Preliminary Environmental Assessment

Sailor Bar Allotment

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Forest Service
Shasta-Trinity National Forest
Shasta, Trinity, Siskiyou and Tehama Counties, California

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Section I – Proposed Action and Purpose and Need

A. Introduction

The Shasta-Trinity National Forest proposes to continue to authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar grazing allotment under the administrative designation of a forage reserve allotment. The Sailor Bar Allotment was first permitted in 1968. The allotment has historically been administered under temporary grazing permits. In 2000, the allotment became vacant, awaiting National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis. The allotment is located in Trinity County in northern California (see Figure 1 - Location Map).

B. Proposed Action

The proposed action is to continue to authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar grazing allotment under the administrative designation of a forage reserve allotment. Forage Reserve allotments are a designation for allotments on which there is no current term permit obligation for some or all of the estimated livestock grazing capacity and where there has been a determination made to use the available forage on the allotment to enhance management flexibility for authorized livestock use.

The grazing capacity on the Sailor Bar allotment would be for a maximum of 100 aums. The season of use would remain the same, June 1st to October 31st. Under forage reserve status, livestock grazing on the Sailor Bar allotment will only occur under the following conditions:

1. Grazing will be permitted on the Sailor Bar allotment when fire (wildfire or wildland fire use) or vegetation treatment on another allotment would prevent that allotment from being grazed by livestock;
2. In a 10-year period, allotment will only be used a maximum of 5 years, allowing 1 year of rest between grazing years;
3. The grazing capacity for grazing years will not exceed 100 aums;
4. The Sailor Bar allotment will be managed to ensure continued upward trend in rangeland and watershed conditions

C. Purpose and Need

Livestock have grazed in the Big Bar area since the early 1900's. The Sailor Bar allotment had been permitted since 1968 under the administration of a temporary grazing permit. In 1995, Public Law 104-19 required the Forest Service to complete NEPA on all grazing allotments by 2010. Under this same law, new permits could not be issued until NEPA was completed. In 2000, the Sailor Bar allotment became vacant. Since 2000, no new permits have been issued for the Sailor Bar allotment since NEPA had not been completed.

There are currently three active allotments in the vicinity of Sailor Bar. The permittees grazing livestock on these allotments have a need to implement a grazing program that is economical and sustainable. The Forest Service has a need to meet multiple-use objectives while ensuring that healthy

rangeland conditions are achieved as directed in the Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). The purpose of the proposed action, therefore, is to authorize livestock grazing on the Sailor Bar allotment as a forage reserve allotment. The Sailor Bar allotment could then be used by the existing permittees in the vicinity if the conditions under Proposed Action are met.

