

APPENDIX B COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The single reply to the draft environmental assessment was a letter, dated May 27, from Mr. Jeff Burgess. Mr. Burgess disagreed with the nonpoint source pollution control portion of the project and included a copy of an article by A. Joy Belsky which he had cited in his response to the scoping letter, plus a list of nine literature citations.

The following summarizes the comments and responses.

Comment #	Comment	Response
1	The EA did not adequately address the “scientific soundness of your assumption that the woody vegetation reductions proposed in this project will result in less erosion.” The EA did not consider the research cited in paper by A.J. Belsky which was cited in response to scoping letter.	The analysis considered the entire treatments and reduction of woody vegetation was only one component. The Project Record has been supplemented to discuss this research, along with other relevant research, plus the site specific evaluations which led to the prescribed treatment proposals (Project Record #12a, supplement to the Soil & Water Specialist Report).
2	The project is an expensive waste of public monies – using non-point source pollution control funds to increase herbaceous vegetation and thereby improve livestock forage production.	Although increased livestock forage production may be a benefit it is not the controlling feature. In these treated areas livestock grazing may only occur following monitoring and determination that watershed condition objectives have been met. Subsequent grazing must be compatible with maintaining watershed condition.
3	The EA should set a minimum rest period for reseeded areas such as at least 3 years.	The required rest period will be determined by monitoring. In Treatment Areas 1-4 it will be at least two growing seasons and may extend beyond three years, depending on rate of recovery.
4	The old fences to be removed and other fences to be ensured to be “antelope friendly” should be specifically identified and a time table established.	The project assessment (Project Record) identified location of the known abandoned fence. The EA has been modified to specify it. Inspection of fences in antelope habitat will be done during the project implementation phase and any required modifications will be completed at that time or within one year of identification. The EA has been modified to include the list of fences, pp 11-12.
5	Prefers selection of the no action alternative.	Preference is noted.