



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Salmon-Challis
National Forest
Supervisor's Office

50 Hwy 93 S
Salmon, ID 83467
208 756-5100

File Code: 1950

Date: July 31, 2003

Greetings:

The Lost River and Challis Ranger Districts of the Salmon-Challis National Forest propose to authorize livestock grazing by updating allotment management plans (AMPs) on National Forest System lands on 21 grazing allotments within the Lost River Range and the Lemhi Range.

The attached scoping document contains a map and information about the proposed project. The letter summarizes the purpose and need for the project, desired conditions, proposed action, preliminary resource concerns, and preliminary alternatives.

Your comments are requested specifically on the proposed action's effects, preliminary resource concerns, and preliminary alternatives. Any suggestions that you have for additional actions to move to the desired conditions would be welcome. Comments made on this proposal are most helpful if they are received by September 5 and pertain directly to the project area. However, your comments and involvement are welcome throughout the planning process.

If you would like to stay on the mailing list for this project or submit comments please contact Tony Beke, Project Team Leader. He can be contacted at the Forest Supervisor's Office, Salmon-Challis National Forest, 50 Hwy 93 South, Salmon, Idaho 83467, by phone at (208) 756-5101, or by email at comments-intermtm-salmon-challis@fs.fed.us. Please state that your comments are for the Lost River/Lemhi Grazing Allotments EIS project.

An open house will also be held on August 19, 2003 at 6:00-9:00PM at the Arco-Butte Business Center, 159 N. Idaho, Arco, Idaho to discuss this proposal and solicit your comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ Stephen J. Solem

STEPHEN J. SOLEM
Acting Forest Supervisor

Enclosures (2)



Lost River/Lemhi Grazing Allotments Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Document

Salmon-Challis National Forest Lost River and Challis Ranger Districts

The purpose of this scoping document is to give you an opportunity to review the proposed action and the preliminary issues and alternatives to the proposed action for the Lost River/Lemhi Range Grazing Allotments Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Location

The project area is located within a 35-mile radius of, and north, east, and south of Mackay, Idaho in the Lost River Range and Lemhi Range. The area includes 322,569 acres of National Forest lands administered by the Lost River and Challis Ranger Districts for the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Approximately 76,572 acres are suitable for livestock grazing as defined in the Challis Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

The 21 allotments in the analysis area are as follows: Arco Pass, Arentson Gulch, Bell Mountain, Briggs Canyon, Cedarville, Horse Creek, Lower Cedar, Meadow Creek, Pass Creek, Ramshorn, Summerhouse, Uncle Ike, Westside, Williams Creek, and Willow Creek Cattle and Horse Allotments; and Howe, Jumpoff, South Creek, Rock Springs, Dry Creek and Long Lost Sheep and Goat Allotments (see map insert).

The Little Lost River Sub-basin has a wide, alluvial, high elevation valley flanked by the Lost River Range to the west and the Lemhi Range to the east. Elevation ranges from 12,000 feet in the Lost River Range to 4,800 feet near the Little Lost River Sinks. The lower portion of the Big Lost River Sub-basin also has a wide alluvial valley that is flanked by the Lost River Range to the east. Both valleys would be characterized as high deserts with precipitation less than 10 inches per year. The northern ranges transition from dry forests to alpine areas in the higher elevations where annual precipitation can exceed 30 inches per year. Vegetation types range from sagebrush and grass in the lower elevations, to Douglas-fir and mountain mahogany in the mid elevations, to subalpine fir and whitebark pine in the higher elevations.

