with the Marys River Complex permittees. The main purpose of the meetings was to clarify any questions that the permittees had on the allotment evaluation process, discuss their concerns, collect additional information for alternative grazing systems from the permittees' perspective, which would meet our objectives and identify range improvements which are critical to improving grazing distribution on the allotments. BLM is listening to permittees and getting ideas from them.

Since the completion of these meetings the team has been working on addressing the comments received during the comment period (over 100 pages of comments) on the draft Allotment Evaluation. Following the completion of answering the comments the team will work on finalizing the technical recommendations to be carried forward in the Management Action Selection Report, Environmental Assessment, Biological Assessment and the Proposed Multiple Use Decision.

Since many of the issues within the Marys River Complex deal with riparian impacts, the Elko Field Office hosted a Proper Functioning Condition/Riparian Grazing Management Workshop conducted by the Nevada PFC Cadre and the National Riparian Service Team. The field locations were within the Marys River Basin, on the Stormy Allotment and associated private lands. The workshop was held the last full week of May 2004. Two of the permittees within the Marys River Complex were present, the host ranch and a member of Higbee Brothers were there for two days. This workshop combines the standard training for PFC with monitoring and grazing management techniques that are conducive to maintaining and/or improving riparian conditions.

The team has also focused on addressing range improvements which were identified during the meetings in February and March as well as in the allotment evaluation. These range improvements included pipeline extensions, adding additional troughs, cleaning out reservoirs to increase water storage capacity, fence reconstruction to allow grazing in closed areas, and fencing to better control livestock and enhance riparian areas. Four field trips were coordinated with permittees in March, May, and June to address these projects including Stan and Jana Wright (South Deeth Unit), Varlin and Joe Higbee (Antelope Basin), and Archie Osborne (North Deeth Unit). As a result of these field trips five projects were finalized and cleared for implementation this summer to better distribute livestock within these allotments.

**Rangeland Health**

**Standards and Guidelines Assessments/Determinations**

- Forty-nine percent of the standards and guidelines (S&G) assessments and determinations have been completed on the public acres in our district since 1997 when the S&Gs were approved by the Secretary. (Completed 3,434,569 acres out of a total of 7,048,831 acres)

EXHIBIT <b>K</b> Lands	Document consists of <b>16</b> pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entire document provided.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Due to size limitations, pages ____ through ____ provided.	
A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775-634-6327 or e-mail library@icb.state.nv.us).	
Meeting Date <b>06-25-04</b>	

- BLM is currently focusing on completing the Marys River Complex, Cottonwood, and Hubbard/Vineyard assessments/evaluations. When these are completed, we will add an additional 365,435 acres (5%) to our accomplishments.

- The remaining 46% (3,248,827 acres) will be completed by 2008.

#### Evaluations Completed (including S&Gs)

- Allotment evaluations have been completed and multiple use decisions/agreements have been issued on 75% of the public acres in our district since the mid 1980s. This includes the acreage noted above associated with the S&G assessments. (covers 5,281,068 acres). This will increase to 80% when the Marys River, Cottonwood, and Hubbard Vineyard evaluations are completed.

Monitoring – The recent Memorandum of Understanding between BLM and the Public Lands Council regarding allotment monitoring has been sent to all BLM permittees. A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding is attached.

#### TeMoak Livestock Trespass

In April 2004, BLM issued final demand letters for payment to Temoak Livestock Association members involved in the long-standing grazing dispute with BLM. The letters were forwarded to the Nevada State Office for processing and will be sent to the U.S. Treasury Department for collection. Since the issuance of the final demand letters, the Healys presented BLM with an offer of settlement. That offer was reviewed by BLM's Nevada State Office solicitors and was forwarded to the Washington Office.

#### Danns Livestock Trespass

The Final Demand Letter and Unauthorized Use Notice were sent to the Danns in April 2004. A Notice of Intent to Impound was sent in May 2004. As BLM received no response from the Danns, the letters were forwarded to the Nevada State Office for processing and will be sent to the U.S. Treasury Department for collection. Horses belonging to the Danns remain in trespass on public lands in the South Buckhorn Allotment.

