

Medora Allotment Management Plan Revisions

Medora Ranger District, Dakota Prairie Grasslands
USDA Forest Service
Billings County, ND

INTRODUCTION

The Medora Ranger District is preparing to conduct environmental analysis on a proposal to revise livestock grazing Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) for 46 allotments. The project area encompasses roughly the northern one third of Billings County, North Dakota (see Figure 1). The project area contains portions of the following Dakota Prairie Grasslands Land and Resource Management Plan (Grasslands Plan) Management Areas (MA): MA1.31 – *Nonmotorized Backcountry recreation*, 2.1 *Special Interest Areas*, 2.2 *Research Natural Areas*, 3.51- *Bighorn Sheep Habitat*, 3.65 – *Rangelands with Diverse Natural – Appearing Landscapes*, 4.22 - *River and Travel Corridors*, and 6.1– *Rangelands with Broad Resource Emphasis*. Most of the project area lays in MAs 3.65 and 6.1

The purpose of this scoping letter is to identify our proposed action to the public for review and comment. Comments provided by the public will help us define the scope of the project, identify issues, and identify possible additional alternatives to our proposal. Ronald W. Jablonski, Jr., Medora District Ranger will make the final decision on the project.

This document first outlines the purpose and need for the project so that you can understand the reason for the proposal. Then, starting on page 6, the proposal itself is presented.

THE PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Basically, the purpose and need for a project is another way of asking “why” is this project being proposed? There are several reasons why this project is being proposed. First, the existing AMPs, which guide the management of an allotment, date back to the late 1960s, and are in need of updating. Second, we need to revise the AMPs to be consistent with direction from the Grasslands Plan (2002), and the September 20, 2006 Livestock Grazing Record of Decision (ROD). Finally, all AMPs have to undergo analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

An interdisciplinary team (IDT) of Forest Service specialists from the Dakota Prairie Grasslands (DPG), with expertise in areas such as range management, wildlife biology, botany, soils, hydrology, and archeology has been assembled to work on this project. Our first step has been to identify the desired conditions for the project area, determine the existing conditions, and then compare the two. The differences between desired conditions and existing conditions specifies the “purpose and need” for the project.

Desired conditions are based on management direction in the Grasslands Plan and other laws and regulations that the Forest Service is required to follow, such as the Clean Water Act, National Historic Preservation Act, or Endangered Species Act.

Existing conditions are determined based on professional knowledge about the area, surveys, inventory, monitoring data, and information from other agencies such as the North Dakota Game and Fish Department and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Comparing desired conditions to existing conditions in the North Billings project area allowed us to determine if there was a need for a change in livestock grazing management on an allotment. Through this process the IDT identified and assessed several resource areas that need to be addressed in AMPs for the project area in order to keep the area in desired condition, or as needed, move it toward desired conditions. The resource areas are summarized below along with pertinent information on Desired Conditions, Existing Conditions, and Needs for Action.

1. Riparian areas.

Desired Conditions:

- Grassland - Wide Direction - Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.
 - Move at least 80 percent of riparian areas and woody draws toward self-perpetuating plant and water communities that have desired diversity and density of understory and overstory vegetation within site capability.
 - Meet or move towards Properly Functioning condition (PFC) on at least 80% of perennial streams (Grasslands Plan, CH.1, p. 1-2).
- Grassland - Wide Direction - Design activities to protect and manage the riparian ecosystem. Maintain the integrity of the ecosystem, including quantity and quality of surface and ground water (Grasslands Plan, CH. 1., p. 1-9).
- Grassland - Wide Direction - Design and implement livestock grazing strategies to provide for thick and brushy understories and multi-story and multi-age structure in riparian habitats, wooded draws, and woody thickets, contingent on local site potential (Grasslands Plan, CH. 1., p. 1-13).
- Grassland - Wide Direction - Manage livestock grazing to maintain or improve riparian/woody draw areas (Grasslands Plan, Ch 1. p.1-19).
- Geographic Area Direction - Streams and riparian areas would maintain soil moisture to perpetuate riparian plant communities with strong root masses (Grasslands Plan, CH. 2., p. 2-10).
- Geographic Area Direction - Streams would be maintained at properly functioning condition or improved to an upward trend (Grasslands Plan, CH. 2., p. 2-18).

Existing Conditions:

Perennial and major intermittent streams on National Forest System lands, in the project area, were surveyed 1997 through 1999, 2004, 2006, and 2007 using the Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) protocol (Pritchard et. al., 1998). Perennial streams flow continuously year around, intermittent streams flow only at certain times of the year when they receive water from springs or from surface sources such as snow or rain runoff.

A total of approximately 57 miles on 11 streams were surveyed. Of the surveyed streams 28.1 miles (50.2%) were Properly Functioning, 2.5 miles (4.5%) were Functioning-at-Risk-Upward Trend, 2.2 miles (3.9%) were Functioning-at-Risk-Trend Not Apparent, 2.9 miles (5.1%) were Functioning-at-Risk-Downward Trend, and 20.4 miles (36.3%) were Nonfunctioning.

Proper Functioning Condition means that the stream has adequate streambank vegetation, proper stream morphology, or instream structures (i.e. woody debris, rock, etc) present to dissipate stream energy, during high flows resulting in benefits including, but not limited to, reduced erosion, sediment and bedload capture, floodplain development, improved water quality, ground-water recharge, and development of streambank root masses. Functioning-at-Risk means that riparian areas are in a functional condition but one or more properties; i.e. soil, water, or vegetation are impaired which makes the riparian area susceptible to degradation. Nonfunctioning means that the riparian area is not functioning properly. Typically, nonfunctioning riparian areas do not provide adequate vegetation, channel properties, or woody debris to dissipate stream energy associated with high flows and thus do not reduce erosion, improve water quality, capture sediment, etc.

Livestock trampling or grazing contributed to all functioning-at-risk ratings in the project area. Some of the nonfunctioning ratings are due to a combination of livestock grazing, road construction, changes in upland vegetative communities, which alter overland flow e.g. juniper encroachment, sagebrush expansion, invasive grasses, and in some cases natural events such as the Fantail Fire.

Needs:

We need to manage livestock grazing to help move functioning-at-risk stream reaches toward PFC, and maintain those reaches that are at PFC. For nonfunctioning streams we need to manage that portion of livestock grazing that is contributing to the degradation of the stream and address additional factors that affect riparian condition.

2. Green Ash Hardwood Draws.

Desired Conditions

- Grassland - Wide Direction - Increase the amount of forests and grasslands restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from disturbance processes, both natural and human controlled.
 - Within 15 years, move forested landscapes toward desired conditions described in Geographic Area direction (Grasslands Plan, CH 1. p. 1-3).

- Grassland - Wide Direction - Move at least 80 percent of riparian areas and woody draws toward self-perpetuating plant and water communities that have desired diversity and density of understory and overstory vegetation within site capability (Grasslands Plan, CH 1, p. 1-2).
- Grassland - Wide Direction - Manage livestock grazing to maintain or improve riparian/woody draw areas (Grasslands Plan, CH 1. p.1-19).
- Grassland - Wide Direction - Design and implement livestock grazing strategies to provide for thick and brushy understories and multi-story and multi-age structure in riparian habitats, wooded draws, and woody thickets contingent on local site potential (Grasslands Plan, CH 1. p. 1-13).
- Geographic Area Direction - Hardwood draws would be managed to maintain or develop a multi-layer and multi-age class of herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees (Grasslands Plan, CH 2. p.2-10, 17).

Existing Conditions

There are several different types of woody draws in the project area including juniper, aspen, cottonwood and green ash draws. Most of the woody draws are in good condition, however, there is a concern with the green ash draws. The green ash woody draws exhibit conditions ranging from healthy to unhealthy.

Green ash woody draws were surveyed in 1998 and 1999, 2005, 2006, and 2007. They were rated as Healthy, At Risk or Unhealthy. Of the green ash woody draws that were surveyed 52 percent were Healthy, 41 percent were At Risk and 8 percent were Unhealthy. We recognize that there are some natural forces such as late frosts and lack of wildfire both of which affect woodlands, however, livestock grazing appears to be the primary force affecting the health of the green ash woody draws.

