

**STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY RANGELANDS  
AND  
GUIDELINES FOR LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT  
FOR THE  
PUBLIC LANDS ADMINISTERED BY THE  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
IN THE STATE OF WYOMING**

**INTRODUCTION**

According to the Department of the Interior's final rule for grazing administration, effective August 21, 1995, the Wyoming Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Director is responsible for the development of standards for healthy rangelands and guidelines for livestock grazing management on 18 million acres of Wyoming's public rangelands. The development and application of these standards and guidelines are to achieve the four fundamentals of rangeland health outlined in the grazing regulations (43 CFR 4180.1). Those four fundamentals are: (1) watersheds are functioning properly; (2) water, nutrients, and energy are cycling properly; (3) water quality meets State standards; and (4) habitat for special status species is protected.

Standards address the health, productivity, and sustainability of the BLM administered public rangelands and represent the minimum acceptable conditions for the public rangelands. The standards apply to all resource uses on public lands. Their application will be determined as use-specific guidelines are developed. Standards are synonymous with goals and are observed on a landscape scale. They describe healthy rangelands rather than important rangeland by-products. The achievement of a standard is determined by observing, measuring, and monitoring appropriate indicators. An indicator is a component of a system whose characteristics (e.g., presence, absence, quantity, and distribution) can be observed, measured, or monitored based on sound scientific principles.

Guidelines provide for, and guide the development and implementation of, reasonable, responsible, and cost-effective management practices at the grazing allotment and watershed level. The guidelines in this document apply specifically to livestock grazing management practices on the BLM administered public lands. These management practices will either maintain existing desirable conditions or move rangelands toward statewide standards within reasonable timeframes. Appropriate guidelines will ensure that the resultant management practices reflect the potential for the watershed, consider other uses and natural influences, and balance resource goals with social, cultural/historic, and economic opportunities to sustain viable local communities. Guidelines, like standards, apply statewide.

Implementation of the Wyoming standards and guidelines will generally be done in the following manner. Grazing allotments or groups of allotments in a watershed will be reviewed based on the BLM's current allotment categorization and prioritization process. Allotments with existing management plans and high-priority allotments will be reviewed first. Lower priority allotments will be reviewed as time allows or when it becomes necessary for BLM to review the permit/lease for other reasons such as permit/lease transfers, permittee/lessee requests for change in use, etc. The permittees and interested publics will be notified when allotments are scheduled for review and encouraged to participate in the review. The review will first determine if an allotment meets each of the six standards. If it does, no further action will be necessary. If any of the standards aren't being met, then rationale explaining the contributing factors will be prepared. If livestock grazing practices are found to be among the contributing factors, corrective actions consistent with the guidelines will be developed and implemented before the next grazing season in accordance with 43

CFR 4180. If a lack of data prohibits the reviewers from determining if a standard is being met, then a strategy will be developed to acquire the data in a timely manner.

On a continuing basis, the Standards for Healthy Rangelands will direct on-the-ground management on the public lands. They will serve to focus the on-going development and implementation of activity plans toward the maintenance or the attainment of healthy rangelands.

Quantifiable resource objectives and specific management practices to maintain or achieve the standards will be developed at the local BLM District and Resource Area levels and will consider all reasonable and practical options available to achieve desired results on a watershed or grazing allotment scale. The objectives shall be reflected in site-specific activity or implementation plans as well as in livestock grazing permits/leases for the public lands. These objectives and practices may be developed formally or informally through mechanisms available and suited to local needs (such as Coordinated Resource Management [CRM] efforts).

The development and implementation of standards and guidelines will enable on-the-ground management of the public rangelands to maintain a clear and responsible focus on both the health of the land and its dependent natural and human communities. This development and implementation will ensure that any mechanisms currently being employed or that may be developed in the future will maintain a consistent focus on these essential concerns. This development and implementation will also enable immediate attention to be brought to bear on existing resource concerns.

These standards and guidelines are compatible with BLM's three-tiered land use planning process. The first tier includes the laws, regulations, and policies governing BLM's administration and management of the public lands and their uses. The previously mentioned fundamentals of rangeland health specified in 43 CFR 4180.1, the requirement for BLM to develop these state (or regional) standards and guidelines, and the standards and guidelines themselves, are part of this first tier. Also part of this first tier are the specific requirements of various Federal laws and the objectives of 43 CFR 4100.2 that require BLM to consider the social and economic well-being of the local communities in its management process.