#### Great Basin Restoration Initiative

The BLM Elko Field Office continues to work on the Great Basin Restoration Initiative (GBRI) - a long-term interagency strategy to restore the ecological health of the Great Basin. Its aim: work together to achieve an improved rangeland health through a collaborative vision with state, federal and local government agencies, along with the tribes, ranchers, miners, environmental advocates and others who have a stake in the long-term health of the Great Basin. All field offices in Nevada are implementing sustainable projects as part of GBRI.

For Fiscal Years 2002-2007, the Elko Field Office is taking a landscape approach to GBRI project planning and implementation. The Field Office has been divided into eight landscape areas. In each landscape area, projects will be prioritized by the following resource issues: Sage Grouse and Sagebrush Obligate Species Habitat Protection, Sage Grouse Habitat and Sagebrush Obligate Species Improvement, Crucial Big Game Winter Range, Lahontan Cutthroat

Trout/Spotted Frog Habitat, Impaired Watersheds, Wild Horse Herd Management Areas, Final Multiple Use Decision Implementation, Invasive/Non-Native Species, and Forest Health.

In the Elko Field Office, many GBRI program goals and related projects overlap and are closely tied to implementation of multiple use decisions, fire rehabilitation, and fuels reduction projects. During the 1999, 2000, and 2001 fire seasons almost 3 million acres burned in Nevada and over 1.5 million acres of those lands are in areas managed by the BLM Elko Field Office.

BLM cannot accomplish this work without partners, which include ranchers, county governments, Nevada Division of Wildlife, Nevada Division of Forestry, and others. The following accomplishments include fire rehabilitation projects from 1999 to 2003, hazardous fuels reduction projects, 8100 range improvement projects, and weed control projects:

- 3400+ acres treated by prescribed fire
- 401,390 acres treated by aerial, drill, dribble and hand seeding
- 473 miles of new, reconstructed or repaired fence
- 1425 miles of dozer line rehabilitated, re-contoured, and re-seeded
- 465 miles of road repaired
- 740 acres spike treatment (chemical sagebrush thinning)
- 17,200 acres of mechanical treatment; i.e. brush beating, roller chopping (sagebrush and juniper), and discing cheatgrass

**Watershed protections:**

- 2,200 straw bales used to create sediment "traps" in drainages
- 45,000 linear feet straw wattles (long straw "tubes" placed on slopes for erosion control)
- 450,000 square feet of erosion blankets (to slow soil movement during recovery)
- 4,100 acres treated for noxious weeds
- 81,000 acres monitored for noxious weeds

**Weeds**

We are in our weed treatment window and are working with Diamond Valley Weed District, Jiggs Conservation District, Owyhee Conservation District, Spring Creek Region Cooperative Weed Management Area. The Elko Cooperative Weed Management Area was incorporated with the State in February 2004. Working cooperatively, BLM is compiling inventory data for the entire county and doing project planning – such as developing map inventory standards. Elko County is very supportive of the weed suppression efforts.

This year BLM Elko Field Office is spending about \$325,000 from several sources and partnerships. The goal is to treat 3600 acres this year and to inventory an additional 500,000 acres in Elko County.

**Fire Management Planning**

The Elko Field Office has received two protests on the proposed Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire Management. Elko Field Office responses are currently under review in the Nevada State Office and Washington Office.

In June, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Nevada Division of Forestry met with the Elko Field Office to discuss the implementation of the BLM's new direction for fire management and budgeting. The goal is to develop an interagency fire management plan which will increase fire suppression and budget efficiency among all agencies. In addition, through this planning effort, the plan addresses each agencies fire management strategies and constraints based on resource objectives. The resource objectives have been developed by BLM resource specialists and where appropriate, in coordination with Nevada Department of Wildlife biologists.

### **Emigrant Mine Project**

An open house was held June 16, 2004 at the BLM Elko Field Office to discuss the proposed Plan of Operations for the Newmont Mining Corporation's proposed Emigrant Project in Elko County, Nevada. The proposed Emigrant Mine would be located about ten miles south of Carlin, Nevada, and would include developing and operating an open pit mine; constructing a waste rock disposal facility, storing oxide waste in mined out areas of the pit; developing an oxide heap leach pad; constructing ancillary facilities; temporarily rerouting intermittent stream and flows in the pit area; and concurrent reclamation. Proposed mining operations would last for approximately 9 years through the year 2013. About 1172 acres of public land and 260 acres of private land would be disturbed.