Healthy woody draws are defined as those woodlands that have self-perpetuating tree and shrub populations with diverse age classes, species composition, and multiple structural layers as habitat conditions permit. At Risk woody draws tend to exhibit a moderate distribution of tree age classes, but lack consistent regeneration as expressed by sapling and young tree age classes and exhibit inconsistent or patchy shrub diversity and structural complexity. Unhealthy woody draws are generally characterized by old or decadent tree layers, a lack of younger tree age classes and little or no tree regeneration. The understory is dominated by herbaceous vegetation instead of a diverse shrub layer.

Needs

Manage livestock grazing to increase the survival of existing tree seedlings and saplings, create conditions conducive to the establishment and survival of new tree regeneration, and improve the health and vigor of moderate to heavily impacted shrub layers.

3. Provide a mosaic of vegetative grass and forb structure across the analysis area to provide habitat that will sustain viable populations of native animal species while providing forage for livestock consumption.

Desired Conditions

- Structural objectives refer to the height, density, and litter cover of grasses and forbs. The objectives are expressed in terms of a Visual Obstruction Reading (VOR). Low structure is vegetation that has a VOR reading of 0 to 1.49 inches, moderate is 1.5 to 3.5 inches, and high is greater than 3.5 inches. The following table identifies the Grassland Plan desired structure objectives (Grasslands Plan, CH 2. p.2-13, 19).

Desired Structure Objectives

Low	Moderate	High
10-20%	50-70%	20-30%

Existing Conditions

As explained previously, structure refers to the height, density, and litter cover of plants, and is divided into categories of high, moderate, and low. VOR survey transects conducted from 1996 to 2005 show high structure ranging from 1 to 21 percent, moderate structure 55 to 71 percent, and low 24 to 52 percent. Surveys were conducted on “biologically capable” lands within the project area. Biologically capable refers to lands that have or are able to sustain plant communities that are capable of producing high structure. The survey information indicates that across the project area we are exceeding the low structure objective, meeting the moderate structure objective, and are below the high structure objective.

A major factor affecting structure, forage availability, and other resources across the landscape is drought, which is “generally defined as a prolonged period during which annual precipitation is less than 75 percent of average. Poor distribution of precipitation in a single year or less than average precipitation in successive years can also cause drought conditions” (Reece et. el). According to Holecheck, since 1940, drought in the Northern Great Plains has occurred slightly more than one in every five years. While livestock grazing is adjusted annually, according to weather patterns, specific drought management guidelines are not currently in place.

Needs:

- ❑ We need to manage livestock grazing so that we can achieve and/or maintain our objective of 20-30% high herbaceous structure across the project area in average and above-average moisture years
- ❑ We need to adopt a drought strategy to help ensure that grassland resources are not overly taxed during drought conditions and to aid in the recovery of grassland resources following drought.

PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to continue livestock grazing on 46 allotments, located in northern Billings County, under an adaptive management strategy that will meet, or move resources toward, Grasslands Plan desired conditions. The proposed action for each allotment consists of initial actions and potential adaptive options which are identified in Allotment Summary Sheets located in Appendix B at the end of this letter. The adaptive options identified in the Allotment Summary Sheets are part of a “Toolbox” of range management tools. In addition to the adaptive options identified in the summary sheets other actions contained in the toolbox are available to the decision maker if needed. The management toolbox is located in Appendix A.

A practical definition of Adaptive Management is: *the process of making use of monitoring information to determine if management changes are needed, and if so, what changes, and to what degree.* It is a process that allows us to deal with uncertainty and changing conditions over time. It provides the authorized officer with “constrained flexibility” to adapt to changing conditions or unanticipated resource response.

The proposed action will result in the development of new AMPs for the 46 allotments in the project area. These are the implementing documents for the alternative selected in the Record of Decision (ROD) for this proposal. AMPs contain the pertinent livestock management direction from the project level decision to reach or move toward a given set of goals or objectives.

A key component of adaptive management is monitoring. The proposed action includes a monitoring plan which will determine if implemented actions are providing the desired results. If some aspect of the planned management is shown by monitoring to be ineffective then the District Ranger, in concert with an interdisciplinary team and the Medora Grazing Association/permittee will determine which adaptive tools are needed, to ensure adequate progress toward desired conditions.

PRELIMINARY ISSUES

Issues are points of discussion, debate or dispute about what effect the proposed action may have. The Forest Service team has identified several potential issues associated with this project based on internal review, past experience with allotment management planning, and issues surrounding the Grasslands Plan. The following is a list of these issues:

- A portion of the green ash woody draws in the project area are not producing adequate tree and shrub regeneration and/or survival of regeneration is too low to ensure that replacement exceeds loss. Livestock use, timing, and intensity, are believed to be significant factors affecting green ash woody draws
- A high percentage of the perennial and major intermittent streams in the project area are not meeting Properly Functioning Condition (PFC). They exhibit an inadequate amount of residual vegetation to trap sediments from fall/spring runoff or to control erosive energy in the channel. They are affected by excessive bank trampling, lack of desired riparian plant communities, and display poor channel morphology. Livestock grazing intensity and timing are believed to be contributing factors.

- Across the landscape, on biologically capable soils, there is a lack of sufficient high vegetative structure to meet nesting and brooding rearing needs for some avian species as well as other wildlife. Livestock grazing intensity and timing are believed to be significant contributing factors.
- There is a need to implement a drought strategy which may impact livestock operations, wildlife, and plants.
- Changes in livestock grazing may impact individual operators and the local economy.

This scoping effort will help us better define these issues, and determine whether there are additional issues that need to be addressed in the environmental analysis.

ALTERNATIVES

Following are alternatives that have been identified by the Forest Service interdisciplinary team;

- A No Action alternative. Under this alternative no livestock grazing would occur in the project area. The No action alternative is required under the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1502.14(d)) The No Action alternative will show the effects of no livestock on the landscape compared with other alternatives that proposed some degree of cattle use in the project area.
- An alternative which would continue current livestock grazing management.
- An alternative (Proposed Action) created in concert with the Medora Grazing Association as per direction contained in Appendix A (Demonstration Project) of the 2006 Livestock Grazing ROD for the Grasslands Plan. This alternative employs an adaptive management approach to livestock management. Under adaptive management, actions are proposed to address resource concerns and monitoring information is used to determine if additional management changes are needed, and if so, what changes, and to what degree. Under this alternative permittees are authorized their historic permitted animal-month numbers. An animal month is equal to a month's tenure upon the range by one animal. In terms of natural resource management, the focus is on meeting or moving toward desired condition resource goals and objectives.
- An adaptive management alternative which considers actions that can be implemented to maintain or improve resource conditions including accounting for changes in animal unit forage demands with changes in cow/calf size. Accounting for the changes in forage demand may result in adjustments in the number of livestock authorized and/or an adjustment in grazing time. This alternative also considers the priority of implementing initial management actions based upon estimated costs of the project.
- An adaptive management alternative which considers actions that can be implemented to maintain or improve resource conditions including adjusting authorized use based on estimated livestock carrying capacities and changes in animal unit forage demands based on changes in cow/calf size.

Using public input from scoping and internal input, the Forest Service team will identify additional action alternatives to the proposed action, and determine if they need to be fully analyzed.

DECISION FRAMEWORK

The Medora District Ranger will decide how livestock grazing will be managed to maintain or meet resource objectives as defined by the Grasslands Plan. The final decision will include required design criteria and monitoring. The decision will not involve management actions unrelated to livestock grazing such as recreation, road issues, oil and gas projects, or wildlife enhancement projects.