These standards and guidelines will provide for statewide consistency and guidance in the preparation, amendment, and maintenance of BLM land use plans, which represent the second tier of the planning process. The BLM land use plans provide general allocation decisions concerning the kinds of resource and land uses that can occur on the BLM administered public lands, where they can occur, and the types of conditional requirements under which they can occur. In general, the standards will be the basis for development of planning area-specific management objectives concerning rangeland health and productivity, and the guidelines will direct development of livestock grazing management actions to help accomplish those objectives.

The third tier of the BLM planning process, activity or implementation planning, is directed by the applicable land use plan and, therefore, by the standards and guidelines. The standards and guidelines, as BLM statewide policy, will also directly guide development of the site-specific objectives and the methods and practices used to implement the land use plan decisions. Activity or implementation plans contain objectives which describe the site-specific conditions desired. Grazing permits/leases for the public lands contain terms and conditions which describe specific actions required to attain or maintain the desired conditions. Through monitoring and evaluation, the BLM, grazing permittees, and other interested parties determine if progress is being made to achieve activity plan objectives.

Wyoming rangelands support a variety of uses which are of significant economic importance to the State and its communities. These uses include oil and gas production, mining, recreation and tourism, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and livestock grazing. Rangelands also provide amenities which contribute to the quality of life in Wyoming such as open spaces, solitude, and opportunities for personal renewal. Wyoming's rangelands should be managed with consideration of the State's historical, cultural, and social development and in a manner which contributes to a diverse, balanced, competitive, and resilient economy in order to provide opportunity for economic development. Healthy rangelands can best sustain these uses.

To varying degrees, BLM management of the public lands and resources plays a role in the social and economic well-being of Wyoming communities. The National Environmental Policy Act (part of the above-mentioned first planning tier) and various other laws and regulations mandate the BLM to analyze the socioeconomic impacts of actions occurring on public rangelands. These analyses occur during the environmental analysis process of land use planning (second planning tier), where resource allocations are made, and during the environmental analysis process of activity or implementation planning (third planning tier). In many situations, factors that affect the social and economic well-being of local communities extend far beyond the scope of BLM management or individual public land users' responsibilities. In addition, since standards relate primarily to physical and biological features of the landscape, it is very difficult to provide measurable socioeconomic indicators that relate to the health of rangelands. It is important that standards be realistic and within the control of the land manager and users to achieve.

## STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY PUBLIC RANGELANDS

### STANDARD #1

**Within the potential of the ecological site (soil type, landform, climate, and geology), soils are stable and allow for water infiltration to provide for optimal plant growth and minimal surface runoff.**

#### THIS MEANS THAT:

The hydrologic cycle will be supported by providing for water capture, storage, and sustained release. Adequate energy flow and nutrient cycling through the system will be achieved as optimal plant growth occurs. Plant communities are highly varied within Wyoming.

#### INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Water infiltration rates
- Soil compaction
- Erosion (rills, gullies, pedestals, capping)
- Soil micro-organisms
- Vegetative cover (gully bottoms and slopes)
- Bare ground and litter

The above indicators are applied as appropriate to the potential of the ecological site.

### STANDARD #2

**Riparian and wetland vegetation has structural, age, and species diversity characteristic of the stage of channel succession and is resilient and capable of recovering from natural and human disturbance in order to provide forage and cover, capture sediment, dissipate energy, and provide for groundwater recharge.**

#### THIS MEANS THAT:

Wyoming has highly varied riparian and wetland systems on public lands. These systems vary from large rivers to small streams and from springs to large wet meadows. These systems are in various stages of natural cycles and may also reflect other disturbance that is either localized or widespread throughout the watershed. Riparian vegetation captures sediments and associated materials, thus enhancing the nutrient cycle by capturing and utilizing nutrients that would otherwise move through a system unused.

#### INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Erosion and deposition rate
- Channel morphology and floodplain function
- Channel succession and erosion cycle
- Vegetative cover
- Plant composition and diversity (species, age class, structure, successional stages, desired plant community, etc.)
- Bank stability
- Woody debris and instream cover
- Bare ground and litter

The above indicators are applied as appropriate to the potential of the ecological site.

### STANDARD #3

**Upland vegetation on each ecological site consists of plant communities appropriate to the site which are resilient, diverse, and able to recover from natural and human disturbance.**

#### THIS MEANS THAT:

In order to maintain desirable conditions and/or recover from disturbance within acceptable timeframes, plant communities must have the components present to support the nutrient cycle and adequate energy flow. Plants depend on nutrients in the soil and energy derived from sunlight. Nutrients stored in the soil are used over and over by plants, animals, and microorganisms. The amount of nutrients available and the speed with which they cycle among plants, animals, and the soil are fundamental components of rangeland health. The amount, timing, and distribution of energy captured through photosynthesis are fundamental to the function of rangeland ecosystems.

INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Vegetative cover
- Plant composition and diversity (species, age class, structure, successional stages, desired plant community, etc.)
- Bare ground and litter
- Erosion (rills, gullies, pedestals, capping)
- Water infiltration rates

The above indicators are applied as appropriate to the potential of the ecological site.

#### STANDARD #4

**Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and a diversity of native plant and animal species appropriate to the habitat. Habitats that support or could support threatened species, endangered species, species of special concern, or sensitive species will be maintained or enhanced.**

THIS MEANS THAT:

The management of Wyoming rangelands will achieve or maintain adequate habitat conditions that support diverse plant and animal species. These may include listed threatened or endangered species (U.S. Fish and Wildlife-designated), species of special concern (BLM-designated), and other sensitive species (State of Wyoming-designated). The intent of this standard is to allow the listed species to recover and be delisted, and to avoid or prevent additional species becoming listed.

INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Noxious weeds
- Species diversity
- Age class distribution
- All indicators associated with the upland and riparian standards;
- Population trends
- Habitat fragmentation

The above indicators are applied as appropriate to the potential of the ecological site.

#### STANDARD #5

**Water quality meets State standards.**

THIS MEANS THAT:

The State of Wyoming is authorized to administer the Clean Water Act. BLM management actions or use authorizations will comply with all Federal and State water quality laws, rules and regulations to address water quality issues that originate on public lands. Provisions for the establishment of water quality standards are included in the Clean Water Act, as amended, and the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act, as amended. Regulations are found in Part 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations and in *Wyoming's Water Quality Rules and Regulations*. The latter regulations contain Quality Standards for Wyoming Surface Waters.

Natural processes and human actions influence the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of water. Water quality varies from place to place with the seasons, the climate, and the kind substrate through which water moves. Therefore, the assessment of water quality takes these factors into account.

INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Chemical characteristics (e.g., pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen)
- Physical characteristics (e.g., sediment, temperature, color)
- Biological characteristics (e.g., macro- and micro-invertebrates, fecal coliform, and plant and animal species)

#### **STANDARD #6**

**Air quality meets State standards.**

THIS MEANS THAT:

The State of Wyoming is authorized to administer the Clean Air Act. BLM management actions or use authorizations will comply with all Federal and State air quality laws, rules, regulations and standards. Provisions for the establishment of air quality standards are included in the Clean Air Act, as amended, and the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act, as amended. Regulations are found in Part 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations and in *Wyoming Air Quality Standards and Regulations*.

INDICATORS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Particulate matter
- Sulfur dioxide
- Photochemical oxidants (ozone)
- Volatile organic compounds (hydrocarbons)
- Nitrogen oxides
- Carbon monoxide
- Odors
- Visibility

**BLM WYOMING GUIDELINES FOR LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

1. Timing, duration, and levels of authorized grazing will ensure that adequate amounts of vegetative ground cover, including standing plant material and litter, remain after authorized use to support infiltration, maintain soil moisture storage, stabilize soils, allow the release of sufficient water to maintain system function, and to maintain subsurface soil conditions that support permeability rates and other processes appropriate to the site.
2. Grazing management practices will restore, maintain, or improve riparian plant communities. Grazing management strategies consider hydrology, physical attributes, and potential for the watershed and the ecological site. Grazing management will maintain adequate residual plant cover to provide for plant recovery, residual forage, sediment capture, energy dissipation, and groundwater recharge.
3. Range improvement practices (instream structures, fences, water troughs, etc.) in and adjacent to riparian areas will ensure that stream channel morphology (e.g., gradient, width/depth ratio, channel roughness and sinuosity) and functions appropriate to climate and landform are maintained or enhanced. The development of springs, seeps, or other projects affecting water and associated resources shall be designed to protect the ecological and hydrological functions, wildlife habitat, and significant cultural, historical, and archaeological values associated with the water source. Range improvements will be located away from riparian areas if they conflict with achieving or maintaining riparian function.
4. Grazing practices that consider the biotic communities as more than just a forage base will be designed in order to ensure that the appropriate kinds and amounts of soil organisms, plants, and animals to support the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow are maintained or enhanced.
5. Continuous season-long or other grazing management practices that hinder the completion of plants' life-sustaining reproductive and/or nutrient cycling processes will be modified to ensure adequate periods of rest at the appropriate times. The rest periods will provide for seedling establishment or other necessary processes at levels sufficient to move the ecological site condition toward the resource objective and subsequent achievement of the standard.
6. Grazing management practices and range improvements will adequately protect vegetative cover and physical conditions and maintain, restore, or enhance water quality to meet resource objectives. The effects of new range improvements (water developments, fences, etc.) on the health and function of rangelands will be carefully considered prior to their implementation.
7. Grazing management practices will incorporate the kinds and amounts of use that will restore, maintain, or enhance habitats to assist in the recovery of Federal threatened and endangered species or the conservation of federally-listed species of concern and other State-designated special status species. Grazing management practices will maintain existing habitat or facilitate vegetation change toward desired habitats. Grazing management will consider threatened and endangered species and their habitats.
8. Grazing management practices and range improvements will be designed to maintain or promote the physical and biological conditions necessary to sustain native animal populations and plant communities. This will involve emphasizing native plant species in the support of ecological function and incorporating the use of non-native species only in those situations in which native plant species are not available in sufficient quantities or are incapable of maintaining or achieving properly functioning conditions and