D. Decision to Be Made

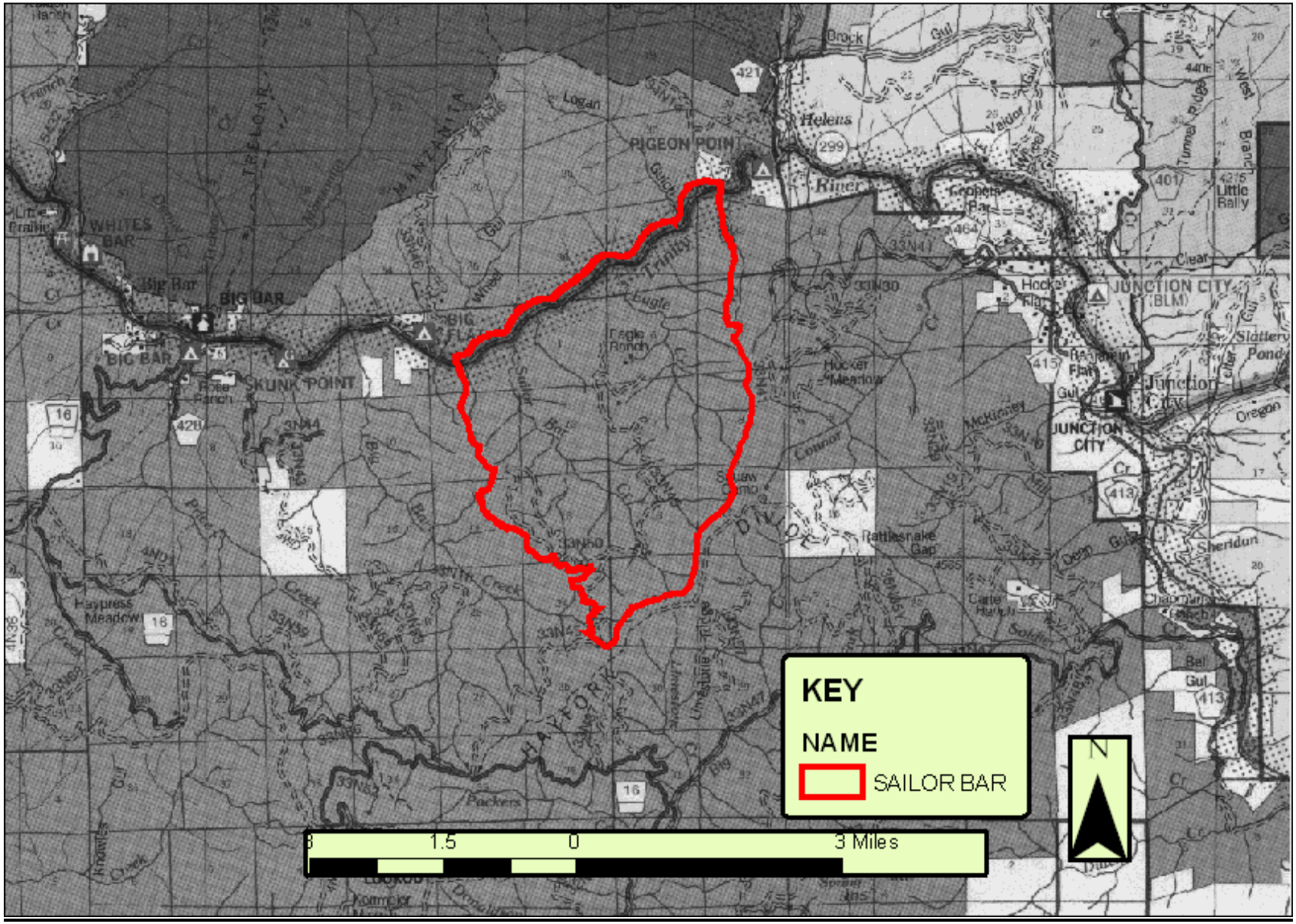
The "Responsible Official" is J. Sharon Heywood, Forest Supervisor, Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The decision to be made is whether to authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar allotment as a forage reserve, close the allotment and remove it from the Forest Plan, or take no action.

E. Management Direction

Development of this document follows the implementing regulation of the *National Forest Management Act* of 1976 (*NFMA*); *Title 36: Code of Federal Regulations* Part 219 (36 CFR 219); the *National Environmental Policy Act* of 1969 (NEPA); and *Title 40: Code of Federal Regulations*, Parts 1500-1508. This EA is tiered to the *Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement*, see Forest Plan Direction below.

The Sailor Bar Allotment is located south of Highway 299 near Big Bar, CA, see Fig. 1. The project area is included in Management Area 15 (Trinity River) of the Shasta-Trinity National Forests LRMP (USDA, 1995).

Figure 1 - Location Map



F. Forest Plan Direction

National Forest management is guided by laws, regulations and policies that provide the basic structure used to develop Regional Guidelines, Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP), and site-specific documents.

Site-specific decision documents use Forest-wide direction and Management area direction. This direction is found within the LRMP.

The LRMP permits grazing on all existing or active allotments. Forest Goal: "Manage rangeland vegetation to provide for healthy ecosystems and to make forage available on a sustainable basis for use by livestock and wildlife." (LRMP p. 4-5)

Section II – Issues and Alternatives

This section explains the process used to solicit public comments and to identify issues pertinent to the proposal and alternatives to the proposal. This section describes the specific alternatives considered in the analysis, comparing and contrasting their attributes.

A. Public Involvement

A public-involvement process was initiated to assist the Forest Service in identifying issues to be addressed in the environmental analysis. An interdisciplinary team was assembled and, together, systematically examined each issue raised during public involvement. Interested and affected parties were contacted by the following actions:

- The project was listed in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA), starting in January 2006.
- A scoping letter dated February 15, 2006 was sent to individuals and organizations who have expressed interest in the project, local Native American tribes, county, state and federal agencies with jurisdiction in the area, the affected and adjacent grazing permittees of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, landowners within a 1 mile radius of the allotments, and anyone who responded to the publication of the project in the SOPA (Scoping Mailing List, Project File, USFS, 2006). A public notice announcing the project was published in the Record Searchlight on February 17, 2006.