Figure 1. North Billings EIS Project Area –

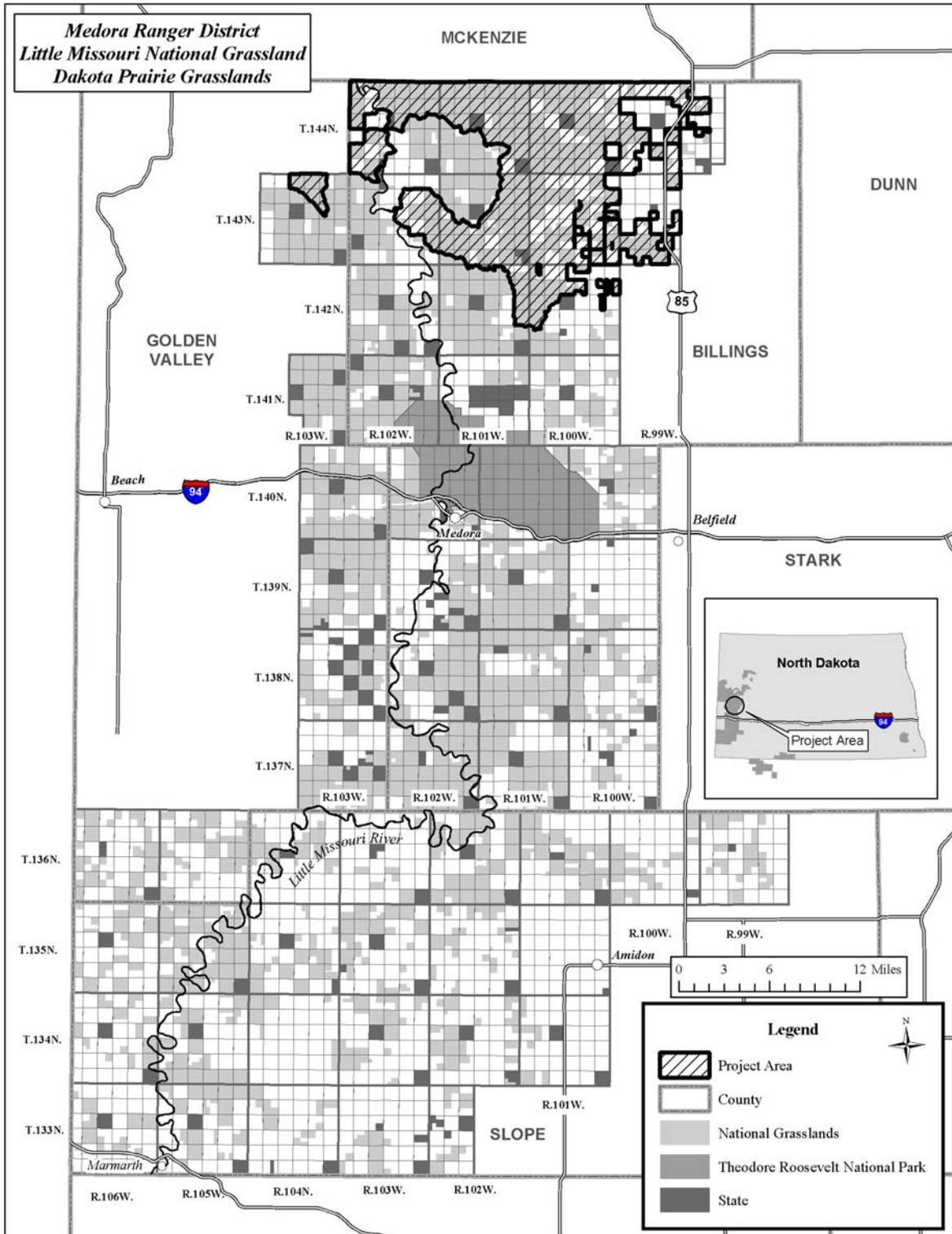
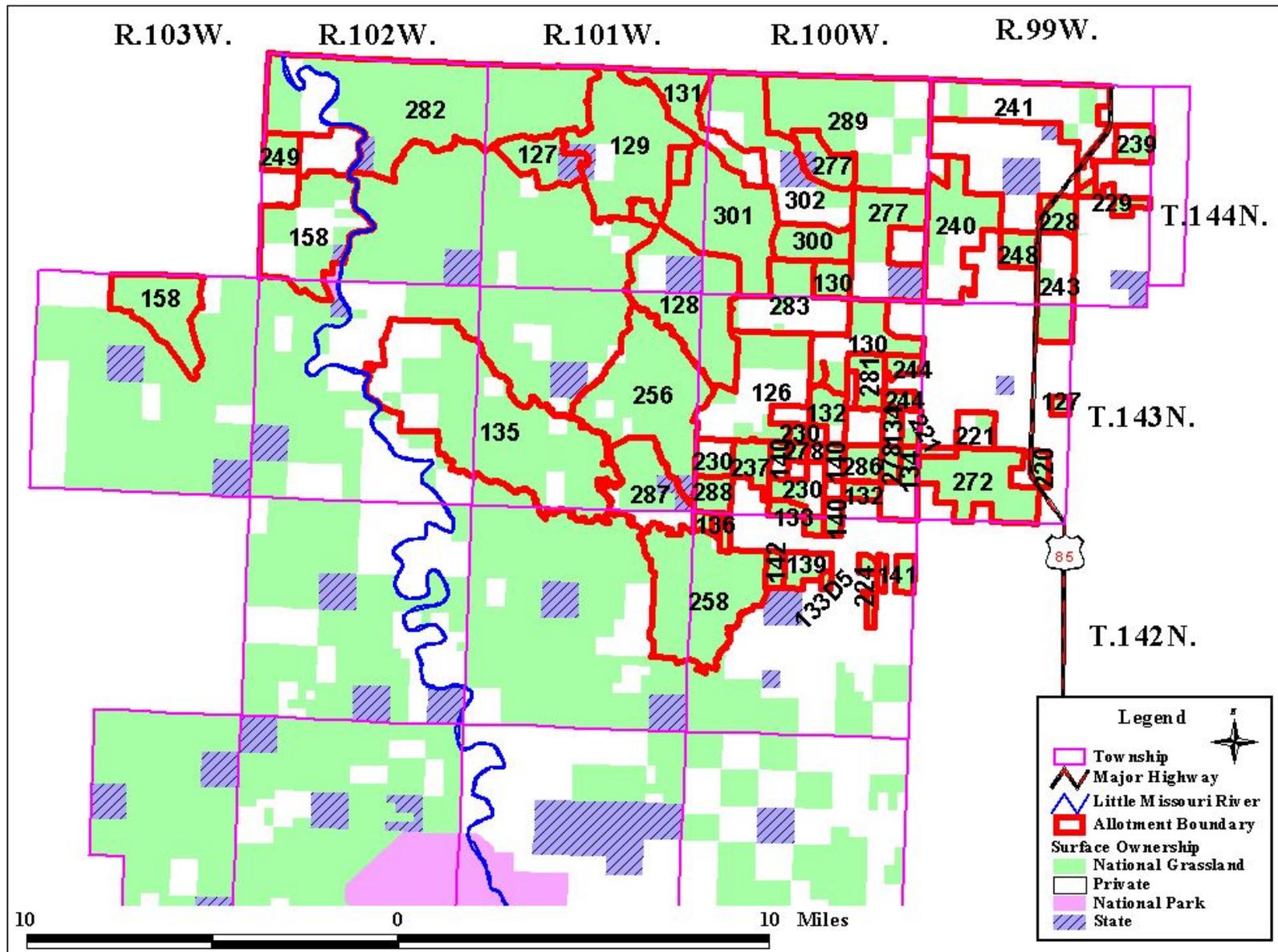


Figure 2. Grazing allotment locations



APPENDIX A

Grazing Management Tool Box

Implement Dakota Prairie Grasslands drought management strategy
Adjust season of use
Adjust AUMs (stocking rate) by # of head &/or # of days
Adjust AUMs based on average cow size
Utilize non-native grass pastures early to defer grazing on native grasses
Allow early turnout on native pastures one out of three years on inventory permits
Defer native pastures until June 1 or until development of the three and a half leaf stage for key graminoid species
Rest for one or more seasons
Reallocation of pastures (change allotment boundary)
Construct temporary fence to control livestock distribution patterns
Construct and/or remove cross fences
Construct livestock water development (well, pipeline, tanks, windmill, reservoir, dugout, or spring)
Remove/reclaim water development (well, pipeline, tanks, windmill, reservoir, dugout, or spring)
Manage water availability/access at water developments
Maintain existing developments to reestablish use
Implement deferred grazing system
Implement rest-rotation grazing system
Implement twice-over grazing system
Incorporate private “off permit” land into rotation
Fertilize crested wheatgrass areas
Hay or cut-&-leave crested wheatgrass areas
Interseed pasture with native grass species
Scarify clubmoss areas within a pasture
Implement prescribed burns
Mechanical brush management
Incorporate a range rider to disperse livestock throughout a pasture (herding)
Manage salt and supplement locations
Construct fence to create riparian unit – allow grazing under riparian grazing dates
Implement BMPs for riparian pastures
Restore/enhance riparian vegetation i.e. willow planting
Construct/harden stream crossings
Construct water gap to limit livestock access on stream
Construct fence to exclude livestock from areas of concern (riparian, wooded draws, springs, wetlands, etc.)
Move winter feeding areas off of National Forest System lands
Utilize biological controls for noxious weed control in woody draws

APPENDIX B

ALLOTMENT SUMMARY SHEETS

This appendix contains an allotment summary sheet for each allotment located in the project area. The summary sheets provide information on existing condition, need for action, initial actions, and adaptive options. These sheets present a specific proposal for each individual allotment.