Background

As part of the 1995 Rescission Act and its implementing regulations (Public Law 104-19 Section 504(a)), Congress directed the Forest Service to issue active term grazing permits due for expiration and prepare and adhere to a schedule to update management direction for the permits in compliance with NEPA, Forest Plan direction, and other relevant laws and regulations. In accordance with this direction, the Intermountain Region (R-4) of the Forest Service prepared such a schedule to contribute to the agencies national schedule for Allotment Management Plans (AMP) development. AMPs implement grazing management direction resulting from Forest Service NEPA decisions. The R-4 schedule, consistent with other regions of the agency, is comprised of individual National Forest's schedules including a schedule from the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

In 1997, Forest Plan standards and guidelines were amended based on an updated Biological Opinion from the Interim Strategy for Managing Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, Western Montana, and Portions of Nevada (INFISH). Accordingly, modifications to grazing permits have been made to comply with its direction and to changes in other pertinent laws and regulations. During the past decade, adjustments to grazing practices, allotment boundaries, and permitted livestock have been made on a portion of the allotments to improve grazing management, respond to changes in permittee operations, and adjust to drought conditions. However, direction for grazing management within these allotments is fragmented. It is not based on a comprehensive approach to management designed to achieve desired resource conditions and respond to emerging grazing management issues. Recently, site-specific issues relative to bighorn sheep management, recreation use conflicts, and conservation of sagebrush habitat for sage grouse warrant changes in grazing management.

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for this project is to improve the range condition and trend and achieve desired management conditions on 76,572 suitable acres of rangeland habitat within the project area through the use of livestock grazing. In addition, grazing mitigation measures and adaptive management provisions are needed to mitigate adverse effects from grazing and provide range managers with future flexibility to implement and adjust management over time to achieve desired resource conditions.

In the fall of 2002, the District initiated a project to develop an updated AMP for the Pass Creek Allotment in the project area. The District has developed desired resource conditions for habitats and plant communities that are key to management of livestock grazing. In addition, management opportunities have been identified that can achieve these conditions or move existing conditions toward desired states. These management opportunities include revised grazing use standards, changes in grazing use, grazing mitigation measures, and monitoring protocols that will improve rangeland condition and trend and move existing resource conditions toward desired states within the project area over time. To this end, District managers have identified nine plant community types, which are considered key indicators of livestock management in the project area; these community types provide the focus for the desired conditions (DCs). Range condition and trend would be improved and management toward DCs progressed within the decade within these plant communities.

During the past five years, emerging management issues relating to the protection of bighorn sheep populations from domestic sheep within the Rock Springs, Dry Creek and Long Lost allotments, grazing use conflicts with recreation users in the Pass Creek Narrows dispersed recreation area, and livestock management within big sagebrush habitat for conservation of sage grouse warrant consideration. Adjustments in grazing use and kind/class of livestock are needed to address these issues.

Desired Conditions

Desired Conditions provide “end point” management objectives for grazing use. The conditions are described in quantitative and qualitative parameters and are designed to be “measurable”, so that project monitoring can assess the effectiveness of management toward achieving these desired objectives over time. For this project, the desired conditions include parameters of key plant community types, and associated resource management

objectives that frame grazing management direction into the future and provide a basis from which management can be assessed over time.

Riparian Management

Manage livestock grazing so as not to prevent the attainment and maintenance of healthy and properly functioning riparian and aquatic communities.

Riparian Objectives

- Riparian Vegetation Seral Status/Rating: The riparian vegetation seral status objective is to maintain or trend toward a riparian vegetation seral status of at least late seral. On average, approximately 80 percent of the riparian areas should have this status at any one time.
- Bank Stability: The bank stability objective is to maintain or trend toward a stream bank stability of at least 80 percent. On average, approximately 80 percent of the streams should have a bank stability of 80 percent or higher at any one time.
- Woody Species Regeneration: Maintain healthy and diverse woody plant stands across the riparian landscape. While several woody plant species are important components of riparian communities, the emphasis will be on those species that are affected by livestock grazing. Within the Salmon-Challis National Forest this includes willow, aspen, and cottonwood. In the future, quantifiable objectives for woody species regeneration may be set when additional information becomes available.

