



**Scoping Document**

**Bug Lake/Red Wells-  
Rock Creek  
Grazing  
Reauthorization**

**USDA Forest Service  
Uinta-Wasatch-Cache  
National Forests  
Ogden Ranger District  
Cache and Rich County, Utah  
Comments Due: April 18, 2008**

**The Purpose of this Scoping Document**

This document is to inform you that the Ogden Ranger District is proposing to reauthorize grazing on the Bug Lake and the Red Wells-Rock Creek Sheep Allotments (see map). Livestock grazing would be reauthorized using Forest Plan direction to meet or move toward the desired conditions identified in the Forest Plan. The current management for the allotments is as shown below.

Allotment	N.F Acres	Pvt. Land Acres	Livestock Number-Class	Grazing Season	Grazing System
Bug Lake	5,445	2,295	1200 - ewe/lamb	June 6 – Sept. 30	Deferred Rotation
Red-Wells/Rock Creek	6,028	2,240 (880 state)	(same band as above)	July 1 – Sept. 30	Deferred Rotation

We invite you to let us know of any comments, concerns, or suggestions you might have regarding this proposed reauthorization of grazing on the Ogden Ranger District.

**What is being proposed?**

The proposal is to reauthorize grazing on these two allotments using Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines which are found below.

**Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines**

The following Forest Plan grazing standards and guidelines are a condition of the term grazing permits and are also included in the Annual Operating Instructions for each allotment. They are intended to maintain desired conditions or trends towards desired conditions.

UTILIZATION STANDARDS

(S24) As a tool to achieve desired conditions of the land, maximum forage utilization standards for vegetation types in satisfactory condition using traditional grazing systems (rest rotation, deferred rotation, season long) are as follows:

Table S24: Percent utilization of key grass or grass like vegetation, by vegetation type, for rangelands in satisfactory condition.

Vegetation Type	Condition	Percent Utilization Key Grass or Grass like
Upland and Aspen	Satisfactory	50
Crested Wheatgrass	Satisfactory	60
Riparian* Class I	Satisfactory	50
Riparian* Class II & III	Satisfactory	60

\*Riparian, away from greenline

(S25) As a tool to achieve desired conditions of riparian areas, maximum forage utilization standards (stubble height) for low to mid elevation *greenline* species in Class I, II, and III (see Forest Plan Appendix VII) riparian areas in satisfactory condition are as follows: (Key species being grazed include water sedge, Nebraska sedge, and/or wooly sedge.)

**Table S25. Greenline stubble height at the end of the growing season, by riparian class, for rangeland satisfactory condition.**

<b>Riparian Class</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Greenline Stubble Height at End of Growing Season</b>
Riparian Class I	Satisfactory	No Less Than 5”
Riparian Class II	Satisfactory	No Less Than 4”
Riparian Class III	Satisfactory	No Less Than 3”

(G71) As a tool to achieve rehabilitation of upland, aspen, and riparian communities away from the greenline that are not meeting or moving toward objectives (i.e. in unsatisfactory condition), maximum allowed forage utilization will be 30-40 percent.

**GREENLINE ECOLOGICAL STATUS**

(G7) Manage Class 1 Riparian Area Greenlines for 70% or more late-seral vegetation communities as described in Intermountain Region Integrated Riparian Evaluation Guide (USDA Forest Service, 1992). Manage Class 2 Riparian Area Greenlines for 60% or more late-seral vegetation communities. Manage Class 3 Riparian Area Greenlines for 40% or more late-seral vegetation communities.

**GROUND COVER**

(S7) Allow management activities to result in no less than 85% of potential ground cover for each vegetation cover type. (See Forest Plan Appendix VII for potential ground cover values by cover type.)

**Why are we proposing this action?**

An environmental analysis is required in order to authorize any permitted activity on National Forest System land.

**What is the Decision to be Made**

The decision to be made is whether or not to reauthorize grazing on the Bug Lake and Red Wells-Rock Creek Allotments.

I will determine whether or not the decision may be categorically excluded from further analysis following a review of specialist reports, biological evaluations/assessments, public comments, and other pertinent analyses. Based on an early review of monitoring data for these allotments, it appears current grazing management is meeting or moving towards the desired conditions stated in the Forest Plan. If the allotments qualify for categorical exclusion, it is my intention to issue a Decision Memo for these allotments under the authority granted the Forest Service by the U.S. Congress in Section 339 of the FY 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-447). This legislation provides that certain decisions to authorize allotment grazing shall be categorical excluded (CE) from documentation in environmental assessments and environmental impact statements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The full text follows:

*SEC. 339. For fiscal years 2005 through 2007\*, a decision made by the Secretary of Agriculture to authorize grazing on an allotment shall be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) if: (1) the decision continues current grazing management; (2) monitoring indicates that current grazing management is meeting, or satisfactorily moving toward, objectives in the land and resource management plan, as determined by the Secretary; and (3) the decision is consistent with agency policy concerning extraordinary circumstances. The total number of allotments that may be categorically excluded under this section may not exceed 900.*

\* Sec. 339 has been extended for an additional year through September 30, 2008

If these allotments do not qualify for categorical exclusion, I will proceed with the appropriate level of analysis and decision.

Decisions issued under the authority of Section 339 of the FY 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act are not appealable under 36 CFR 215. Permittees may appeal this decision under 36 CFR 251.

### **Preliminary Issues**

1. Effects on the environment including water quality, wildlife, vegetation, soil, cultural resources, fisheries, air quality, and recreation.
2. Effects on special status species, including plants and wildlife.

### **Who will make the Decision?**

The District Ranger, Chip Sibbersen, is the official responsible for making the decision. The decision would be implemented in the summer of 2008.

### **We want to hear from you.**

We welcome your comments, whether you have additional issues you believe need to be addressed or specific concerns with the proposal.

Specific questions regarding the proposal should be directed to Jim Chard, at (801) 625-5112; FAX (801) 625-5914, or email [jchard@fs.fed.us](mailto:jchard@fs.fed.us). Additional information can be found on the web at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/wcnf/projects/proposed/>.

Submittals you make and identifiers therein will be available for public review and may be released in their entirety if requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

### **When do we need your Response?**

To be most useful, we would appreciate receiving your written comments by **April 18, 2008**. Comments should be mailed to:

Chip Sibbersen, District Ranger, Ogden Ranger District, 507 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 103, Ogden, UT 84401 or emailed to: [jchard@fs.fed.us](mailto:jchard@fs.fed.us)

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