Concerns expressed at the open house included loss of AUMs on the public lands involved in the project, access, potential impacts to wildlife, adequate bonding, and reclamation. The majority of the people participating were very positive about the project. The comment period ends July 7, 2004 and comments will be analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement.

### **Baca Land Sales**

Five parcels comprising 648 acres of BLM-administered public lands in Elko and Lander Counties are proposed to be sold this fall under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act of 2000 (also called the 'Baca Bill'). The parcels range in size from 40 acres to 250 acres.

The land parcels will be sold competitively. The minimum bid will begin at the appraised fair market value. No bids lower than the appraised value will be accepted. The environmental assessment has been completed for the parcels that are proposed for sale. The sale date is targeted for September 15, 2004. An official notice will also be published with the date, times, and requirements of the sale.

### **Proposed Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act Acquisitions**

In Round 4 the BLM Elko Field Office had three parcels approved for acquisition - Clover Valley, IL Ranch, and Rock Creek. The IL Ranch is not completely funded at this point (\$20 million approved thus far). BLM will begin acquisition process for the parcels.

No parcels have been nominated for Elko County at this point for Round 5.

## **California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center**

The BLM has received 95% design documents for the building and 65% design for the exhibits. 95% design for exhibits is expected in August. The BLM received an additional \$1 million in the Fiscal Year 2004 appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior. This money will go toward the construction of the Center. The land donation for the Center site from the Maggie Creek Ranch is expected to be completed within the next month which will allow Elko County to begin construction of the road.

## **Sage grouse**

The Northeastern Nevada and Central Nevada Sage Grouse Conservation Plans were sent to the Governor's committee for inclusion in statewide plan which is currently being reviewed by a technical science review team.

In response to petitions to list the greater sage grouse as threatened or endangered, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a 90-day finding which has determined that the petitions and other available information provide substantial biological information that indicate further review of the status of the species is warranted. The subsequent nine month review process includes a more thorough review of all available information and a request for input from State and Federal natural resource agencies and all interested parties regarding the greater sage grouse and its sagebrush habitat. Following the nine month review period, the Service will determine whether to propose listing the species as either threatened or endangered. BLM nationwide is putting together a sage grouse conservation package for consideration during the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's nine-month review.

## **Wild Horses**

BLM received approval for the reprogramming of \$7.665 million for the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

What this means for the Elko Field Office is that three gathers will go forward this year in the Diamond Hills North Herd Management Area (HMA) and the Rock Humboldt Complex (Rock Creek and Little Humboldt HMAs). The gathers will be conducted under a BLM contract which is scheduled to start after July 1, 2004 for the Diamond Hills North and September 1, 2004 for Rock-Humboldt Complex. The performance time for the gathers is 7 days for the Diamond Hills North and 28 days for Rock-Humboldt. An estimated 1,515 wild horses will be gathered (1,435 on Rock-Humboldt and 80 on Diamond Hills), with approximately 1,280 head being made available for adoption (1,237 on Rock-Humboldt and 43 on Diamond Hills).

The Diamond Hills North HMA gather is part of a larger gather for the Diamond Complex which is comprised of three HMAs on the Battle Mountain, Ely, and Elko Field Office areas.

## **Off Highway Vehicles**

BLM Elko Field Office is working with a partnership to develop off highway vehicle (OHV) trails in Elko County. The partnership includes the Elko Convention and Visitors Authority, U.S. Forest Service, and interested citizens. This grassroots effort started as an economic diversity project and thus far has generated \$250,000+ in grants. The basic premise is that the

network of open roads and trails on public lands in northeastern Nevada serves as the attraction for thousands of recreation enthusiasts in the West. Currently, a network of existing roads and trails in the Spruce Mountain area south of Wells is being analyzed for suitability as an OHV trail. BLM is working with Nevada Department of Wildlife to work through wildlife concerns in the area.