biological health.

9. Grazing management practices on uplands will maintain desired plant communities or facilitate change toward desired plant communities.

## DEFINITIONS

### ACTIVITY PLANS

Allotment Management Plans (AMPs), Habitat Management Plans (HMPs), Watershed Management Plans (WMPs), Wild Horse Management Plans (WHMPs), and other plans developed at the local level to address specific concerns and accomplish specific objectives.

### COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CRM)

A group of people working together to develop common resource goals and resolve natural resource concerns. CRM is a people process that strives for win-win situations through consensus-based decisionmaking.

### DESIRED PLANT COMMUNITY

A plant community which produces the kind, proportion, and amount of vegetation necessary for meeting or exceeding the land use plan/activity plan objectives established for an ecological site(s). The desired plant community must be consistent with the site's capability to produce the desired vegetation through management, land treatment, or a combination of the two.

### ECOLOGICAL SITE

An area of land with specific physical characteristics that differs from other areas both in its ability to produce distinctive kinds and amounts of vegetation and in its response to management.

### EROSION

(v.) Detachment and movement of soil or rock fragments by water, wind, ice, or gravity. (n.) The land surface worn away by running water, wind, ice, or other geological agents, including such processes as gravitational creep.

### GRAZING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Grazing management practices include such things as grazing systems (rest-rotation, deferred rotation, etc.), timing and duration of grazing, herding, salting, etc. They do not include physical range improvements.

### GUIDELINES (For Grazing Management)

Guidelines provide for, and guide the development and implementation of, reasonable, responsible, and cost-effective management actions at the allotment and watershed level which move rangelands toward statewide standards or maintain existing desirable conditions. Appropriate guidelines will ensure that the resultant management actions reflect the potential for the watershed, consider other uses and natural influences, and balance resource goals with social, cultural/historic, and economic opportunities to sustain viable local communities. Guidelines, and therefore, the management actions they engender, are based on sound science, past and present management experience, and public input.

### INDICATOR

An indicator is a component of a system whose characteristics (e.g., presence, absence, quantity, and distribution) can be observed, measured, or monitored based on sound scientific principles. An indicator can be evaluated at a site- or species-specific level. Monitoring of an indicator must be able to show change within timeframes acceptable to management and be capable of showing how the health of the ecosystem is changing in response to specific management actions. Selection of the appropriate indicators to be observed, measured, or monitored in a particular allotment is a critical aspect of early communication among the interests involved on-the-ground. The most useful indicators are those for which change or trend can be easily quantified and for which agreement as to

the significance of the indicator is broad based.

#### **LITTER**

The uppermost layer of organic debris on the soil surface, essentially the freshly fallen or slightly decomposed vegetal material.

#### **MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

Management actions are the specific actions prescribed by the BLM to achieve resource objectives, land use allocations, or other program or multiple use goals. Management actions include both grazing management practices and range improvements.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

An objective is a site-specific statement of a desired rangeland condition. It may contain either or both qualitative elements and quantitative elements. Objectives frequently speak to change. They are the focus of monitoring and evaluation activities at the local level. Monitoring of the indicators would show negative changes or positive changes. Objectives should focus on indicators of greatest interest for the area in question.

#### **RANGE IMPROVEMENTS**

Range improvements include such things as corrals, fences, water developments (reservoirs, spring developments, pipelines, wells, etc.) and land treatments (prescribed fire, herbicide treatments, mechanical treatments, etc.).

#### **RANGELAND**

Land on which the native vegetation (climax or natural potential) is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs. This includes lands revegetated naturally or artificially when routine management of that vegetation is accomplished mainly through manipulation of grazing. Rangelands include natural grasslands, savannas, shrublands, most deserts, tundra, alpine communities, coastal marshes, and wet meadows.

