

**DECISION/RATIONALE**  
**EA # OR-030-03-002**

**DECISION**

I have determined that implementation of the proposed action to modify the winter portion of the Whitehorse Ranch ten year grazing permit from

Coyote Lake Allotment (10804)	713 Cattle	11/01	11/30	703 AUMs
	781 Cattle	12/01	02/28	2311 AUMs

to

Coyote Lake Allotment (10804)	745 Cattle	10/01	01/31	3014 AUMs
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as outlined in Environmental Assessment OR-030-03-002 is in conformance with the SEORMP and ROD. My decision is to implement the proposed action and modify the grazing permit. The new permit will read as follows:

Allotment	Livestock		Grazing Period		% PL	Type Use	AUMs
	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
Whitehorse Butte	1670	Cattle	03/16	08/31	100	Active	9279
	2	Cattle	03/16	04/15	100	Active	2
	6	Cattle	12/01	12/31	100	Active	6
Coyote Lake	745	Cattle	10/01	01/31	100	Active	3014

Allotment	Preference		
	Active	Suspended	Total
01206 Whitehorse Butte	9287	1691	10978
10804 Coyote Lake	3014	381	3395

**RATIONALE**

My rationale for this decision is as follows. The modified permit would not cause detrimental affects to the vegetation. Grazing use would merely be made at a slightly different time during the same basic fall/winter grazing season. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, most vegetation has been dormant for several months because of high summer temperatures and a lack of soil moisture. Grazing at this time would be outside of the growing season. A small amount of fall green up could occur if fall precipitation came early, the lows were above freezing and the daily highs remained quite warm. However, grazing would still be outside the growing season.

In some years, spring green up occurs from the middle of February through March. The proposed change would expose green plants to grazing for a shorter period than under the existing permit. Use by cattle during spring green up would be reduced by removing the cattle from the Coyote Lake Allotment by January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Modifying the permit would neither enhance nor degrade the wilderness study area. Values such as primitiveness, unconfined recreation, solitude, species diversity, wild horses, scenery, etc would still be available to the public and not affected by the proposed action. Soils, air quality, noxious weeds, wildlife, special status plant species, recreation, cultural resources, and areas of critical environmental concerns would not be affected.

This permit change is a reasonable action and will benefit the permittee. No impacts were identified that would significantly affect any aspect of the human environment.

Environmental Assessment OR-030-03-002 was posted on the Vale District website and a Notice of Proposed Action was published in the Argus Observer on June 27, 2003. The EA was also mailed to various interested publics and no comments were received.

s/Jerry Taylor

August 20, 2003

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Jerry Taylor, Field Manager, Jordan Resource Area

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Date