A list of those contacted, including comments received from the public involvement process, are located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Office.

B. Issues

An issue is a point of discussion, debate or dispute related to the environmental effects that will occur as a result of implementing the proposed action. Key issues are used to formulate alternatives, prescribe mitigation measures or analyze environmental effects.

No issues, key or non-key, were raised during the scoping process for the Sailor Bar Allotment. For more details on the scoping process see the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Office.

C. Alternatives

The following three alternatives received detailed study:

Alternative 1: No Grazing on Sailor Bar Allotment

The No Grazing Alternative is mandated for comparison purposes, although it is assumed that private lands contained within the project area would continue to be grazed under the no action alternative and that wildlife would still graze in the project area.

Alternative 2: Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve

Discussed under the Proposed Action.

Alternative 3: Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the historic management

Alternative 3 does not meet the LRMP. The LRMP permits grazing on all existing or active allotments. Forest Goal: “Manage rangeland vegetation to provide for healthy ecosystems and to make forage available on a sustainable basis for use by livestock and wildlife.” (LRMP p. 4-5)

Monitoring and analysis on the Sailor Bar allotment have determined that there is a need to rest the Sailor Bar allotment every other year. The historic management of the Sailor Bar allotment did not include 1 year of rest between grazing years, as a result some areas on the allotment did not meet the LRMP standards. It was determined that due to the naturally unstable soils in the allotment area, resting the allotment for 1 year between grazing years would provide for healthy ecosystems and make forage available on a sustainable basis for both wildlife and livestock.

Section III – Environmental Consequences

This section discloses the direct, indirect and cumulative environmental consequences of implementing each alternative.

Interdisciplinary team members contributing to the analysis in this section, as well as in the rest of this document, relied on field work, literature reviews, published research findings, consultation with other experts and specialists, and their own training and experience. Specific references used are cited. Other related sources not specifically mentioned in the text are included in the planning records. The assessment of effects assumes compliance with Forest Service Regional standards and guidelines and policies, and Federal laws and Forest Service national policies.

A. Range

Grazing has been permitted within the Big Bar area since the early 1900's. Today, there are only a small number of Forest Service allotments in the area. The three active allotments in the vicinity are permitted for 20-25 cow/calf pairs. In the last 5 years, one permittee was unable to use their allotment due to a wildland fire. Records show the area to have a high fire hazard potential. The Sailor Bar allotment is located close enough to the other three active allotments to be a suitable alternative if one of the other allotments is not available.

In 1994 the number of cattle permitted on the Sailor Bar Allotment was decreased to 15 cow calf pairs. This was due to signs of overgrazing at the previous permitted number of 38 cow/calf pairs. In 1999, an increase of 5 cow/calf pairs were allowed to graze. Monitoring that year showed some signs of overuse. It was determined that 15 cow/calf pairs for 5 months was a more appropriate stocking to meet LRMP standards.

Grazing Capacity

A factor of 1.32 is used to calculate animal unit months for a cow/calf pair. We can determine grazing capacity by multiplying the number of cow/calf pairs by the factor of 1.32 and the number of months the allotment is used.

15 cow/calf pairs X 1.32 X 5 months = 100 Animal Unit Months (AUMS)

The grazing capacity for the Sailor Bar Allotment is 100 AUMS.

Alternative 1 – No Grazing

There would be no livestock permitted to graze the Sailor Bar allotment. On private lands within the allotment private grazing may occur. In the event of a fire or other disturbance on a nearby allotment, Sailor Bar could not be used as a forage reserve.

Alternative 2 – Authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve Allotment

Livestock would be permitted to graze the Sailor Bar Allotment every other year if needed. The maximum grazing capacity permitted would be 100 AUMS. This alternative would support existing permittees in the area by allowing them to continue their ranching operation despite disturbances such as wildland fires, prescribed fires or other vegetation treatment that would occur on their permitted allotment.

Alternative 3 – Authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar allotment under the historic direction

The last permit for the Sailor Bar Allotment was for 20 cow/calf pairs. Since the Regional lower limit requirement is 25, a new permit could not be authorized.

B. Soils

The Proposed Action was analyzed to determine the impacts to soil components in the project area. A more comprehensive analysis is included in the Soils Report located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta Trinity National Forest Office.