The information contained in the allotment summary sheets will set the stage for development of AMPs. Each AMP will be developed by the Forest Service in consultation with the permittee(s) AMPs provide detailed management direction for the livestock operators and Forest Service administrators.

The following actions apply to all the allotments under the proposed action.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place and rotate salt and supplement to draw livestock away from woody draws, riparian areas, and sensitive areas and to minimize concentrating livestock in uplands.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defer turnout on native grass pastures until June 1 or until the three and a half leaf stage is reached for key native graminoid species (e.g. western wheatgrass, green needlegrass, needle-and-threadgrass). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On inventory permits early turnout on native pastures is allowed one out of three years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New water sources will be located in uplands away from woody draws and riparian areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During times of drought the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Drought Strategy, which is under construction, will be implemented. The drought strategy identified in the NE McKenzie Allotment Management Plan Revision Environmental Impact Statement will be used until the DPG strategy is completed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to ground disturbing activities, heritage, paleontological, botanical, and wildlife assessments will be conducted and mitigation initiated if needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New fencing will be built according to the standards identified in Grasslands Plan Appendix B.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas disturbed by rangeland improvements will be seeded utilizing native weed seed free mixtures prescribed by the Forest Service Botanist.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burn plans will be developed and approved for all prescribed fires prior to implementing on-the-ground actions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following are common to all allotments requiring an AUM adjustment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If temporary or permanent stocking rate adjustments are needed annual reductions will generally not exceed ten percent. ➤ If monitoring shows that resource objectives are being met before full implementation of an AUM reduction has occurred, then no further reduction in AUMs will be needed. ➤ If after a reduction in AUMs is complete and monitoring shows that resource objective(s) have not been met but there is evidence that progress towards the resource objective(s) is occurring then further AUM adjustments will not occur unless continued monitoring indicates that upward progress is not being sustained. ➤ If after the reduction in AUMs is complete, monitoring shows that resource objective(s) are not being met then, as an adaptive option, further AUM adjustments may be initiated. ➤ Temporary increases in AUMs may be granted if monitoring indicates that resource objectives are being exceeded.

Definitions

Animal Month (AM) - A month's tenure upon range by one animal. Must specify kind and class of animal. Not synonymous with animal-unit month.

Animal Unit (AU) - Considered to be one mature cow of about 1,000 pounds (450 kg), either dry or with calf up to 6 months of age, or their equivalent, consuming about 26 pounds (12 kg) of forage/day on an oven-dry basis.

Animal Unit Month (AUM) - The amount of oven-dry forage (forage demand) required by one animal unit for a standardized period of 30 animal-unit-days. Not synonymous with animal month.

Allotment - A rangeland area designated for the use of a prescribed number and kind of livestock under one plan of management.

Authorized Use - This is the amount of animals and months, expressed in Animal Months (AMs) or Animal Unit Months (AUMs), that the permittee is authorized to utilize through grazing of livestock for a specific grazing season on an allotment.

Carrying Capacity - The average number of livestock and/or wildlife that may be sustained on a management unit compatible with management objectives for the unit. In addition to site characteristics, it is a function of management goals and management intensity.

Class of Livestock - Type of animal permitted to graze e.g. cow/calf pair, bull, yearling, horse, bison.

Crested Wheatgrass Pasture - A grazing unit that is composed of at least 70 percent crested wheatgrass.

Cross Fence - A temporary or permanent fence used to subdivide a pasture.

Deferred Rotation - Any grazing system, which provides for a systematic rotation of the deferment among pastures.

Drift Fence - An open-ended fence used to retard or alter the natural movement of livestock; generally used in connection with natural barriers.

Dugout - An artificially constructed depression that collects and stores water and differs from a reservoir in that a dam is not relied upon to impound water.

Exclosure - An area fenced to exclude animals.

Pasture - A group of subunits within a grazing allotment which are enclosed and separated from each other by fencing or other barriers.

Permitted Use - This is the historical total amount of animals and months, expressed in Animal Months (AMs), that the permittee can utilize through grazing of livestock on an allotment.

Prescribed Burn - This use of fire as a management tool under specified conditions for burning a predetermined area.

Native pasture - A pasture primarily composed of native grasses, sedges, forbs, and shrubs.

Range Pipeline - Generally a one to two inch pipeline used to convey water from a range well to stock tanks.

Range Well - A water well developed to provide water for livestock use.

Reclamation - Restoration of a site or resource to a desired condition to achieve management objectives or stated goals.

Riparian - Referring to or relating to areas adjacent of water or influenced by free water associated with streams or rivers on geologic surfaces occupying the lowest position on a watershed.

Reservoir - Water storage facility generally created by erecting an earthen dam across a drainage for the purpose of catching and storing water for livestock.

Stock Tank - Generally an eight to fourteen foot diameter shallow tank designed to hold water for livestock use.

Summer Use AUMs - AUMs available for livestock grazing between May 1 and December 31.

Tree Regeneration - Refers to the amount of trees reproduction present in a woody draw as evidenced by seedlings and saplings.

Water Gap - An opening or fenced area providing access to a developed or natural water supply permitting one watering facility to serve two or more pastures.

Winter Use AUMs - AUMs available for livestock grazing between January 1 and April 30.

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Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
126	Woody Draws	31 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy; 69 percent are at risk due to a lack of regeneration in flat bottomed woody draws and near water developments.	Establish regeneration and /or increase survival of saplings. Need to reduce rate of head cutting and gully creation in pasture 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new water source in pasture 5 to pull livestock away from woody draws and riparian areas. Install temporary electric fence between pastures 5 and 6. Extend range water pipeline from allotment 128 pasture 2 into allotment 126 pasture 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize fire to stimulate regeneration in woody draws. Rest pasture 6 for two years. Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate. Install temporary electric fence in pasture 5 to segregate crested wheatgrass areas from native grass areas.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reclaim existing spring developments in pastures 4 and 6. Combine Allotments 126 and 128 and implement a nine pasture rest/deferred rotation grazing system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize fire to reduce excessive litter, regenerate decadent “wolfy” crested wheatgrass areas throughout allotment
	Riparian	Whitetail Creek - at PFC.	Maintain PFC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When pasture 5 is used as an early pasture place salt and supplement so as to maximize use of crested wheatgrass areas. Authorized Use is 489 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize rest, fencing, or change in season of use if riparian falls below PFC. Develop new water sources to pull livestock away from riparian areas.
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data, annually for three years then every fifth year. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are approx. 58 acres of Canada thistle located primarily in woody draws and riparian areas. Burdock was also identified in most wooded areas. Forward information to weeds coordinator. Permitted Federal AMs: 489 	

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Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Actions	Adaptive Options
127	Woody Draws	80 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy; 20 percent were at risk due to lack of adequate regeneration and impacted shrub layer.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a two pasture rotation between pastures 2 and 3. Improve allotment boundary fence between Allotment 127 and 280 to maintain proper stocking. Utilize pasture 4 early in season to defer use on pasture 2 and 3. Authorized Use is 412 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data every three years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portions of pasture 2 west were burned in the 2004 Magpie fire. Monitor burned area for new noxious weed infestations. Forward information to weeds coordinator Permitted Federal AMs: 412. 	