Upland Management

Upland Objectives

- Adequate litter and vegetation cover will be present to keep soil movement within acceptable levels to meet regional guidelines.
- Desired native grass species (such as Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass) will dominate the herbaceous vegetation communities.
- Maintain sensitive plants species (Regional Forester's listing).
- Maintain a coordinated program for control of noxious and invasive weeds.
- Viable sagebrush plant communities will be found across the area where soils and site conditions support such communities. A variety of age classes and adequate stand size of sagebrush will be maintained to support sagebrush dependent species.

Key Plant Communities

- **Low sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia arbuscula/Agropyron spicatum*)

- Live Sagebrush Canopy Cover:
 - 20 percent of the sagebrush area has 5 to 10 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 60 percent of the sagebrush area has 10 to 20 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 20 percent of the sagebrush area has greater than 20 percent shrub canopy cover
- Dead Sagebrush Canopy Cover: no more than 25 percent of total shrub canopy
- Grass-Forb Canopy Cover: 15-45 percent
- Bare Ground: 10-30 percent
- **Low sagebrush/Idaho fescue** (*Artemisia arbuscula/Festuca idahoensis*)
 - Live Sagebrush Canopy Cover:
 - 20 percent of the sagebrush area has 5 to 10 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 60 percent of the sagebrush area has 10 to 20 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 20 percent of the sagebrush area has greater than 20 percent shrub canopy cover
 - Dead Sagebrush Canopy Cover: no more than 25 percent of total shrub canopy
 - Grass-Forb Canopy Cover: 15-45 percent
 - Bare Ground: 10-30 percent
- **Mountain big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia tridentata var. vaseyana/pauciflora/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Live Sagebrush Canopy Cover:
 - 15 percent of the sagebrush area has 5 to 15 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 60 percent of the sagebrush area has 15 to 25 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 25 percent of the sagebrush area has greater than 25 percent shrub canopy cover
 - Dead Sagebrush Canopy Cover: no more than 25 percent of total shrub canopy
 - Grass-Forb Canopy Cover: 15-45 percent
 - Bare Ground: 10-30 percent
- **Mountain big sagebrush/Idaho fescue** (*Artemisia tridentata var. vaseyana/pauciflora/Festuca idahoensis*)
 - Live Sagebrush Canopy Cover:
 - 10 percent of the sagebrush area has 5 to 10 percent shrub canopy cover
 - 50 percent of the sagebrush area has 10 to 20 percent shrub canopy cover

40 percent of the sagebrush area has greater than 20 percent shrub canopy cover

- Dead Sagebrush Canopy Cover: no more than 15 percent of total shrub canopy
- Grass-Forb Canopy Cover: 15-55 percent
- Bare Ground: 10-30 percent
- **Wyoming big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Live Sagebrush Canopy Cover:

15 percent of the sagebrush area has 5 to 15 percent shrub canopy cover
60 percent of the sagebrush area has 15 to 25 percent shrub canopy cover
25 percent of the sagebrush area has greater than 25 percent shrub canopy cover
 - Dead Sagebrush Canopy Cover: no more than 25 percent of total shrub canopy
 - Grass-Forb Canopy Cover: 15-45 percent
 - Bare Ground: 10-30 percent
- **Antelope bitterbrush/Idaho fescue** (*Purshia tridentata/Festuca idahoensis*) and **Antelope bitterbrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Purshia tridentata/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Maintain existing stands with small amounts of decadent shrubs. Avoid heavy use by livestock.

Aspen/Forb Communities

Livestock grazing in aspen/forb communities will be managed to maintain at least 80 percent of the aspen stands within the project area for long-term viability. Specifically, the goal is to obtain a net gain in height growth annually. The objective, depending on habitat type, (i.e. upland, riparian, or mixed conifer communities) is to have 1000 stems per acre in the younger age classes in at least 80 percent of the aspen stands.

In stable stands, the goal is to have regeneration that results in a multi-storied stand. The lower canopy (less than six feet tall) levels may only need 500 + stems per acre but would have a low percentage of grazing use.