**Wild Horse and Burro Program**  
**BLM Nevada**  
6/24/04

**Key Messages**

- ❖ A \$7.665 million increase in funding for the remainder of fiscal year 2004 (which ends September 30, 2004) has been approved by Congress for the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Program. The funding will enable BLM to resume removal of excess animals during the summer of 2004. As a result of the additional funding, BLM will continue to make progress toward achieving appropriate management levels (AMLs) of wild horses and burros on the public lands we manage.
- ❖ Nevada will receive \$1.461 million of the additional funding. With the added funding, Nevada BLM proposes to move forward with removal of about **3,100** excess wild horses and burros on **11 herd management areas (HMAs)** within the state
- ❖ Governor Guinn met with Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton this week to inform her of Nevada's needs regarding wild horses.
- ❖ Gathers:
  - Diamonds complex (comprising 3 HMAs on the Battle Mountain, Elko and Ely field offices)
  - Moriah and White River HMAs (Ely field office) are expected to commence on/after July 5, 2004
  - Gathers for the Jakes Wash (Ely)
  - Garfield HMAs (Carson City)
  - Little Humboldt/Rock Creek (2 HMAs managed by the Elko field office)
  - Little Owyhee (2 HMAs managed by the Winnemucca field office) herd complexes will follow a little later this summer.
- ❖ **To date this fiscal year, Nevada BLM removed 1,444** (prior to foaling season) from the Nevada Wild Horse Range, Lahontan and Desatoya HMAs. Without the additional funding, Nevada BLM would have been unable to conduct any additional removals of excess animals during the remainder of fiscal year 2004.
- ❖ Looking ahead to FY2005 (which begins October 1, 2004), the House of Representatives has approved a \$10.5 million increase for the WH&B program in their appropriations markup. The President's budget requested a \$12.5 million increase.

## **BACKGROUND:**

- ❖ Nevada manages more than half the nation's wild free-roaming wild horses and burros within 102 Herd Management Areas on nearly 16 million acres of public land. BLM's goal is to manage Nevada's wild horses and burros in a thriving ecological balance with the land's ability to sustain and produce forage for wild horses, wildlife and domestic livestock over the long term. Achieving AML on the public lands helps BLM to attain that goal by ensuring that the number of wild horses and burros is in balance with the land's ability to produce forage and with other multiple-uses of the land such as wildlife habitat, authorized livestock use, etc.
- ❖ In fiscal year (FY) 2000, the actual population of wild horses and burros managed by Nevada was more than 25,000 head, about 70% higher than the estimated appropriate management level (AML) of wild horses and burros of 14,500 head.
- ❖ Today, largely because of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) National Strategy to achieve AML, Nevada's population of wild horses and burros has decreased to about 19,000 head (roughly 31% above estimated AML).
- ❖ During this same period, Nevada has also made substantial progress toward establishing AMLs for all our herd management areas (HMAs). Currently, Nevada has AML set for 83 HMAs (compared to only 60 in FY2000). The goal is to set AML for most remaining HMAs by the end of 2005.
- ❖ Once AML is achieved, only about 2,500 excess animals will need to be gathered and removed in Nevada on an annual basis.





# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Washington, D.C. 20240

<http://www.blm.gov>

Dear BLM Grazing Permittee/Lessee:

Enclosed is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning cooperative rangeland monitoring recently entered into by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Public Lands Council (PLC). This MOU sets out a framework to improve the quality and quantity of short- and long-term allotment level monitoring information on BLM administered rangelands. The opportunity for cooperation, communication, and consultation between permittees/lessees and the BLM will be collaborative work done on a voluntary basis. Better information for making range decisions will also develop because of this MOU.

The monitoring information obtained as a result of cooperative monitoring will help stabilize livestock grazing on public lands and achieve desired future range conditions. The BLM and PLC will benefit by increasing the number of allotments being monitored. Each entity will enjoy shared benefits from the establishment of uniform monitoring protocols, data collection processes, and reporting methods.

One important goal of this MOU is to make significant progress in the implementation of this cooperative rangeland monitoring effort. Every rangeland management specialist and field office manager with a range program should get a copy of this MOU and work to identify permittees/lessees to implement it. Similarly, each PLC or National Cattlemen Beef Association State representative will also receive a copy of the MOU will work to identify permittees/lessees who want to participate in the activity. Each State office, together with the PLC, will work to identify and expand a list of permittees/lessees willing to participate in this joint cooperative monitoring effort.

The data collected through the framework of the MOU efforts will be used to make management decisions on the affected allotments. A systematic approach to monitoring using BLM approved protocols, such as those described on page 3 of the MOU, will assist in MOU implementation and benefit the BLM and the permittee/lessees of BLM administered rangelands.

