

DON AND SHIRLEY TOELLE
GRAZING PERMIT
RENEWAL

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
OR-025-03-013

Bureau of Land Management
Burns District Office
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I. Introduction: Purpose of and Need for Action.....	1
Chapter II. Alternatives Including the Proposed Action	1
A. Description of the Proposed Action.....	1
B. No Grazing Alternative.....	2
Chapter III. Description of the Affected Environment.....	2
Chapter IV. Environmental Consequences.....	2
A. Proposed Action.....	2
1. Anticipated Impacts	2
2. Cumulative Impacts	3
Chapter V. Persons and Agencies Consulted.....	3
Chapter VI. Participating Staff	3

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

Grazing permittees who graze their livestock on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land shall have grazing permits issued to them under the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4130.2(a)). Grazing permits shall be issued for a term of 10 years unless there is some reason which requires a term of less than 10 years under the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4130.2(d)). In this case, the Don and Shirley Toelle grazing permit will be issued for a period of 10 years.

The Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (RMP) of 1992, identified land that was available for livestock grazing. The land in the Cow Creek (#5106) and Virginia Valley (#5316) Allotments (refer to attached maps), which is within the Don and Shirley Toelle grazing permit, meets the criteria set forth in the Three Rivers RMP under GM 1.4, Page 2-37. This action is also in conformance with applicable Tribal, State, and County Land Use Plans. (This analysis is tiered to the Three Rivers RMP and incorporates by reference, the information and analysis contained within the RMP.)

There are currently sage-grouse and/or its habitat present in one or more of the allotments under this term grazing permit. The current grazing system addresses the needs of sage-grouse and, therefore, should not be in conflict with the needs for sage-grouse.

An analysis of the grazing systems used on the Cow Creek (#5106) and Virginia Valley (#5316) Allotments for compliance with the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management was completed in 2002. Both allotments are meeting the standards and guidelines under current management practices.

CHAPTER II: ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue to the current permittee (Don and Shirley Toelle), a term livestock grazing permit with the same terms and conditions as the expiring permit. This would continue the existing grazing management and would be the same as a no action alternative. Therefore, both alternatives will be analyzed under the proposed action.

There has been monitoring of the effects of the current livestock grazing system in place within the allotment for a number of years. These study sites have been read periodically for 10 to 22 years. Monitoring data collected was last formally analyzed in 2002 for the Cow Creek Allotment and in 1995 for the Virginia Valley Allotment. The data analyzed indicates that allotment objectives are currently being met.

B. No Grazing Alternative

The proposed action would continue current terms and conditions. Monitoring has shown that allotment resource objectives and Standards for Rangeland Health are being met. Therefore, while a "No Grazing Alternative" has been considered, for the above reasons this alternative will not be addressed further in this document.

CHAPTER III: DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The following elements of the human environment have been analyzed in the Three Rivers RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), are not present in the project area, or will not be affected by the proposed action or no action alternative: Prime or Unique Farmlands, Floodplains, Hazardous Materials, Special Management Areas (Resource Natural Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas), Air Quality, Water Quality, Cultural Heritage, American Indian Religious Concerns, Noxious Weeds, Paleontology, Special Status Fauna, and Special Status Flora.

Migratory Birds: Some migratory birds are known to use the project area for nesting, foraging, and resting as they pass through on their yearly migrations.

Environmental Justice: There are no economically disadvantaged or minority populations present within the project area.

Adverse Energy Impacts: No known adverse impacts would occur to energy development, production or distribution as a result of the proposed action.

CHAPTER IV: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Proposed Action

1. Anticipated Impacts

Grazing use for Don and Shirley Toelle would be authorized under a new term grazing permit. The level and timing of use by livestock in the allotment would not change from what was authorized at the time the Three Rivers RMP was adopted.

Since the writing of the RMP/EIS, the following resources have been recognized

and were not analyzed in the RMP/EIS:

- a. Migratory Birds: There would be no known effect on migratory birds by the issuing of a livestock grazing permit.
- b. Environmental Justice: There are no economically disadvantaged or minority populations which would be disproportionately affected by issuance of a livestock grazing permit.
- c. Adverse Energy Impacts: There are no known impacts which would occur to any energy-related resources as a result of issuing a livestock grazing permit.

2. Cumulative Impacts

There are no known cumulative impacts, either positive or negative, that would occur if a grazing permit is issued.

CHAPTER V: PERSONS AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

Don and Shirley Toelle

CHAPTER VI: PARTICIPATING STAFF

Bill Andersen, Acting Natural Resource Supervisor
Gary Foulkes, District Planning/Environmental Coordinator
Terri Geisler, District Geologist
James A. King, Range Management Specialist, Lead Preparer
Fred McDonald, Recreation Specialist
Glenn Patterson, District Range Management Specialist
Lesley Richman, Weed Specialist
Fred Taylor, Wildlife Biologist
Nora Taylor, District Botanist
Scott Thomas, District Archaeologist
Michael Weston, Fisheries Biologist