Aspen/Forb Characteristics:

- Maintain aspen regeneration of at least 500 stems per acre of small trees greater than one inch stem diameter and greater than six feet tall; and at least 500 suckers per acre less than one inch stem diameter and less than six feet tall for a total of 1000 stems per acre.

- Aspen canopy cover equal to or greater than 40 percent
- Sagebrush cover less than 10 percent
- Bare ground less than 15 percent

Wildlife

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Objective

- To ensure that domestic sheep do not adversely affect bighorn sheep due to disease/virus transmission, no physical contact between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep will be allowed within the analysis area.

Sage Grouse Objective

- The desired conditions for the upland communities were described under upland desired conditions. If these objectives are obtained and livestock grazing is managed accordingly, adequate and healthy upland habitat will be available for sage grouse. The desired conditions are needed to provide adequate, healthy habitat for sage grouse.

Social and Economics

Grazing fees for permitted livestock use on National Forest System lands are designated by Congress based on a standard formula incorporated in Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and agency regulations for all Federal agencies. The Forest Service, like all federal agencies managing livestock grazing, has no discretion to alter these fees to improve or alter financial efficiency. Moreover, with the passage of the 1995 Rescission Act, Congress has directed the Forest Service to issue grazing permits on active allotments pending updated Allotment Management Plan (AMP) development. Based on this direction, Forest Service managers are constrained from using financial efficiency as a consideration in authorization of grazing, and issues to this regard are outside the scope of the decision framework for the decision maker.

In addition, economic impacts incurred by the permittee through implementation of alternatives documented in this analysis are speculative. The Forest Service has no legal authorization to the comprehensive financial details of a permittee's business or profit margins necessary to render such predictions. To this end, the agency is limited to disclosure of expected impacts from grazing authorization where alternative standards are not met, and prediction of anticipated resource benefits where these impacts can responsibly be estimated. Disclosure of grazing receipts generated from grazing permits are included in the analysis. Socioeconomic impacts of the grazing permit to local working circles are addressed as part of Forest Planning, and therefore, considered outside the scope of the analysis for site-specific projects.

Social and Economic Objective

- Authorize available livestock forage to qualified livestock operators. Establish such limits and make investments needed to protect or enhance the resources while allowing livestock grazing.

Heritage Resources

Heritage resource sites, including sites identified as Native American, determined to be eligible based on the National Historic Preservation Act, will be assessed and protected from grazing impacts.

Soils and Hydrologic Function

Soil quality, productivity, and hydrologic function would be managed to maintained or restored where needed, within the Lost River/Lemhi Range Grazing Allotments. Physical, chemical, and biological soil properties would be maintained to support desired vegetation conditions and soil-hydrologic functions and processes. Soils would have adequate protective cover, levels of soil organic matter (litter), and coarse woody material to minimize erosion and facilitate nutrient cycling. Soil productivity would be maintained by complying with Regional Soil Quality Guidelines.

Water Quality

Water quality would be managed to meet clean water act requirements, EPA-approved state water quality standards, and contribute to the support of beneficial uses.

Recreation and Visuals

Dispersed Recreation sites - Manage for dispersed recreation and leave the area essentially undeveloped.

Visual Integrity - Modification, Partial Retention, and Retention are the visual management classifications for the analysis area.

Proposed Action

In order to meet the purpose and need for the project and achieve site-specific desired conditions, the Lost River and Challis Ranger Districts, Salmon-Challis National Forest are proposing to authorize continued livestock grazing use within the project area under updated management direction to achieve site-specific management objectives and move existing conditions toward desired conditions. The proposed management direction includes implementing the following grazing use standards, changes in livestock use, and mitigation measures. Based on the decision for this project, existing grazing permits will be modified to incorporate these standards.

Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve the desired conditions. A strategy will be followed that emphasizes achieving resource conditions as opposed to implementing a specific livestock management strategy. This approach is to allow rangeland managers to use any combination of livestock management techniques to achieve the objectives.

Since grazing management within an allotment will be focused at the unit scale, management planning will also focus at the unit scale. The proposed action emphasizes adaptive management to allow managers to customize range management planning to the specific circumstances of each unit. The planning associated with this adaptive management approach is completed annually by the range staff with input from permittees

and other resource specialists as needed.

Riparian Areas

The specific grazing plan for each unit will be developed in the following manner. First, the order of use is determined.

Second, the resource characteristic on which management will focus is selected for the unit. This is done by evaluating riparian vegetation seral status, bank stability, and woody species regeneration within the unit and determining which one is the most sensitive to livestock grazing. This characteristic is selected as the resource characteristic upon which livestock management within the unit will focus. If it is not clear which characteristic is the most sensitive more than one may be selected.

Third, the management indicator is selected. The management indicator is the management tool that determines the amount of resource use allowed by livestock and will be used to determine when livestock are moved from the unit. The resource characteristic and associated management indicator will be as follows:

- A. Riparian Vegetation Seral Status – The management indicator for this resource characteristic will be an end of growing season hydric greenline stubble height standard.
- B. Bank Stability – The management indicator for this resource characteristic will be an end of grazing season current year bank alteration standard.
- C. Woody Species Regeneration – The management indicator for this resource characteristic will be an end of grazing season woody browse standard measured on willow, aspen, or cottonwood under six feet in height.

Fourth, the end of growing season standard for the management indicator is selected. This is done by estimating how much use can occur on the management indicator while still maintaining or trending toward the objectives. The adaptive management approach associated with this plan requires grazing management plans to be customized to the specific circumstances of each unit or allotment. Subsequently, the plan relies on range managers to set the specific end of season standards for each unit. However, in the absence of unit specific end of season standards the standards identified in this plan will be used (see Table 1).

Table 1. End of season standards to be used in the absence of a pasture specific end of season standard.

Resource Characteristic	Management Indicator	Status of Resource Characteristic	End of Growing Season Standard
Seral Status	Stubble Height	Very Early/Early Seral	8 inches
		Mid Seral	6 inches
		Late Seral/PNC	4 inches
Bank Stability	Bank Alteration	<60% stability	5% annual bank alteration by cattle
		60-79% stability	10% annual bank alteration by cattle
		>80% stability	15% annual bank alteration by cattle
Woody Regeneration	Woody Browse	Insufficient Recruitment	15% incidence of use on terminal leader growth on willow, aspen, or cottonwood less than 6' tall
		Sufficient Recruitment	30% incidence of use on terminal leader growth on willow, aspen, or cottonwood less than 6' tall

Fifth, the trigger for the management indicator is selected. This is done by estimating how much time will be needed to move livestock from the unit before the end of season standard is met.

Finally, any other actions needed to effectively manage the unit are identified.

As additional information becomes available, the resource characteristic on which management is focused, the management indicator, the end of season standard, and the trigger should be changed to reflect the specific circumstances in each pasture.

Implementation monitoring, implementation evaluation, and allotment planning will be completed annually to ensure that grazing plans are implemented correctly and to make any necessary revisions to the grazing management plan.

Effectiveness monitoring and effectiveness evaluations will be completed every five-year to ensure that grazing management is accomplishing the objectives.

Upland Areas

Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve the desired condition for upland areas. Unless otherwise specified in the Allotment Management Plan or Annual Operating Instructions for the permit, the following end of grazing season standards would be met. Height measurements include the highest (or tallest) naturally occurring part of the plant, which may include seed heads. Dominant and co-dominant herbaceous species in each community type will be included in stubble height monitoring.