#### **RANGELAND HEALTH**

The degree to which the integrity of the soil and ecological processes of rangeland ecosystems are sustained.

#### **RIPARIAN**

An area of land directly influenced by permanent water. It has visible vegetation or physical characteristics reflective of permanent water influence. Lakeshores and streambanks are typical riparian areas. Excluded are such sites as ephemeral streams or washes that do not have vegetation dependent on free water in the soil.

#### **STANDARDS**

Standards are synonymous with goals and are observed on a landscape scale. Standards apply to rangeland health and not to the important by-products of healthy rangelands. Standards relate to the current capability or realistic potential of a specific site to produce these by-products, not to the presence or absence of the products themselves. It is the sustainability of the processes, or rangeland health, that produces these by-products.

#### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Terms and conditions are very specific land use requirements that are made a part of the land use authorization in order to assure maintenance or attainment of the standard. Terms and conditions may incorporate or reference the appropriate portions of activity plans (e.g., Allotment Management Plans). In other words, where an activity plan exists that contains objectives focused on meeting the standards, compliance with the plan may be the only term and condition necessary in that allotment.

#### **UPLAND**

Those portions of the landscape which do not receive additional moisture for

plant growth from run-off, streamflow, etc. Typically these are hills, ridgetops, valley slopes, and rolling plains.

DRAFT

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
FOR STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

WYOMING

JULY 15, 1997

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

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**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - WYOMING  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR  
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

**1. BACKGROUND**

According to grazing regulations that became effective on August 12, 1995, the State Director of the Wyoming Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is required to develop and implement standards for healthy rangelands and guidelines for grazing management. Standards apply to all uses of BLM-administered public lands in Wyoming and represent the minimum acceptable conditions for public rangelands. The guidelines apply only to livestock grazing. The Wyoming standards and guidelines were submitted to the Secretary of the Interior in July 1997 and were approved August 12, 1997.

The BLM is responsible for implementing the standards and guidelines and determining the condition of the 18 million acres of public rangelands in Wyoming. Within 1 year after the Wyoming BLM Standards and Guidelines have been approved, each Resource Area will make a determination if the standards are being met on their 10 highest priority allotments. All other grazing allotments will be temporarily categorized as "unknown" until it can be determined if they meet the standards. These determinations will be made in accordance with current Resource Area priorities or as opportunities present themselves as described in section 3 of this plan.

**2. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION**

Part 4100 of the grazing regulations provides for public participation, referred to as consultation, cooperation, and coordination with permittees/lessees, private landowners, interested public and State agencies which own or manage resources in the area. This level of public participation occurs at the District/Resource Area, and is usually associated directly with the BLM resource specialist responsible for the specific allotment or project.

The Resource Area offices will provide written notification of impending rangeland health reviews to the affected permittees, lessees, and interested publics. This notification will occur immediately prior to the review of individual allotments, and will include a cover letter (reference Appendix A), as well as a copy of the approved standards and guidelines.

**3. PRIORITIZING ALLOTMENTS FOR REVIEW**

Allotments with existing management plans or management agreements will be the first to be reviewed for compliance with the standards. Since BLM generally has monitoring information readily available for these allotments, the review process should go relatively quickly.

As part of their rangeland program summary, Resource Areas should have their allotments classified into one of three categories: improvement; maintenance;

and, custodial (I,M,C). Since this categorization was based on health of the land criteria, the I,M,C categorization will be the basis for establishing priorities for reviewing compliance with standards. Category I allotments will be given second priority, category M allotments third priority, and category C allotments fourth priority.

The above priority ranking represents a recommended order of review but may be modified by each Resource Area to meet its individual needs. For example, a transfer of any allotment may offer an opportune time to conduct a rangeland health review. Recent range management actions may also upgrade the priority for an allotment review.

Another area to consider in establishing allotment priorities is the findings of the Wyoming Water Quality Assessment Report, prepared by the Water Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. Each Resource Area will review the findings of the Wyoming Section 303(d) list of priority water bodies and the Water Quality Assessment Report. These reports identify the designated uses (e.g., human health value), degree of use support (e.g., not supported), causes of impairment (e.g., nutrients), sources of impairment (e.g., range lands), and other water quality issues. The State priorities for many of the major stream reaches within each basin are also identified in this report. This information will be considered in adjusting the review priority of allotments.

The priorities established under this section will be used only for selecting allotments for review of rangeland health. Since the time required for the consultation process will vary, the allotment order for selection of guidelines and development of permit terms and conditions may vary.