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Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Actions	Adaptive Options
128	Woody Draws	60 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy; 33 percent were at risk due to insufficient regeneration; 17 percent were unhealthy because they contained no seedling or sapling regeneration. Juniper is encroaching into hardwood draws and grassland areas.	Establish regeneration and/or increase survival of saplings. Reduce juniper encroachment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pasture 1, fence developed spring located in SW1/4SW1/4 of Sec. 25, T144N, R101W. Pipe water from spring to a tank located away from spring area. Control livestock distribution in pasture through stock tank management. Combine Allotments 126 and 128 and implement a nine pasture rest/deferred rotation grazing system. Harden stream crossings/watering areas along Whitetail Creek in Section 6. Install stream structures below headcut on Whitetail Creek, to help dissipate stream energy. Authorized Use is 1866 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize herding. Utilize fire to reduce juniper encroachment. Temporarily fence heavily impacted woody draws. Adjust stocking rate. Construct a riparian exclosure above headcut. Develop a riparian pasture within pasture 1. To create this pasture an existing range pipeline will have to be extended from pasture 2 (Section 18) into pasture 1 (Section 6).
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There is an extensive headcut located in pasture 1. The headcut has been an ongoing process for over 80 years. Above the headcut Whitetail Creek is rated FARDT the reach below is rated NF.	Start FARDT reach on an upward trend. On the NF reach need to decrease stream velocity to help the stream heal itself.		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data, annually for three years then every fifth year. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 acres of Canada thistle located primarily in riparian areas. Small amount of burdock noted in pasture 4. Some burdock was noted in pasture 4. Permitted Federal AMs: 1866 	

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Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
129	Woody Draws	56 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy; 44 percent were at risk due to insufficient regeneration.	Increase seedling survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange allotment 131 pastures 1 and 2 for allotment 129 pasture 2. • Extend range water pipeline from well in allotment 131 pasture 3 into allotment 131 pasture 1. • Reclaim two reservoirs in allotment 131 pasture 1. • In Section 3 develop water on fence line between allotment 129 pasture 1 and allotment 131 pasture 1. • Remove the boundary fence between allotments 129 pasture 2 and 131 pasture 3 in the south half of section 11. • To eliminate the bottleneck in pasture 3 remove the fence line (Sections 11 and 12) between allotment 129 pasture 2 and allotment 131 pasture 3. • Create a riparian pasture by installing a NW to SE fence in pastures 1 and 2 (Sections 10 and 11). Annually rotate the season of use within the created riparian pasture. • To establish/enhance willows along Magpie Creek rest riparian pastures for one year then annually rotate season of use. Begin rotation with dormant season grazing. • In allotment 129 pasture 4 extend the existing range water pipeline from Section 15 to the NW quarter of Section 23, T144N, R101W. • Reclaim developed spring located in the SW1/4SW1/4 of Section 14, T144N, R101W. • Authorized Use is 1090 AM of which 1000 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily fence heavily impacted woody draws. • Adjust stocking rate. • Harden watering area in SW1/SW1/4 of Section 11 to define access to Magpie Creek.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	<p>Surveys conducted in 1998/99 and 2004 show downward trend from PFC to FAR for portions of Magpie Creek located in the allotment.</p> <p>Surveys conducted in 2006 rated the stream reach in pasture 2 as PFC. The reach in pasture 1 was rated as FARDT for most of reach declining to NF just before entering allotment 282.</p>	Initiate action to start the stream on an upward trend towards PFC.		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every fifth year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. • Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. • Collect vegetative composition and production data every three years. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than five acres of Canada thistle, burdock, and spurge noted in allotment. • 2004 Magpie fire burned through area, monitor for new noxious weed infestations. • Permitted Federal AMs are 1090 of which 1000 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
130	Woody Draws	27 percent of sampled woody draws are healthy, 67 percent are at risk, and 7 percent are unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws exhibit a lack of tree and shrub regeneration, grass understories, and headcutting.	Increase the survival of tree and shrub seedlings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter graze pastures 1, 2, and 6 on rotating annual basis. • Create three pasture deferred rotation system between pasture 7, 8, and 9. • Authorized Use is 833 AMs of which 634 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Utilize herding. • Adjust stocking rate..
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	1998/99 and 2004 surveys rate the portion of Whitetail Creek in this allotment at PFC.	Maintain PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. • Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year., Monitor Canada thistle in pasture. 1 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 63 acres of Canada thistle and burdock located along Whitetail Creek. • Recommend moving winter feeding activities from federal to private in pastures 1 and 2. • Permitted Federal AMs are 833 of which 634 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
131	Woody Draws	Approximately 56 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy and 44 percent were at risk due to lack of adequate regeneration and poor structure in the shrub layer.	Increase the survival of seedlings and improve structure of the shrub layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange allotment 131 pastures 1 and 2 for allotment 129 pasture 2. Pastures 1 and 2 would be utilized as summer pasture. To eliminate the bottleneck in pasture 3 remove the fence line between allotment 129 pasture 2 and allotment 131 pasture 3 in Sections 11 and 12. Extend range water pipeline from well in allotment 131 pasture 3 into allotment 131 pastures 1 and 2. Reclaim two reservoirs in allotment 131 pasture 1. Authorized Use is 273 AMs of which 48 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence individual woody draws in pasture 2 and 3. Adjust stocking rate. Replace the fence between pasture 1 and 2.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace of Canada thistle and burdock. Note: 2004 fire burned 15 ac. of allotment, monitor for weeds Permitted Federal AMs are 273 of which 48 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
132A	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide opportunity for growth and regrowth of native grasses and crested wheatgrass. Authorized use is 176 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting structure objectives.	Continue to maintain structure objectives.		
	Riparian	The are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need new ADP number for either this allotment or allotment 132H. Permitted Federal AMs: 176 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
132H	Woody Draws	Only one woody draw in this allotment. The sample taken in this allotment was at risk due to lack of regeneration, grassed in understory and head cutting.	Increase the survival of seedlings/saplings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a rangeland well in either pasture 2 or 3. Locate a stock tank on the fenceline separating pastures 2 and 3. Focus on early use of crested wheatgrass in pastures 2 and 3. This will aid in pulling livestock away from woody draw. Continue use of temporary fencing to defer use of native grasses intermingled with crested wheatgrass in pasture. Authorized Use is 332 AMs of which 322 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence the woody draw. Rest crested wheatgrass pastures every other year. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace of burdock in woody draws Need new ADP number for either this allotment or allotment 132H. Permitted Federal AMs are 332 of which 322 AMs are summer use and the remainder are winter use. 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
133	Woody Draws	33 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy and 67 percent are at risk due to lack of regeneration and impacted shrub layer.	Increase the survival of seedlings/saplings and stimulate shrub layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As needed graze pastures 1 and 2 early to stimulate crested wheatgrass. After coming off Blacktail Common implement a fall two pasture deferred rotation. Authorized use is 272 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Stimulate crested wheatgrass through application of fire, mowing, haying, fertilization, etc. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Blacktail Ck. flows through a portion of this allotment. The 2004 survey rated it as PFC.	Maintain PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 5 acs of Canada thistle, burdock located primarily in riparian areas. Permitted Federal AMs: 272 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
133D5	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current management which involves haying 75 percent (60 acres) of the allotment one year. Then haying the remaining 25 percent (20 acres) the next year. Authorized use is 49 AMs. 	
	Structure	This is an 80 acre allotment of crested wheatgrass and smooth brome that is hayed	Prevent crested wheatgrass from becoming decedent.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permitted Federal AMs: 49 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
134	Woody Draws	Of the sampled woody draws 71 percent were healthy, 15 were at risk and 14 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws are being affected by a lack of regeneration and understories dominated by herbaceous growth.	Increase the survival of seedlings/saplings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a twice over grazing system annually changing season of use within the rotation. Alternate salt placement in pasture 3 from one side of Whitetail Creek to the other at midpoint of grazing season, or as needed. Authorized use is 254 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rates. Implement a once over deferred rotation .
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Whitetail Ck. 98-99 Survey had two reaches at PFC and one at FAR. 2004 Survey – all reaches at PFC.	Maintain PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 22 acres of Canada thistle and burdock A sensitive plant, Hooker Townsendia, was identified in pasture 3 Permitted Federal AMs: 254 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
135	Woody Draws	All sampled woody draws were healthy.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate prescribed burning or mechanical treatment of encroaching juniper. • Initiate three pasture rotation with pasture 8,9,10. • Authorized use is 1559 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop rangeland water in pastures 8, 9, 10 and install stock tanks. • Use herding. • Adjust stocking rate. • Improve and /or add boundary fence between pastures 9 and 10 and implement five pasture rotation.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Surveys conducted in 2006 rate Mike’s Creek as Nonfunctional.	Start Mikes Creek on upward trend towards PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every fifth year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. • Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted Federal AMs: 1559 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
136/139	Woody Draws	40 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy, 40 percent are at risk, and 20 percent are unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws are affected by lack of regeneration and livestock trampling.	Increase the survival of seedlings/saplings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use crested wheatgrass pastures (allotment 136, pasture 1 and 139 pasture 1) as early season pastures. • Develop range water in 136 pasture 2 to replace lost water source located on adjacent private property. • Authorized use is 362 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx.1 ac. of wormwood, black henbane, burdock, Canada thistle • Allotments 136 and 139 are one allotment, need to correct allotment numbering. • Permitted Federal AMs: 362 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
140	Woody Draws	100 percent of the woody draws sampled were at risk due to lack of regeneration, cattle use, and grass understory. Woody draws are in pasture 1.	Increase seedling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change season of use between allotments 140 pasture 4 and 230 pasture 2. Annually change season of use between pastures 1 and 5. Authorized use is 281 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Initiate a three pasture deferred rotation between pastures 1, 4, and 5. Use a rangeland drill to interseed pasture 4 with native grass species. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	A small portion of Blacktail Creek flows through pasture 1. The 2006 survey rated this portion at PFC.	Maintain PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burdock in northwest corner of pasture 1 Permitted Federal AMs: 281 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