Soils within this allotment have predominately formed in metasedimentary colluvium and dormant landslides. Soils formed in metasediments are generally moderately deep-to-deep (20-60 inches) gravelly loams to very gravelly clay loams (Holland and Nenus soils, see Sailor Bar Soils Report for on-site soil pit descriptions).

Alternative 1, No Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment

With no action taken, the effect on the soil resource would be no new disturbances and the maintenance of natural soil biological processes. Without grazing management, rangeland vegetation would not be available to provide for healthy ecosystems and to make forage available on a sustainable basis for use by livestock and wildlife.

Existing soil cover exceeds SQS guidelines and compaction in open meadows is only confined to concentration areas and is less than 10% of the allotment. The level of soil disturbance observed in the project area is low and is due to natural causes.

Evaluation of the allotment indicates that the No Action Alternative has a low probability of meeting the project emphasis of providing excess forage for livestock, based upon current conditions.

Alternative 2 – Authorize grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment as a forage reserve

Analysis shows that the soils in this area are moderately deep to deep (20 to 60 inches) and soil erosion levels are high to moderate with bare soil surfaces. With a soil cover of 70% on all slopes, this yields a moderately low to low erosion hazard rating. Current soil cover conditions are 90 to 100% so a reduction in soil cover by 10 to 15% depending upon location would have little effect. No observable soil erosion was detected in three separate field visits to the allotment.

Given current site conditions alternative 2 indicates the probability of these activities meeting the three soil evaluation criteria used to rate soil effects are high and acceptable for this project. Under the forage reserve management of 100 AUMS with one year of rest in between grazing years, the Sailor Bar allotment should continue to provide adequate forage for domestic livestock and wildlife.

C. Hydrology

A more comprehensive analysis of the hydrology of the Price Creek Allotment is included in the Hydrology Specialist Report, located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta Trinity National Forest Office.

The project is located within the Eagle Creek watershed. Eagle Creek is a north-facing drainage with a high gradient channel that rapidly transports debris to the Trinity River. The drainage pattern is bedrock controlled, and the stream channel is actively incising.

Field Observations

The site was visited on October 30, 2000 to observe the grazing allotment boundaries, the roads accessing the allotment, and the active translational-rotational slide. The toe of the slide has created a low gradient meadow where the majority of the cattle will be concentrated. Several springs discharge water at the head of the meadow and feed low gradient perennial drainages. Active scarps are present at the head, middle, and toe of the landslide (i.e., meadow) with as much as 4 feet of offset. Based on field observations made by Carol Powell, the majority of the movement occurs during wet periods. The last known movement occurred in 1997.

The drainages dissecting the landslide show signs of active head-cutting and have irregular drainage patterns. Woody vegetation at the toe of the landslide are severely pistol butted and jack strawed. Active headcuts were observed in channels near the toe of the landslide and tend to be below the break slope.

Mitigation and Monitoring Recommendations

To help protect the water quality of streams flowing through and adjacent to the grazing allotment, the following mitigation and monitoring recommendations are provided.

This area is naturally unstable and continues to creep downslope providing a chronic source of sediment to Eagle Creek. To reduce the potential impacts of grazing above and within the unstable area, I recommend a combination of fencing and rest in between grazing years. Using fence enclosures to prevent cattle from trampling, compacting, and removing vegetation from the unstable slope will help reduce sediment to Eagle Creek. The type of fence depends on the funding available; however, a mobile electric fence is likely the best option. In addition, a year of rest in between grazing years will also help vegetation stabilize the area and reduce sedimentation in Eagle Creek.

Project implementation monitoring should be used to verify that the fence remains operational during the grazing period. This monitoring will help ensure that cattle are not allowed to graze the unstable slope. Project effectiveness monitoring should be used to verify that the fence is properly placed and that the unstable slope is adequately protected. Photo points and ocular field inventory techniques are the most cost effective methods for effectiveness monitoring.

Alternative 1 – No Grazing on Sailor Bar Allotment

Since the area is naturally unstable it will continue to creep downslope transporting sediment to Eagle Creek. Fencing will not be required if there is no grazing.

Alternative 2 – Authorize Grazing on Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve

Recommended mitigation measures of fencing the toe of the slide when cattle are present, alternating years of grazing and continuous monitoring would be implemented with this alternative. Grazing under this direction will meet LRMP standards.

Alternative 3 – Authorize Grazing on Sailor Bar Allotment under the historic management

Fencing would not be done to help reduce the amount of sediment going into Eagle Creek. In addition, the Sailor Bar Allotment would be allowed to be grazed every year without a required one year of rest. Monitoring would continue.