- **Low sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia arbuscula/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Average Shrub Height: 6 inches

- Average Residual Grass Height: an average of 3 inches on 10 percent of the management unit, an average of 4 inches on 70 percent of the management unit, and greater than or equal to 6 inches on 20 percent of the management unit
- **Low sagebrush/Idaho fescue** (*Artemisia arbuscula/Festuca idahoensis*)
 - Average Shrub Height: 8 inches
 - Average Residual Grass Height: an average of 1 inch on 10 percent of the management unit, an average of 3 inches on 30 percent of the management unit, and greater than or equal to 4 inches on 60 percent of the management unit
- **Mountain big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia tridentata var. vaseyana/pauciflora/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Average Shrub Height: 20 inches
 - Average Residual Grass Height: an average of 3 inches on 10 percent of the management unit, and average of 5 inches on 10 percent and greater than or equal to 7 inches on 80 percent of the management unit
- **Mountain big sagebrush/Idaho fescue** (*Artemisia tridentata var. vaseyana/pauciflora/Festuca idahoensis*)
 - Average Shrub Height: 20 inches
 - Average Residual Grass Height: an average of 3 inches on 20 percent of the management unit, an average of 5 inches on 60 percent of the management unit, and greater than or equal to 7 inches on 20 percent of the management unit
- **Wyoming big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Artemisia tridentate wyomingensis/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Average Shrub Height: 20 inches
 - Average Residual Grass Height: an average of 3 inches on 10 percent of the management unit, and average of 5 inches on 10 percent and greater than or equal to 7 inches on 80 percent of the management unit
- **Antelope bitterbrush/Idaho fescue** (*Purshia tridentata/Festuca idahoensis*)
 - Maintain existing stands with small amounts of decadent shrubs. Avoid heavy use by livestock.

- **Antelope bitterbrush/bluebunch wheatgrass** (*Purshia tridentata/Agropyron spicatum*)
 - Maintain existing stands with small amounts of decadent shrubs. Avoid heavy use by livestock.

Aspen/Forb Communities

Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve the desired condition for aspen/forb communities. Stands, which have conifer encroachment as the primary limiting factor, would be managed to eliminate the conifer component before grazing standards are applied. Unless otherwise specified in the annual operating instructions the following standard would be met:

- No more than 20 percent of current terminal leader growth would be removed on an annual basis.

Change in Livestock Use

Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve the desired condition for bighorn sheep.

- In order to provide protection to bighorn sheep populations within the project area, current grazing use within the Dry Creek and Long Lost allotments would be switched from sheep grazing to cattle grazing.
- Sheep would be removed from the Rock Springs allotment and it would remain vacant until conversion to cattle is made feasible through appropriate range improvements.
- South Creek allotment would remain vacant until such time as the disease transmission issue has been resolved.
- If bighorn sheep populations expand into the Howe and Jumpoff domestic sheep allotments, a change of kind and class of livestock would be evaluated based on the site-specific conditions and a decision would be made at that time.

Soil Productivity/Quality/Hydrologic Function

Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve the Desired Condition for Soil Resources. Regional Soil Quality Guidelines set the limits of disturbance or thresholds beyond which there will be long-term losses in inherent soil productivity or hydrologic function if the guidelines are exceeded. The management goal is to cause as little disturbance as possible, therefore, the guidelines represent the upper limits of allowable disturbance.

- Regional guidelines recommend that no more than 15 percent of an activity area should have detrimental soil conditions after the completion of livestock grazing. In other words, at least 85 percent of an activity area should be in a non-detrimentally disturbed condition.

Water Quality

- Livestock grazing would be managed to achieve state water quality standards and support designated beneficial uses.

Grazing within Dispersed Recreation Areas

- Visual Quality - New permanent structures in a retention area would be cleared first by the Forest Landscape Architect. Also, any existing range structures found to be in a Retention area, would be analyzed, mitigated; or considered for phase out or relocation to more suitable areas over time.
- Recreation Use - In order to resolve conflicts with recreation use, trucking the cattle through the Narrows, limiting the trailing of the cattle to a one-day period, or not allowing trailing on holidays or weekends would be considered. Cows would also be prevented from trailing back down the canyon whenever possible. Livestock would be kept from congregating at Swauger Lake for extended periods of time.