We are encouraged about this cooperative relationship between the BLM, the PLC, and grazing permittees/lessees that choose to participate in this cooperative rangeland monitoring effort. The BLM will distribute this letter and enclosed MOU to rangeland management specialists, field office managers and other staff as appropriate in your State. If you have any questions regarding implementation of the MOU please contact your local BLM field office range personnel, or your State PLC contact.

Sincerely,

K. L. Bliss  
President, Public Lands Council

Kathleen Clarke  
Director, Bureau of Land Management

MAY 13 2004

Enclosure

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Between:**  
**U. S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management**  
**and**  
**the Public Lands Council**

This agreement is entered into between the Public Lands Council (PLC) and the Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The signatories to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) believe that cooperative rangeland monitoring is an important tool to help stabilize livestock grazing on lands administered by the BLM and to achieve desired range conditions in the future. Such a monitoring program involving the exchange of information benefits the collection, analysis and interpretation of monitoring information through the cooperation of public and private interests.

The signatories also believe that interpretation of data and conclusions about resource condition at the allotment level should be principally based on facts and data collected on the ground, using the latest scientific techniques. At times, there is a need to utilize the professional judgments of rangeland resource professionals. To evaluate and interpret all of the information available to accomplish allotment/lease objectives, the current and historic knowledge and practical experience of the permittees/lessees is also necessary.

This MOU is intended to provide a framework for the facts and data to be collected, analyzed, shared with the public, and used by the BLM to make land management decisions.

### **AUTHORITY**

Section 307(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1737(b), authorizes the Secretary, subject to the provisions of applicable law, to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements involving the management, protection, development, and sale of public lands.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

The PLC and the BLM will jointly:

1. Develop a letter, to be signed by national level representatives of both parties to inform public land permittees/lessees and BLM employees of the purpose of this MOU.
2. Encourage respective local members and employees to participate in joint, cooperative monitoring.

**The Public Lands Council will, as appropriate:**

1. Publicize and otherwise support joint, cooperative monitoring among its members, including emphasis of implementation of monitoring on a watershed basis where practical.
2. Encourage livestock permittees and lessees to work cooperatively with the BLM to develop a monitoring plan which, at a minimum, addresses those items outlined in Appendix A (attached) or public land.
3. Encourage grazing permittees and lessees to include private or leased land to the extent such inclusion is consistent with the scope of Federal jurisdiction, and only with written permission from the owner/lessee.
4. Provide a written report by February 28 of each year to the BLM's Rangeland, Soil, Water, and Air (WO 220) Group Manager on the status of activities pertinent to this MOU over the preceding year.
5. Work cooperatively with BLM to implement and stress the importance of consistent use of monitoring protocols or methodologies by Federal land management agencies.

**The Bureau of Land Management will:**

1. Continue working with livestock permittees and lessees who have actively participated with BLM in collecting and/or analyzing monitoring data within the past 5 years. Confirm they still have interest in conducting joint, cooperative monitoring.
2. Work with additional livestock permittees and lessees to jointly monitor to the maximum extent feasible within limits of available funds and BLM priorities.
3. Provide an annual status report to PLC at its Spring Conference on BLM's activities in the rangeland monitoring program during the preceding year. The annual report may address such matters as the number of permittee/lessee participants in the preceding year, a summary of the resources used in the previous fiscal year, and the number of participants projected for the upcoming year.
4. Work cooperatively with the livestock permittees and lessees to develop a monitoring plan. At a minimum it should address those items outlined in the attached Appendix A for the public land portion of their operation. Parties will comply with the Federal Advisory Committee Act to the extent it applies.

5. Involve permittees and lessees in data collection and evaluation processes, and provide copies of evaluation(s) to these permittees and lessees.
6. Coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to perform soil surveys and develop Ecological Site Descriptions where joint, cooperative monitoring occurs.
7. Maintain the final decision authority concerning the planning, collection and interpretation of the monitoring data collected under this MOU. The BLM retains its responsibility to make decisions relating to public land management, including livestock grazing, and compliance with public involvement requirements in the grazing regulations.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS**

- A. **Public - Private Partnership:** The planning, collection and interpretation of monitoring data will be jointly conducted between the permittee or lessee and BLM pursuant to the agency's applicable protocols. Permittees or lessees may seek assistance from other individuals or institutions (i.e., the extension service and/or consultants) when taking part in this joint venture. The BLM shall accept for consideration monitoring data collected using BLM-approved techniques when the data meets BLM standards as determined by the authorized officer. The BLM may check data and conduct random quality control reviews of data presented by the permittee/lessee or their representative prior to using the data. Monitoring data not collected as referenced above or found not to accurately reflect on-the-ground conditions may not be used.