D. Botany

A more comprehensive analysis of species occurrence habitat and effects for sensitive, endemic and invasive species is included in the Biological Evaluation for Sensitive Plants located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta Trinity National Forest Office.

Up to 38 head of cattle (cow/calf pairs) were grazed for five months many seasons in the 1980's, concentrating in Eagle Ranch Meadow. Earlier in the century non-native forage grasses were planted extensively by homesteaders. The most dramatic alterations to plant communities started during this period of high activity and full recovery has not been achieved to date, despite lower numbers of livestock.

A Noxious Weed Risk Assessment was prepared for the proposed action. The assessment concluded that while the project has moderate risk because of the presence of noxious weeds and routes of entry for those weeds, the current standards and guidelines with mitigations to reduce impacts of grazing would present low or no risk of increasing introductions or spread of noxious weeds. Permittees will be required to use only certified weed free hay for their ranching operation on the allotment.

Survey and Manage - Plants

The proposed project area has suitable habitat for Brownie lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium fasciculatum)* and mountain lady's-slipper *(Cypripedium montanum)* in riparian areas. No *Cypripedium* species were found during field surveys in 1999, 2000, and 2001. All riparian areas except small portions of Eagle Creek and some of the tributaries directly adjacent to it were surveyed. The likelihood of adverse impacts to these two species is low because of the low number of cattle being permitted and due to the lack of individuals in the allotment. No effects are expected to this species from the proposed action.

Alternative 1 – No Grazing on Sailor Bar Allotment

Because of the lack of any Sensitive plant populations in the allotment, there would be no difference in direct impacts between the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives. Under this alternative, no

grazing permits would be issued. Native plant habitat and existing populations would remain stable. Without additional treatments, established invasive weed and non-native species would still be present and presumably continue to grow and expand.

Upland habitats would see little difference in quality in comparison to implementation of the proposed action. Impacts to plants in these habitats are light because of the lack of available forage in habitats supporting Sensitive and Forest Plan Endemic plant populations.

Wetland habitats would benefit from implementation of the no action alternative.

Alternative 2 – Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve

In the most recent permit (1990's), 20 head of cattle were permitted for 5 months, based on more extensive transitory range in plantations created at that time. This proposal would reduce numbers even more to 15 head of livestock, (cow/calf pairs) further reducing impacts to Eagle Ranch Meadow and reducing impacts from livestock to a negligible level. Fewer impacts from livestock will allow some recovery of degraded areas in Eagle Ranch meadow and the small meadow southwest of it, reducing suitable habitat for invasive weeds. The proposed action reduced the number of permitted livestock and this will reduce creation of suitable habitat for weeds. In addition, adding a year of rest in between grazing years will also further reduce impacts from grazing to a negligible level. In any case, the LRMP standards and guidelines for utilization are adequate to protect and maintain native plant community structure and diversity, as well as adhere to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy standards and guidelines.

Alternative 3 – Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the historic management

Alternative 3 will not meet LRMP standards and guidelines. Monitoring has shown that the stocking of 20 cow/calf pairs will result in overuse in some areas.

E. Cultural Resources

A more comprehensive analysis of cultural resources is included in the Archaeology Report, located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta Trinity National Forest Office.

Archaeological survey work and ethnographic research determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances for archaeological or historic properties or areas within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this project. Consequently, in direction with Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 (Chapter 30) no extraordinary circumstances related to American Indian religious, cultural, or archaeological sites exists in the APE.

Alternative 1, No Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment

This alternative would have no effect to historic properties.

Alternative 2 – Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve

Continued livestock grazing will have no affect to historic properties and has been exempted under Region 5 Section 106 PA.

Alternative 3 – Authorize Grazing on the Saior Bar Allotment under the historic management

Continued livestock grazing will have no affect to historic properties and has been exempted under Region 5 Section 106 PA.

F. Fisheries

A more comprehensive analysis of species occurrence habitat and effects for fish species is included in the Fisheries Specialist Report, located in the Sailor Bar Range Analysis project file at the Shasta Trinity National Forest Office.

A. Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES), and Management Indicator (MIS) Fish Species

Naturally produced coho salmon inhabiting the Trinity River basin occur within a broad Southern Oregon-Northern California Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit (SONCCESU) described by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) with regard to the Endangered Species Act. These coho salmon have been listed by the NMFS as threatened under the Endangered Species Act on June 6, 1997 (62 FR 24588). The Klamath Mountain Province Steelhead under went a status review and NMFS determined that the KMP steelhead is not warranted for listing under the endangered species act on March 28, 2001.

The Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1994) uses the concept of a single Management Indicator Species to represent groups of species. The following species were chosen as Management Indicator Species for the Anadromous Fish Assemblage:

- Anadromous Commercial/Recreational Sport Fish – Spring Run Chinook
- Anadromous Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Sport Fish – Spring-run (Summer) Steelhead

There are two perennial streams within the Sailor Bar grazing allotment, Eagle Creek and Sailor Bar Creek. Barriers to anadromous salmonids exist near the mouths of both creeks preventing salmon and steelhead from accessing streams in the allotment area.

Resident Rainbow Trout occur in low numbers within Eagle Creek and Sailor Bar Creek in the allotment area.

B. Critical Habitat and Essential Fish Habitat

The National Marine Fisheries Service designated critical habitat for coho salmon on May 5, 1999. Critical habitat includes all stream reaches accessible to anadromous fishes, irregardless of the presence or absence of coho salmon. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act (MSFCMA), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (public Law 104-297), designates Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for commercially valuable fish species as those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, and growth to maturity. Critical Habitat and Essential Fish Habitat do not occur within the analysis area.

Alternative One - No Grazing

Direct and Indirect Effects

The elimination of grazing in the Sailor Bar range allotment would eliminate any grazing related effects on anadromous salmonids. Since current effects are minimal this would likely result in no distinguishable improvement in habitat conditions or fish populations.

Cumulative Effects – See Alternative 2.

Alternatives 2 & 3 – Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the direction of a Forage Reserve & Authorize Grazing on the Sailor Bar Allotment under the historic management direction

C. Direct and Indirect Effects

Areas where direct interaction between resident fish and livestock may occur are very limited. There is no possibility of direct interaction between livestock and listed fish. Indirect effects to listed fish from grazing livestock in riparian or near aquatic habitats are expected to be negligible.

D. Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects to fish are most often expressed as incremental changes (most often decreases) to habitat features. Key features that may be changed over time include timing and quantity of stream flow, fine sediment and large woody debris. Change of key habitat features may lead to overall reduced habitat quality over time. Within the analysis area likely cumulative effects include: higher peak stream flows as a result of roads, skid trails, and compacted soils increasing the drainage efficiency of the watershed, lower summer base flows due to an increase in vegetation, lowered levels of large woody debris due to riparian timber harvest and stream clearing, and an increase in fine sediment due to ground disturbance. Due to the small size of streams within the analysis area, relative to the Trinity River at the confluences, cumulative effects resulting from management within Eagle Creek and Sailor Bar Creek are likely negligible at the scale of the Trinity River.

E. Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation

Existing consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service has determined that the Sailor Bar allotment "May affect but is not likely to adversely affect" the SONCC coho salmon.

F. Consequences Relative to Significance Elements

In 1978, the council on Environmental Quality disseminated regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act. These regulations include a definition of the word "significantly." The definition includes consideration of context and of ten elements of intensity.

Context

The context of the proposed action is limited to the southern portion of the Trinity portion of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, specific location is shown on the map. The Shasta-Trinity National Forest has 22 allotments across the entire Forest. This analysis is concentrated on 1 allotment, Sailor Bar. Out of a twelve-month year, this allotment is grazed no more than 5 months each year. The amount of time is also dependant upon the condition of the range and the forage needed by the permittee, as long as it is within the dates specified in the permit. The allotment covers an area of approximately 6,585 acres and a total of 20 cow/calf pairs were previously permitted. In terms of the affected area, the proposed action affects a minute portion of the total Forest area, approximately .5%. Even in the context of seasonality and duration of activities, analysis prepared in support of this EA, (Biological Evaluations, Management Indicator Species Assessment, Weed Risk Assessment, Biological Assessments, etc.) indicate that the proposed action would not pose significant short- or long-term effects.

Intensity

1. **Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.**
   Effects determinations are summarized in supporting analysis and in Section III of this analysis. Beneficial effects have not, however been used to offset or compensate for potential adverse effects.
   Some potential short-term adverse may include:
   - Crushing or trampling of sensitive plant or animal individuals.
   - Compaction of soil in wet, moist areas.