Existing and Future Range Improvements

Specific standards have been developed for structural range improvements that adequately protect wildlife and aquatic habitats.

Based on the results of project monitoring to evaluate the effect of grazing management standards and mitigation measures to achieve Desired Conditions, District managers may determine that adjustments in proposed grazing standards and additional implementation of range improvements are warranted. For this reason, resource impacts relative to implementation of range improvements, specifically: water developments and fencing would be addressed in the effects analysis of this EIS. The analysis would document anticipated resource impacts associated with implementation of these two categories of improvements within the key plant communities identified in the Desired Condition section of the EIS. If needed, the District will evaluate the site-specific effects of implementing these improvements within the project area against the EIS. Where the impacts are consistent with the EIS, the District will document the assessment associated with implementation in the project record and implement the improvements. In cases where the anticipated resource impacts are found to be outside the scope of the EIS, the District will issue a separate decision to implement the improvements supported by appropriate analysis needed to support the decision.

Forest Plan Amendment

The Land and Resource Management Plan for the Challis National Forest would be amended in Management Area 16, Borah Peak (page IV-141). The management direction, "Maintain existing livestock use within the proposed wilderness.¹⁷", would be removed from the management direction.

Public Involvement to Date

Pass Creek Cattle and Horse Allotment, December 1999 – Written comments in response to the December 1999 scoping letter came from individuals, organizations, and other government agencies. Comments received were reviewed for this project.

Preliminary Resource Concerns

Concerns that have been identified through past scoping, from both the public and internal sources include:

- Riparian and Aquatic Habitat
- Terrestrial Wildlife
- Effects to Other Forest Users
- Effects on Vegetation Structure and Composition
- Tribal Treaty Rights
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Management Indicator Species (MIS)

Preliminary Alternatives

For each allotment, a minimum of two alternatives to the proposed action will be analyzed. One of these alternatives discontinues livestock use of the allotment; the second would continue current management. Further alternatives may be developed if an additional management solution is identified that achieves the desired condition, or if scoping results in the identification of significant issues not already identified.

- Alternative 1 – Continue Current Management (No Action) - Grazing would continue on all twenty-one allotments as currently permitted.
- Alternative 2 – (Proposed Action) - Modifications would be made to the no action based on this analysis.
- Alternative 3 – No Grazing - Use of the allotments by domestic livestock is discontinued.

Decision Framework

Based on the environmental analysis, the Forest Supervisor will decide whether or not to continue livestock grazing on the 21 grazing allotment's suitable rangelands in accordance with the standards proposed in the proposed action or as modified by additional mitigation measures and monitoring requirements.