				Proposed Action	
Allot #		Existing Condition	Need for Action	Initial Action	Adaptive Options
Key Issues					
141	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to annually rotate season of use between pastures 1 and 3. Authorized use is 177 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Green River – 2006 PFC survey rated the Green River as PFC.	Maintain PFC		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known noxious weeds on NFS lands Permitted Federal AMs:177 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
142	Woody Draws	40 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy and 60 percent were at risk. At risk stands are bottom type woody draws which are easily accessed by cattle. Lack of adequate regeneration and impacted shrub layer are putting the stands at risk.	Increase seedling survival and stimulate shrub layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually, change seasons of use within the grazing rotation. Authorized use is 167 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate. Remove pasture boundary fence between pastures 1 and 2 and annually change season of use.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in this allotment	None		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some burdock and wormwood noted in drainage, size was less than .1 ac. Permitted Federal AMs: 167 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
158	Woody Draws	Of the woody draws sampled 50 percent were healthy, 42 percent were at risk and 8 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws had low regeneration, shrub layers were impacted and downcutting was occurring.	Increase regeneration survival, increase shrub layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change season of use within the grazing rotation. Utilize crested wheatgrass pasture 4 as an early season pasture Continue use of a once over deferred grazing rotation. Authorized use is 1566 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate. Utilize prescribed fire to treat encroaching juniper in pastures 1, 2, 6, and 11. Add allotment 249 into the grazing rotation. Implement a rest rotation.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	The Little Missouri River borders this allotment on the east side of allotment. Given the size of the river and little National Forest System land on the river FS management has little effect on the river.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx 263 acs. of leafy spurge and Canada thistle. Leafy spurge and Canada thistle are adversely affecting woody draws, continue to treat with biological controls. Burdock was also noted in the woody draws. Permitted Federal AMs: 1566 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
220	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change season within the grazing rotation. Authorized use is 160 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No noxious weeds known on NFS lands Permitted Federal AMs: 160 	

Allot	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
221	Woody Draws	All surveyed woody draws were at risk. This is due to lack of regeneration and impacted shrub layer.	Increase seedling survival and stimulate shrub layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize crested wheatgrass pastures 2 and 3 as early season pastures. Annually change season of use in pasture 6. Add stock tank in pasture 3. Tank will be supplied from existing rangeland pipeline located in adjacent Allot.272. Authorized use is 246 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rates.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known noxious weeds on NFS lands Permitted Federal AMs: 246 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
224	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change up season of use within the grazing rotation. Lightly scarify pasture 1 to address clubmoss concern. Authorized use is 153 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary fence out crested wheatgrass areas in pasture 3 and utilize as early pastures to defer impacts to natives in the pasture. Adjust stocking rate. If monitoring shows scarification for clubmoss doesn't result in reestablishment of native species then interseed pasture 1 with native grass species.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate objectives but not high.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in this allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known noxious weeds on NFS lands. Permitted Federal AMs: 153 	

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
228	Woody Draws	All sampled woody draws in the allotment were healthy.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a deferred grazing system utilizing crested wheatgrass pastures first. Authorized use is 325 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in this allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx three acres of Canada thistle and leafy spurge, areas are being treated Permitted Federal AMs: 325 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
229	Woody Draws	50 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy and 50 percent were unhealthy. The unhealthy woody draws had low regeneration and mineral blocks in the woody draws.	Increase seedling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate a livestock tank northwest of the reservoir along the fence line between pastures 2 and 3. • Fence reservoir in pasture 3. • Authorized use is 168 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence woody draws. • Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting structural objectives.	Continue to maintain structure objectives on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Collect vegetative composition and production data every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted Federal AMs: 168 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
230	Woody Draws	Of the woody draws sample 67 percent were healthy and 33 percent were at risk due to low sapling numbers, cattle use, and headcuts.	Increase seedling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a four pasture deferred rotation utilizing allotments 230 pasture 1, 288 pasture 2, 256 pasture 2 and the proposed riparian pasture in allotment 256. Annually change season of use between allotments 140 pasture 4 and 230 pasture 2. Authorized use is 364 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draw in pasture 1. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Survey(s) conducted 2004 rated the portion of Blacktail Creek in the allotment as PFC.	Maintain PFC		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 acs. of Canada thistle, wormwood, and burdock – being treated Permitted Federal AMs: 364 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
237	Woody Draws	60 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy and 40 percent were at risk. At risk stands have low regeneration, grass dominated understory and/ or impaired shrub layer .	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize pasture 3 early and change season of use in the remaining two pastures. Extend existing rangeland pipeline into pasture 1 and add a tank. Authorized use is 288 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	2004 survey rated portion of Blacktail Creek in allotment at PFC.	Maintain PFC		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 1 ac. of Canada thistle and burdock Permitted Federal AMs: 288 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
239	Woody Draws	All of the sampled woody draws were at risk. The risk stands have grass dominated understories, low tree regeneration, and an impacted shrub layer.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change season of use. Construct temporary north/south electric fence and implement a deferred rotation. Recommend early turnout in pasture Authorized use is 250 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws Construct a rangeland fence(s) dividing the allotment into quarters and implement a deferred rotation grazing system. Additional livestock water would also need to be developed once fencing was completed.
	Structure	Meeting structural objectives	Continue to meet structural objectives.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some scattered burdock noted Permitted Federal AMs: 250 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Actions	Adaptive Options
240	Woody Draws	About 30 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy and 70 percent were at risk. At risk stands have grass dominated understories, low regeneration, cattle trailing and some head cutting.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete grazing in pasture 4 by March 15. Create dependable water in pasture 1 which will allow for annual season of use changes in pastures 1, 2, and 3. Authorized use is 809 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Utilize pasture 4 for early summer grazing one out of every four years. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Survey conducted in 2006 rated North Creek and Spring Creek as PFC.	Maintain PFC		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years then every fifth year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .5 acs of Canada thistle. Burdock and wormwood noted in woody draws. Permitted Federal AMs: 809 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
241	Woody Draws	Of the sampled woody draws approximately 17 percent were healthy and 83 percent were at risk due to lack of regeneration, and the shrub layer being in poor condition. The presence of smooth brome is also a factor inhibiting woody regeneration.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the woody draw bottom in pasture 7 to establish what is the causing the adverse effects. Authorized use is 359 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use prescribed fire to treat a portion of the woody draw located in pasture 7 and then fence the treated area. Adjust stocking rate Use drift or experimental fence to minimize impacts to woody draw bottoms
	Structure	Meeting structure objectives	Continue to maintain structure objectives on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetation composition and production data once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some burdock noted in the woody draw Permitted Federal AMs: 359 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
243	Woody Draws	67 percent of the woody draws sampled were healthy and 33 percent are at risk due to heavy stock use and low regeneration.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change up season of use within the grazing rotation. Add a stock tank in southern end of pasture 1. Authorized use is 375 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Establish drift fence in pasture 1 to deflect livestock from woody draws. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting structure objectives.	Continue to maintain structure objectives on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetation composition and production data once every five years. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No weeds noted Permitted Federal AMs: 375 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
244	Woody Draws	Approximately 75 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy and 25 percent were at risk. At risk woody draws exhibit low regeneration and sapling count, impacted shrub layer and stock use.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually change season of within the grazing rotation Cross fence pasture 2, north to south. The cross fencing will create a crested wheatgrass pasture which will be grazed early. The additional pasture, created through the cross fence, allows the implementation of a two pasture deferred grazing rotation. Authorized use is 236 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Move the south boundary fence to Whitetail Road. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Whitetail Creek flows through part of this allotment. 97/98 surveys rate as PFC. The 2004 survey rated the creek at FAR/TNA.	Move creek back towards PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete R1 Bank Trampling Index annually after construction of fence, complete PFC every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permitted Federal AMs: 236 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
248	Woody Draws	No woody draws in the allotment.	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current management. Authorized use is 312 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting structure objectives.	Continue to maintain structure objectives on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	No streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permitted Federal AMs: 312 	