#### **4. REVIEW OF ALLOTMENTS FOR CONFORMANCE WITH STANDARDS**

Changes in management of an allotment will be required under 43 CFR 4180 if the following conditions apply:

1. A conformance review has been completed for the allotment; and
2. It has been determined that one or more of the standards are not being met; and,
3. It has been determined that grazing management needs to be modified.

Bureau of Land Management personnel will conduct allotment reviews for conformance with the standards. Staffing necessary to conduct the reviews will be determined by the Resource Area manager. Ideally, reviews will be conducted in an interdisciplinary manner. Permittees, lessees, State agency representatives, and interested publics will be invited to accompany bureau personnel in the field, attend meetings, and provide input into the review process.

Existing data, professional judgement, or collection of additional data may be utilized during the interdisciplinary review. Field observation and data collection will utilize established procedures as identified in various BLM

guidelines and technical references. Additional procedures may be issued through Information Memorandums as needed.

On allotments in which management changes have been implemented within the last 5 years or a determination made that no management change was necessary, existing data and/or field observations will be used to determine conformance with standards. This information will be reviewed and summarized using the format in Appendix B.

If an allotment's condition is found to be below the minimum standards and a determination made that grazing management needs to be modified, then the consultation process will continue with the selection of guidelines to be implemented, as well as the development of specific terms and conditions for the permit.

Where existing management has resulted in healthy rangelands, it will be recognized and continued.

#### **5. DETERMINATION OF NON-CONFORMANCE**

When an allotment's condition fails to meet one or more of the standards, and livestock grazing is a contributing factor to that failure, then a determination must be made that existing grazing management needs to be modified. This determination must be supported by monitoring, field observations, ecological site inventory, or other data acceptable to the authorized officer. If field observations are used, the observations must be well documented, and where possible, supported by photographs, weather records, or other supporting evidence.

The notice of determination shall include: (1) a statement saying the allotment does not conform with the standards; (2) identification of the standards which are not met; (3) a description of the non-conformance problem; (4) a determination that grazing management needs to be modified; (5) the date by which appropriate actions must be implemented; and, (6) a description and location of the documentation used in making the determination. The determination will be documented in a certified letter to the permittee (example in Appendix C). Copies of this letter will also be provided to lien holders and interested publics.

The determination process will not include the specific modifications to grazing management. The selection of guidelines and development of permit/lease terms and conditions will be completed during later consultations.

#### **6. GUIDELINES**

Guidelines consist of a number of alternatives, one or more of which may be implemented in an effort to bring an allotment into conformance with a specific standard. The appropriate guidelines must be identified early enough to allow sufficient time for the development of terms and conditions and modification of the permit, not later than the start of the next grazing year.

The start of the next grazing year is defined as March 1, following the date of permittee/lessee notification for determination of non-conformance.

## **7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Once the specific guidelines have been identified, the consultation process will continue with the development of terms and conditions appropriate to achieve the identified resource objectives. The terms and conditions will be included in livestock grazing permits and leases. The authorized officer will ensure that the terms and conditions are appropriate to achieve the resources objectives, resulting in conformance with the standards. Once the allotment conforms to the standard, the authorized officer may modify the terms and conditions. However, the modified terms and conditions must ensure the allotment's continued conformance.

## **8. MODIFICATION OF PERMITS AND LEASES**

Blanket modifications of all permits and leases will not be necessary to implement either the new grazing regulations or the standards for healthy rangelands.

In cases where it has been determined that a specific allotment does not meet a standard, that permit or lease will be modified to include specific terms and conditions which are designed to implement the selected guidelines. The effective date of these modifications will be March 1, following the date of permittee/lessee notification for determination of non-conformance.

Any time a permit or lease is modified, a decision is required if a consensus agreement has not been reached with all parties including the permittee/lessee, interested public, and appropriate State agencies. In either case, use the procedures outlined in 10 below in order to provide the permittee/lessee, State, and interested public an opportunity to comment, protest and/or appeal.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an administrative determination is required for all permit/lease renewals. Under 43 CFR 4100, a grazing decision is not required when renewing and existing permit/lease if there are no changes or modifications.

## **9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Monitoring criteria, including the types and levels of monitoring required to measure progress towards meeting the specific resource objectives, will be an integral part of each allotment management plan.

In those cases where guidelines are to be implemented, but an activity plan neither exists nor is scheduled to be developed, a separate monitoring plan, including measurable objectives, will be prepared. This monitoring plan will be specifically designed to evaluate progress towards meeting the standard(s) for which the allotment is in non-conformance. It will also identify the type, level, and method of monitoring, as well as the responsible party (i.e.,

BLM, permittee). The monitoring process may consist of professional judgement based upon well documented field observations. Field observations should be supported with photographs, weather records, or other supporting evidence.