   However, Shasta-Trinity National Forest's LRMP standards and guidelines and project specific protection measures have been designed to reduce these impacts. Long-term benefits to administering this forage reserve include providing economic stability for the permittees who use the allotment.
2. **The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.**
   Water quality as it relates to public health is influenced by multiple factors within the Eagle Creek watershed. Livestock grazing has a very small influence on water quality within the watershed, given the numbers of livestock proposed for grazing. If all other perturbations

within the watershed were removed, by the time water leaves the watershed, impacts from livestock on water quality would be undetectable. Public safety is not affected by livestock. There are no recorded instances of human safety being compromised by the presence of livestock on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers (Wild & Scenic Rivers), or ecologically critical areas.**
   The project would maintain existing unique features. It has been determined that the proposed project would not further effect cultural resources located within the area. Livestock are not expected to disturb park lands, farmlands or Wild & Scenic Rivers because no park lands or farmlands are present within the grazing allotment.
4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.**
   The EA and supporting documents were written by an interdisciplinary team of Forest Service resource specialists in consultation with outside interests and agencies. Their conclusions were formulated using existing data, scientific literature and site conditions within the allotments. Research identifying adverse impacts, typically are linked with abusive grazing practices. The allotment under analysis is currently grazed on managed systems with light use.
5. **Degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.**
   Results of the action are not considered highly uncertain, nor do they represent unique or unknown risks. Grazing by domestic livestock has occurred on this allotment for over 100 years and have been reduced to a fraction of historic levels. Monitoring and documentation of grazing levels and effects have been collected since the early 1900's. The Shasta-Trinity National Forest has allowed livestock grazing since its inception, thus there are no unknown or unique risks involved in implementing this proposed action. In addition, implementation of the standards and guidelines would reduce any potential impacts to the point of non-significant.
6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future action with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about future consideration.**
   A precedent is not being set for future decisions with significant effects. The proposed action would continue an already existing action. Any future decisions would need to consider all relevant scientific and site-specific information available at the time and would require full compliance with the NEPA.
7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.**
   Factors influencing upland vegetation include dispersed recreation, drought, road construction, fire (wild and prescribed), timber harvest and wildlife grazing. Little to no

cumulative effects are expected, however, because effects from grazing have been minimal and for the most part difficult to detect, particularly at a watershed scale. Given the numerous activities within the analysis area and the few numbers of livestock grazing the allotment, no detectable effects were determined from livestock grazing as proposed, and therefore, no cumulative effects were detectable either.

Implementing Best Management Practices, soil and water conservation strategies, Forest Plan standards and guidelines, including ACS objectives, minimizes site-specific concerns.

8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.**

   The proposed action would have no effect on cultural resources, Archeological Reconnaissance Report, completed by the Hayfork District Archeologist (2005) is in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The proposed action would provide for standard protection measures to insure that “eligible” historic properties are not impacted and “no effect” to historic properties is expected. Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Effects.

9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA).**

10. **Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.**

    This action will not violate any Federal, State or local environmental protection law, agency policy or management direction.

G. Findings Required by other Applicable Laws and Regulations

Executive Order #12898

Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations provides for agencies to determine if a proposed action will result in disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations. Those effects must encompass both human health and environmental effects, and must include the cumulative and indirect effects on a community.

Authorizing grazing on Sailor Bar under the direction of a forage reserve as proposed, would have no anticipated effects to disadvantaged communities with minority or low-income populations, either cumulatively or indirectly. The project area is in close proximity to the rural communities of Big Bar and Burnt Ranch. The Sailor Bar Allotment would be managed as a forage reserve for permittees in the nearby communities, allowing them to continue their ranching operation when their permitted allotment is not available for use.

Invasive Species Presidential Executive Order # 13112

This Executive Order directs Federal Agencies to identify and carry out actions to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species affected by potential spread of invasive species.

A Noxious Weed Risk Assessment was prepared for the proposed action. The assessment concluded that while the project has moderate risk because of the presence of noxious weeds and routes of entry for those weeds, the current standards and guidelines with mitigations to reduce impacts of grazing would present low or no risk of increasing introductions or spread of noxious weeds.

H. List of Agencies and Others Consulted

Federal Agencies Consulted

- National Marine Fisheries Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

State Agencies Consulted

- State Historic Preservation Office
- California Department of Fish & Game

Others

- Mr. and Mrs. James Harrigan
- Mr. Carrol Powell (USFS, Retired)
- Humboldt State University

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