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
249	Woody Draws	Sampled woody draws were healthy.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use existing tank system to rotate use. Change season of use – Alternate turn-in dates over a three year period. First year turn in starts in June, second July, third August. Rotate salt and supplement to pull livestock off ridge tops. Authorized use is 204 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a stock tank in the southwest quarter of allotment. Shorten season of use but increase stocking. Adjust stocking rates. Add allotment 158 into the grazing rotation.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high objectives. Ridge tops are receiving heavy grazing pressure.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in this allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetation composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some leafy spurge and Canada thistle noted along road Permitted Federal AMs; 204 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
256	Woody Draws	Of the woody draws sampled 50 percent were healthy and 50 percent were at risk. At risk woody draws had low or no regeneration, heavily impacted or missing shrub layer. Water developments near woody draws are having an adverse effect on woody draws.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a four pasture deferred rotation utilizing allotments 230 pasture 1, 288 pasture 2, 256 pasture 2 and the proposed riparian pasture in allotment 256. • Create a riparian pasture in pasture 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construct approx. 1.5 miles of fence south of Blacktail Creek. ➤ Drill a stock well in the northwest quarter of section 24. ➤ Construct approx. 1.5 miles of livestock water pipeline to supply the two stock tanks. ➤ Install one tank in the new riparian pasture and one in the southeast quarter of section 24. • Fence existing reservoir and portion of adjacent woody draw in section 25. • Authorized use is 1591 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Adjust stocking rate. • Utilize herding to move livestock off of Blacktail Creek. • In pasture 2 create water gaps. Harden gaps and trail crossing Blacktail Creek in Sec. 24. • In pasture 3 cut encroaching junipers and use the material to control livestock access to Blacktail Creek. Drift fences could also be used in combination with the native materials.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	PFC surveys conducted in 2004 and 2006 rated Blacktail Creek as NF with a small portion FAR-TNA.	Start stream back toward PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. • In pastures 2 and 3 annually complete R1 Bank Trampling Index, complete PFC every fifth year. • Collect vegetation composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black henbane along creek. • Sensitive population of Dakota buckwheat in allotment. • Permitted Federal AMs: 1591 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
258	Woody Draws	86 percent of the sampled woody draws are healthy and 14 percent are unhealthy due to low regeneration.	Maintain current woody draw conditions..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage livestock tank system to better distribute livestock. Place tank in north central portion of pasture 1 to draw cattle away from the creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate. Add a tank to the existing rangeland pipeline in the SW1/4 of Section 7.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a riparian exclosure by installing an electric fence in the SW1/4NE1/4 of Section 13 north of Ash Coulee Creek. 	
	Riparian	98/99 survey rated Ash Coulee Creek as FARNTA and FARDT. 2004, 2006 surveys rate creek as PFC and FARDT.	Move FARDT reach of Ash Coulee Creek towards PFC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once riparian exclosure has met PFC allow prescribed grazing in the pasture as directed by the Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). Authorized use is 2071 AMs. 	
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Annually complete R1 Bank Trampling Index, complete PFC every fifth year. Collect vegetation composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx.2 acs. of Canada thistle, leafy spurge, and burdock which is being treated. Sensitive plant species Blueeyed Mary and Hooker Townsendi were found in this allotment, however the population was not being effected by livestock grazing. Headcutting in gullies is affecting the distribution of livestock in the allotment. Headcuts appear to be tied to road construction. Permitted Federal AMs: 2071 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
272	Woody Draws	50 percent of the sampled woody draws are at risk and 50 percent are unhealthy. In the at risk woody draws seedling/saplings are present but they are being continually grazed back. Unhealthy wood draws exhibit low or no tree regeneration and livestock trailing.	Establish tree regeneration and promote seedling/sapling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence woody draw located in the SW1/4 of Section 30 with temporary electric fence. Construct rangeland water pipeline starting at the wellhead in Section proceeding through sections 28, 29, 30, and 33. Install four livestock tanks, one in each section. After construction of the pipeline is complete reclaim the dugout located in pasture 1, SE1/4 of Section 29; and the reservoir in pasture 2, NW1/4SE1/4 Section 30. Control livestock distribution through management of access to tanks and reservoirs. Authorized use is 1473 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence additional high value woody draws. Adjust stock rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not the high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Collect vegetation composition and production data annually for three years then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 5 acs. of Canada thistle and burdock Permitted Federal AMs: 1473 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
277	Woody Draws	50 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy, 42 percent were at risk, and 8 percent were unhealthy. For both at risk and unhealthy woody draws low or no regeneration is main concern. Pasture 1 has the most impacted woody draws.	Establish tree regeneration and promote seedling/sapling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install stock tank (Section. 24) supplied from existing pipeline located in pasture 1. • Fence dam in SE 1/4SW1/4 of Section 24 to control livestock access to water. • Maintain current twice over grazing system. • Continue to manage tanks to distribute livestock. • Authorized use is 1129 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Install new stock tank in pasture 2. • Adjust stocking level.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives. This allotment is close to meeting high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	1998/99, 2004, 2006 surveys rate-Magpie Ck at PFC; 2006 survey of North Creek at PFC, 2006 Survey Scairt Woman Draw - Upper reach at PFC, lower NF. It's unclear why the lower reach of Scairt Woman Draw is NF. Underlying bedrock formations may be effecting. This is a reach of less then a quarter of a mile.	Determine why lower reach of Scairt Woman Draw is nonfunctional. Maintain PFC on Magpie and North Creek.		
MONITORING				REMARKS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws in pastures 1 and 5 every third year and pasture 2 every fifth year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. • Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. • Monitor pasture 1 annually for three years to determine vegetation composition and production and then every five years. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 23 acres of Canada thistle, burdock, and wormwood scattered across allotment. • Recommend moving hay lot in pasture 5 from present location to the SW corner of the pasture. • Permitted Federal AMs:1129 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
278	Woody Draws	Sampled woody draw was rated as unhealthy due to lack of seedling/saplings, and no shrub layer.	Increase seedling/sapling understory, and enhance shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize pastures 1, 2, and 4 as crested wheatgrass pastures (May 1). Reclaim reservoir in pasture 2. Authorized use is 272 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	No perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data every third year. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 8 acres of Canada thistle and burdock. Weeds have been treated Permitted Federal AMs: 272 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
281	Woody Draws	Of the sampled woody draws 20 percent were healthy, 60 percent were at risk, and 20 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy stands are due to low regeneration, and livestock trampling.	Increase seedling/sapling survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop water source in pasture 1 to pull livestock away from woody draws. Annually change season of use in the grazing rotation. Authorized use is 295 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct reservoir in southwestern portion of pasture 1. Fence high value woody draws. Mechanically treat portion of pasture 6, to reduce clubmoss, then interseed, and possibly fertilize. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 13 acres of Canada thistle, leafy spurge, and burdock Permitted Federal AMs: 295 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
282	Woody Draws	Approximately 80 percent of the woody draws sampled were healthy and about 20 percent were at risk. Low sapling numbers, impacted shrub layer, low or no regeneration, and browsing typify the At Risk woody draws. Heavy leafy spurge infestations in woody draws are adversely affecting woody draws.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move pasture 5 boundary fence to ridge top in the SE portion of pasture 5. • Continue deferred rotation system changing season of use within the rotation. • Manage water tanks to better distribute use along Magpie Creek. • Reduce sagebrush encroachment on terrace along east side of pasture 6. • Move fence from NE corner of pasture 5 to the west. • Continue to monitor Fantail Creek. • Authorized use is 2123 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Create a riparian pasture through construction of a fence south of Magpie Creek in Sections 4, 5, 6. • If created the riparian pasture would require an additional water source. • Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting all structure objectives.	Continue to maintain structure objectives		
	Riparian	1998/99 Survey – Fantail Creek at PFC – 2004 Survey Fantail rated NF and FARUT. Fantail Creek is recovering from the Fantail Fire. Increasing vegetation is trapping sediment. and reducing sediment delivery. 1998/99 survey rated Magpie Ck at PFC, 2004 survey rated it NF.	Fantail is still being affected by a natural event. At this point no action is necessary. Need to start Magpie on an upward trend.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every fifth year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Annually complete R1 Bank Trampling Index, complete PFC every fifth year. • Collect vegetative composition and production data once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 230 acres of noxious weeds including leafy spurge, Canada thistle, black henbane, and burdock. Weeds are scattered across landscape, they are being treated. • Control leafy spurge infestations in woody w/ biological agents as preferred control method. Herbicides if biological is unsuccessful • Permitted Federal AMs: 2123 	