**10. AGREEMENTS AND DECISIONS**

Where agreements have been reached by consensus on development of an AMP or other grazing management agreement. We must provide notification to the permittee and all others consulted with during the process including any interested publics and appropriate State agencies. A letter similar to the example (see appendix D) should be used to provide notification and allow all parties one last chance to voice comments/concerns before we proceed with implementation. This letter would not be sent certified, and would not provide appeal information. If agreement cannot be reached with all parties, the decision process would be used with the decision being sent to all affected parties.

**11. REPORTS**

The Federal Land Policy Management Act (Section 201.(a)) and the Public Rangeland Improvement Act (Section 4.(a)) both require continuing inventory, monitoring, assessment, and reporting of changes in public rangeland conditions. It is anticipated that the BLM Washington Office will be requesting an annual report of key rangeland health measures. Each Resource Area will compile the following information and submit it as part of the Annual Range Monitoring Report.

|  | No. Allotments | No. Acres (Public) |
|--|----------------|--------------------|
| Rangelands Meeting All Standards                                 |                |                    |
| Rangelands Not Meeting All Standards                             |                |                    |
| Rangelands Not Meeting Standards for Causes Other Than Livestock |                |                    |
| Rangelands Unclassified (Unknown)                                |                |                    |
| Guidelines Implemented - Current Year                            |                |                    |
| Guidelines Implemented - Total to Date                           |                |                    |

**12. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The annual reporting requirement must be followed with an accounting of progress towards meeting management objectives and improvement in rangeland health. The Wyoming State Office will track each Resource Area's annual progress. Annual work plan directives will allocate District and Resource Area funding based on rangeland health priorities and accomplishments.

### **13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

STATE DIRECTOR - The State Director is responsible for formulating statewide policy and developing, directing and coordinating statewide livestock grazing administration, and range management programs. This responsibility includes developing and implementing standards and guidelines in accordance with 43 CFR 4180 Grazing Administration.

AREA MANAGER - The Area Manager is responsible for implementing District, State, and national BLM grazing policies and programs within the areas of jurisdiction. This responsibility includes developing terms and conditions. The terms and conditions are applied through grazing permits/leases, allotment management plans, other activity plans, cooperative agreements, and range improvements. The Area Manager also insures that land use plans and activity plans comply with the standards and guidelines. When appropriate, the Area Manager consults with the affected permittee/lessee, owners of intermingled lands including Wyoming State Land and Farm Loan Offices, and other interested parties.

(Letter Head)

(Date)

Dear (Permittee/Interested Public):

In 1997, the Secretary of Interior, under the terms of 43 CFR 4180, approved the attached Wyoming standards for healthy rangelands and guidelines for grazing management. These standards and guidelines are to be used to improve and/or maintain the health of all BLM-administered public lands.

Within the next few months, the \_\_\_\_\_ Resource Area will be visiting the \_\_\_\_\_ Allotment to determine if it meets these standards. You are invited to participate in this rangeland health assessment.

We recommend that you review these standards and guidelines closely. If you wish to participate in the health assessment or have any questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_, Range Management Specialist, at (307) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Area Manager

Attachment



STANDARD #5: (Insert fifth standard)

DO RESOURCE CONDITIONS IN THE ALLOTMENT MEET THE STANDARD? (circle one)

YES

NO

UNKNOWN

RATIONALE:

PART 2 - FACTORS RELATED TO NON-CONFORMANCE WITH STANDARDS:

PART 3 - SELECTED GUIDELINES TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE IN GRAZING MANAGEMENT:

PART 4 - IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC ACTIONS INCLUDING PERMIT/LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

REVIEWED BY:

|         |      |
|---------|------|
| (Title) | Date |

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR  
CONFORMANCE REVIEW SUMMARY**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS** - The Rangeland Standards Conformance Review Summary should be completed in an interdisciplinary manner. Personnel conducting the review should have had experience with the allotment and collection of its monitoring data and/or field observations. It is recommended that as a minimum, personnel conducting the review should include a BLM range, and wildlife specialist. The permittee/lessee, personnel from State agencies which own or manage resources within the allotment, and interested publics must be invited to accompany bureau personnel in the field, attend meetings, and provide input. Once completed, the Rangeland Standards Conformance Review Summary, should be signed and dated by the personnel who conducted the review.

**PART 1** - Determine if the allotment is in conformance with each standard, circle the appropriate response and provide a short narrative describing the rationale for the response. Be as specific as possible in the narrative. Where applicable, reference monitoring data, field observation reports, and supporting documentation.