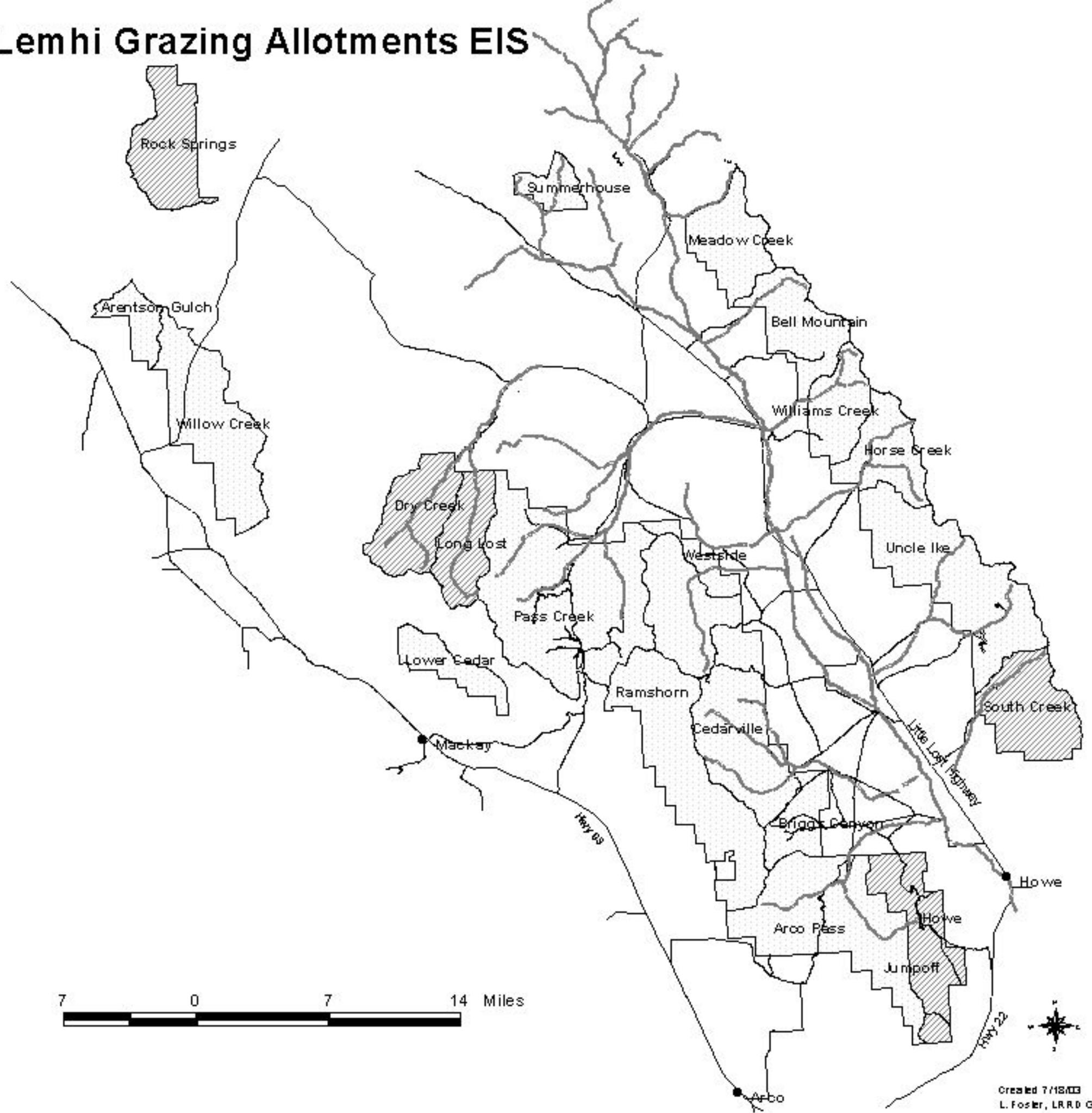
Public Input Needed

Comments are specifically requested on the proposed action effects, preliminary resource concerns, and alternatives. Any suggestions that you have for additional actions to move the habitats and plants communities toward the desired conditions would be welcome. Comments made on this proposal are most helpful if they are received by September 5 and pertain directly to the project area. However, comments are welcome throughout the planning process. Issues identified outside of the scope of the proposal will not be addressed at this level of planning.

The key contact for this proposal is Tony Beke, Project Team Leader. He can be contacted at the Forest Supervisor's Office, Salmon-Challis National Forest, 50 Hwy 93 South, Salmon, Idaho 83467, by phone at (208) 756-5101, or by email at tbeke@fs.fed.us.

An open house will also be held on August 19, 2003 at 6:00PM at the Arco-Butte Business Center, 159 N. Idaho, Arco, Idaho. Comments can also be given during this meeting.

Lost River/Lemhi Grazing Allotments EIS



- Streams
- Roads
- Sheep Allotments
- Cattle Allotments