				Proposed Action	
Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Initial Action	Adaptive Options
283	Woody Draws	Of the sampled woody draws 100 percent were healthy.	Maintain current woody draw conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue current management system and monitor. • Develop rangeland well which may be located in this allotment or allotment 300. Construct a water pipeline to supply two stock tanks. A stock tank will be located in each allotment. • Authorized use is 300 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Whitetail Creek flows through portion of this allotment. 1998 survey rated it at PFC.	Maintain PFC		
<p>MONITORING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every fifth year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. • Collect vegetative composition and production data every third year. 				<p>REMARKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 40 ac. of Canada thistle and burdock. • Permitted Federal AMs: 300 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
286	Woody Draws	Sampled woody draw was unhealthy due to lack of or low regeneration and no shrub layer.	Establish/increase seedling regeneration and shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement three pasture deferred rotation. Construct water lot between pastures 1 and 3. Authorized use is 278 AMs. Construct water lot between pastures 2 and 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draw. Adjust stocking rate. Include off permit private land pasture in the rotation. Construct water lot between pastures 1 and 3.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	1998/99, 2004 surveys rated Betsy Creek's three reaches as NF, NF, FARTNA.	Start on upward trend.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every fifth year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 ac of wormwood in lowlands, trace of burdock. Permitted Federal AMs: 278 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
287	Woody Draws	33 percent of sampled woody draws were healthy, 50 percent were at risk and 17 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws are affected by low regeneration, no shrub layer, deep headcuts, and locations next to water.	Promote survival of seedling/saplings and shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage stock tanks to pull livestock away from woody draws and to control distribution. • Maintain current grazing system but change season of use within rotation. • Authorized use is 579 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Improve upon natural barrier between pasture 2 and 3 to control livestock access. • Add livestock tank in N1/2 of section 26, pasture 3, and adjust tank management accordingly. • Adjust stocking rate. • Fence reservoir in pasture 3.
	Structure	Meeting structure objectives.	Continue to maintain structural objectives.		
	Riparian	The are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. • Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .4 ac of Canada thistle, and burdock on private, none on federal. • Permitted Federal AMs: 579 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
288	Woody Draws	All of the sampled woody draws were at risk due to lack of regeneration and impacts to shrub layer.	Increase seedling and sapling survival and reduce impacts to the shrub layers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a four pasture deferred rotation utilizing allotments 230 pasture 1, 288 pasture 2, 256 pasture 2 and the proposed riparian pasture in allotment 256. • Manage stock tanks to control livestock distribution. • Authorized use is 268 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence high value woody draws. • Adjust stocking rate. • Utilize a temporary electric or permanent fence to diagonally fence pasture 2 northwest to southeast.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the allotment.	None		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey woody draws every third year. • Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) every three years. • Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted Federal AMs: 268 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
289	Woody Draws	45 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy, 33 percent were at risk, and 22 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws exhibit low regeneration, no saplings, no shrub layer, grazing impacts dugout, and impacts associated with winter feeding near woody draws.	Improve seedling regeneration, sapling and shrub survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pasture 3 manage livestock tanks to more effectively draw cattle away from woody draws. Add a stock tank in both pastures 2 and 3. Fence south boundary of Section 2 and integrate new pasture into a two pasture deferred rotation. Authorized use is 1789 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence high value woody draws. Split pasture 3 with a north/south fence and implement a three pasture deferred rotation. Adjust stocking rate.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	A portion of North Creek in this allotment. Surveys conducted in 2006 rated at PFC.	Maintain PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx 18 acs on fed, 5 on private of Canada thistle and burdock. Weeds are being treated. Permitted Federal AMs: 1789 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
300	Woody Draws	50 percent of the sampled woody draws were healthy, and 50 percent were at risk. The at risk woody draws exhibited little or no regeneration, low saplings numbers and some headcutting.	Increase seedling/sapling understory,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop rangeland well which may be located in this allotment or allotment 283. Construct a water pipeline to supply two stock tanks. A stock tank will be located in each allotment. Once well is developed reclaim spring in the SE1/4 in Section 28. Reclaim entrenched livestock trails in the waterlot located on Magpie Creek. Authorized use is 486 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross fence allotment dividing the allotment into two pastures. Adjust stocking rate
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objectives.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	The waterlot located on Magpie creek was surveyed in 2006 and rated as FARDT.	Restore water lot segment of Magpie to PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some wormwood noted Permitted Federal AMs: 486 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
301	Woody Draws	Of the sampled woody draws 47 percent were healthy, 35 percent were at risk and 18 percent were unhealthy. At risk and unhealthy woody draws exhibit low regeneration, no shrub layer, access by livestock and headcutting.	Increase seedling/sapling understory,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair existing water developments which would offer more management opportunities Install a crossfence in pasture 1 and implement a four pasture deferred rotation. Fence out spring areas, install check valve to dump water back into riparian areas once stock tanks are full. Move existing water tanks away from seeps/boggy areas. Authorized use is 1666 AMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase stocking level and shorten season of use. Adjust stocking levels.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate but not high structure objective.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Magpie Ck. 97-99 survey rated PFC, 2004 survey part PFC and part FARTNA, 2006 survey rated at PFC except for 1/8 mile segment which was rated FARDT.	Need to move FARDT reach towards PFC.		
MONITORING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada thistle, burdock and bindweed identified in woody draws. Permitted Federal AMs: 1666 	

North Billings Allotment Management Plan Revisions – Scoping Letter

Allot #	Key Issues	Existing Condition	Need for Action	Proposed Action	
				Initial Action	Adaptive Options
302	Woody Draws	50 percent of the sampled woody draws are healthy, 40 percent are at risk, and 10 percent are unhealthy. Main concern is lack of regeneration. The unhealthy woody draws are associated with water.	Increase survival rate for seedlings and saplings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change up season of use between pastures 1 and 2. Fence three reservoirs to control access to water in pasture 2. Authorized use is 1044 AMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust stocking rates. Temporarily fence crested wheatgrass areas and early graze (May 1) once every three years.
	Structure	Meeting low and moderate structure but not high structure objectives. East side of pasture 2 heavily impacted, dominated by blue grama and clubmoss.	Create additional high structure on biologically capable habitats.		
	Riparian	Magpie Creek 98-99 Survey –PFC 2004 Survey – FARTNA 2006 Survey - PFC	Maintain PFC		
<p>MONITORING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey woody draws every third year. Gather Visual Obstruction Readings (VOR) annually for three years then reevaluate survey frequency. Complete Properly Functioning Condition (PFC) survey every fifth year. Collect vegetative composition and production data annually for three years, then once every five years. 				<p>REMARKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace of Canada thistle and burdock. There is a population of Black Cottonwood on this allotment. Permitted Use: 1044 Federal AMs. This Permitted Use includes state, fed, and deeded lands. Trade use also affecting. 	