A response of "UNKNOWN" will require additional data analysis, field observations and/or monitoring. In this instance the rationale should clearly describe what additional information is required, as well as how and when it will be obtained.

If the allotment is in conformance with all standards, then Part 1 will complete the review process. If one or more standards are not being met, continue to Part 2.

**PART 2** - The purpose of Part 2 is to document if existing grazing management, needs to be modified, or if failure to meet the standard(s) is the result of other "non-grazing" factors. This documentation should be as detailed as possible.

If it is determined that failure to meet the standard(s) is in any part due to other "non-grazing" factors, then a copy of the Rangeland Standards Review Summary will be forwarded to the appropriate BLM staff, for corrective action.

If it is determined that failure to meet the standard(s) is in any part due to existing grazing management, then: (1) a determination of non-conformance must be issued, as described in Section 5 of the implementation plan; and, (2) proceed with Part 3.

**PART 3** - Continue the consultation process by reviewing the list of guidelines for

each standard, in which the allotment is in non-conformance. Identify the selected guidelines which will be implemented and proceed to Part 4.

**PART 4** - Continue the consultation process by identifying specific actions which will be required, responsible party, and time frame for completion. All actions required of the permittee/lessee should be identified as terms and conditions of the permit/lease.

(Letter Head)

(Date)

CERTIFIED RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I have reviewed the Rangeland Standards - Conformance Review Summary and found that resource conditions in the \_\_\_\_\_ Allotment do not meet the following standards for healthy rangelands:

- 1.
- 2.

The allotment does not conform with these standards in that \_\_\_\_\_ (describe problems using the language of the standards) \_\_\_\_\_.

In addition, I have determined that grazing management needs to be modified to bring about positive change in the health of the rangeland.

The purpose of this notification is to inform you of the determination of non-conformance with the standards, and that appropriate actions will be identified and implemented no later than March 1, 199\_.

You will be afforded the opportunity to participate in the identification of those actions in accordance with the procedures outlined in 43 CFR 41103.3, 4120.2 and 4130.3-3.

This determination is based on \_\_\_\_\_ (briefly describe the data upon which the determination is based) \_\_\_\_\_, which may be reviewed at the Bureau of Land Management, \_\_\_\_\_ Resource Area Office. If you would like to review this data, or have any questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_, Range Management Specialist, at (307) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Area Manager

cc:  
Lien Holders  
Interested Publics

**Appendix D**

Suggested Format for Letter (To Permittee  
And Other Parties Who Were Consulted with  
During Development of an Amp or Management  
Agreement, Where Consensus Was Reached)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Please accept my sincere appreciation for your participation in the development of a mutually agreed grazing management plan for the \_\_\_\_\_ allotment. The environmental assessment is completed and I have signed a record of decision to proceed with this project.

If we do not hear from you within the next 15 days, we will assume you are in agreement with the plan. Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ Resource Area office should you have any questions or concerns.

Again, thanks. I look forward to continuing working with you as we begin to implement this grazing management plan.

Sincerely,

Area Manager

Standards and Guidelines for Healthy Rangelands Workshop  
Lander, WY  
November 17-18, 1997

**AGENDA**

**November 17, 1997**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 9:00 a.m.<br>State Director   | Introduction   |
| 9:15 a.m.<br>Kurt Kotter  | S&G Overview   |
| 9:45 a.m.<br>Panel S&G Team   | S&G Questions and Answers  |
| 10:45 a.m.  | Break  |
| 11:15 a.m.  | State Implementation Plan Overview<br>Bill Watters   |
| 11:45 a.m.  | Lunch  |
| 1:00 p.m.<br>Public Affairs Staff   | Public Information Options   |
| implementation plan.<br>public requirements<br>permittees/leasees.<br>communication we will use.<br>group involvement we<br>review. | Public opinion and reaction to<br>How to communicate interested<br>of new regs to<br>Seeking public input.<br>Determine what methods of<br>Discuss the amount of interest<br>can expect in allotment |
| 2:00 p.m.<br>Don Glenn<br>Discussion/Interaction  | Implementation Plan Detail<br>Group  |
| 2:45 p.m.   | Break  |
| 3:15 p.m.<br>Discussion   | Continue Implementation Plan   |
| 5:00 p.m.<br>Solutions  | Work Group Assignments To Recommend  |

Discussion To problems That Come Up In The

5:30 p.m. Adjourn

**November 18, 1997**

8:00 a.m. Work Groups

10:30 a.m. Work Group Presentations

12:00 Noon National Policy Buddy Arvizo

12:30 p.m. State Director Round Table State Director

1:30 p.m. Adjourn