When, at the request of the permittee/lessee, assistance is provided by consultants, institutions, other agencies or individuals, the permittee(s) or lessee(s) shall designate one individual to work with the BLM.

- B. Prior to implementing joint cooperative monitoring both parties shall agree to the methods for collecting data as specified in BLM-approved protocols. This includes but not limited to Technical Reference 1730-1, Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations, 1734-3, Utilization Studies and Residual Measurements, 1734-4, Sampling Vegetation Attributes, 1734-7, and Ecological Site Inventory.
- C. Nothing in this agreement may be construed to obligate either the DOI or the United States to any current or future expenditure of resources in advance of the availability of appropriations from Congress. This agreement does not obligate the DOI or the United States to expend funds, property or services.
- D. While recognizing that the BLM has a responsibility to coordinate, consult, and communicate with many different entities concerning management of the public lands, this MOU addresses interaction between the BLM and PLC who represents members of the livestock industry


operating on public lands. This MOU in no way precludes or restricts the involvement of other public land users, interested public, or other public or private agencies, organizations or individuals from participating in this joint, cooperative monitoring.

- E. Nothing in this agreement shall be construed to conflict with any existing statutes, regulation or policy of the United States or any policy or procedures of the BLM or the DOL.
- F. This agreement shall be effective on the date of the last signature for a period of five years, at and that time it may be reaffirmed.
- G. This agreement may be re-negotiated, amended, extended, or modified by a written amendment through an exchange of correspondence between authorized officials of PLC and BLM.
- H. Either party may terminate this agreement by written notice to the other party.
- I. Each party will obtain prior approval from the other of all press releases, published advertisements, or other statements intended for the public that refer to this agreement or to the parties, the Department, the name or title of any employee of the Department, or other cooperating individuals in connection with this MOU.
- J. Nothing in this MOU may be interpreted to imply that the United States, the DOL, or the BLM endorses any product, service, or policy of PLC. The PLC will not take any action or make any statement that suggests or implies such an endorsement.

**APPROVED:**

  
Kathleen Clarke  
Director, Bureau of Land Management

1-30-04  
Date

  
K. L. Bliss  
President, Public Lands Council

1-30-04  
Date

The following items should be considered when developing a monitoring plan with the grazing permits or leases. It is not intended for this list to be all-inclusive or absolute. Local considerations need to be factored in when jointly preparing the monitoring plan. The monitoring plan should be considered a dynamic document, which is reviewed and modified as necessary when new information becomes available. If an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) exists, it is suggested that the monitoring plan become part of the AMP after compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

#### **A. Management Objectives**

State clearly the land use plan and/or other management plan watershed or landscape management objectives and desired plant community objectives that will serve as the basis for selecting the attributes to be monitored and the interpretations to be made of monitoring data. Allotments may be used or aggregated if size approximates a watershed level. Objectives may be identified by reviewing and consulting relevant BLM documents.

#### **B. Existing Monitoring Information**

1. All available information from prior inventories, monitoring data, climatic records, actual stocking records, utilization surveys, photographs, or other pertinent information shall be compiled, analyzed and summarized for the public lands portion of the ranching operation.
2. Additional data needs may be identified to meet management objectives, desired plant community objectives, and other considerations (such as water quality, endangered species, etc).

#### **C. Future Monitoring Attributes & Protocols**

1. Describe and agree upon the locations, timing, attributes to be measured, and protocols to be used for both annual event monitoring and periodic long-term resource-trend assessment.
2. Where available, Ecological Site Descriptions should be the basis for interpreting and extrapolating monitoring results and for conducting rangeland inventories.
3. Monitoring data shall include the measurement or assessment of indicators or attributes appropriate for evaluating the allotment management objectives, which may include ground cover, vegetative species composition, long-term trend transects, and repeat

photographs. Additional monitoring data, such as actual use, utilization or residual measurement (stubble height), vegetation structure (height, pattern), age class distribution of plant species, vegetation production, erosion indicators, and other relevant indicators may be included as needed on a case-by-case basis.

4. Monitoring data should be collected in a manner that is repeatable and as quantitative as practical.