

Permits for R.L. and W & M Baker would be issued as follows:

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>Livestock Number/Kind</u>	<u>Season of Use</u>	<u>%PL</u>	<u>Active AUMs</u>	<u>Suspended AUMs</u>	<u>Total AUMs</u>
Richard L. Baker	30 cattle	5/21 to 6/5	50*	8	8	16
		10/15-10/31	50*	8	-	8
Wayne & Melodie Baker	<u>256</u> cattle	5/21 to 6/5	50*	69	79	148
		10/15-10/31	50*	<u>70</u>	-	<u>70</u>
	286 cattle			155	87	242

\* The percent public land is shown at 50% for R.L Baker and W & M Baker due to permitted grazing on the adjacent Marco Forest permit and Spud Forest permit grazed consecutively with East Fork Allotment.

AUMs can be utilized entirely in the spring (ending 6/22) or split between the spring and fall periods (as shown) if so determined during annual operating plan development. The scheduled fall use can be flexible extending into November to accommodate the coordinated grazing plan. If full use is made in the spring a fall trailing permit would have to be applied for separately and authorized prior to trailing across public land. The 155 active AUMs can not be exceeded which equates to a maximum of 33 days with 286 cow/calf pairs or "dry" cows. Fall use would be made only with "dry" cows. Paddocks grazed in the fall would not be re-grazed the following spring. The Big Lake/Corral Cr Pasture would remain a combined use pasture and available for use by all permittees during its scheduled use period. It would continue to be scheduled for complete rest every other year, however, fall trailing would be allowed to accommodate the grazing sequence on the adjacent Forest allotment.

The same terms and conditions indicated as grazing use standards and guidelines, as shown in Alternative 2, would apply. Actual use reports submitted by each permittee in a timely manner would continue as a requirement of the permit. However, these reports must state, at a minimum, the number and type of livestock and the on/off dates for each paddock comprising the BLM administered public lands. The big horn sheep range would remain closed to livestock grazing until an assessment of habitat conditions and Herd Management Plan (HMP) objectives is completed.

Alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail:

A no grazing alternative was considered but not analyzed in this environmental assessment. Resolution of any present issues or resource conflicts would continue to be obtained through properly managed livestock grazing in accordance with direction given in the Challis RMP without total livestock exclusion.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

General Description

The allotment generally faces south and east, sloping towards the East Fork of the Salmon River with drainages flowing south and east creating dissected upland foothills with a variety of aspects. The public lands occupy the lower elevation sagebrush steppe foothills from approximately 6000 feet to 7800 feet above sea level. Slopes range from nearly flat on river terraces and benches to very steep (over 60%) on mountain hillsides and canyons. Precipitation follows topography with the higher elevations ranging from 12 to 16 inches per year to the lower foothills where yearly precipitation ranges from 8 to 10 inches.

Occurrences of experimental transplanted populations of gray wolf are possible on the BLM managed areas of the allotment, however livestock grazing will have no impact on their habitat or movements.

The allotment lies within Visual Resource Management Class 1 (associated with the two wilderness study areas) and Class 2. Livestock grazing, as described in each of the alternatives, has been greatly reduced from pre AMP (1982) historic levels and will not exceed the manner or degree described in the initial 1976 baseline criteria for livestock grazing and therefore will not be analyzed further.

#### CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Some of the following elements of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation, executive order, or policy and must be considered in all environmental assessments. Others have been added to the following list because of their importance in assessing impacts. All the following elements have been analyzed. However, elements denoted by an "X" are not affected by the proposed action and will receive no further consideration.

<u>X</u> Air Quality	<u>X</u> Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
<u>   </u> Cultural Resources	<u>X</u> Farm Lands (prime or unique)
<u>   </u> Floodplains	<u>X</u> Native American Religious Concerns
<u>X</u> Threatened/Endangered Animals	<u>   </u> T/E and Sensitive Plants
<u>   </u> Threatened/Endangered Fish	<u>X</u> Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
<u>   </u> Water Quality	<u>   </u> Wetlands/Riparian Zones (including upland sites)
<u>   </u> Wild & Scenic Rivers	<u>   </u> Wilderness
<u>X</u> Availability of Access/ Need to Reserve Access	<u>   </u> Soils
<u>X</u> Wild Horse and Burro Designated Herd Management Areas	<u>X</u> Mineral Resources

- |                                     |  |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Vegetation types, communities;<br>vegetative permits and sales;<br>Rangeland resources   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Invasive/Non-native Species |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Wildlife   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Forest Resources            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Economic Feasibility of<br>Agricultural Entry  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Paleontological Resources   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Indian Trust Resources   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Tribal Treaty Rights        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Recreation Use, Existing and<br>Potential  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Visual Resources            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Existing and Potential Land Uses   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Economic & Social Values    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Justice (EO 12989)<br>(minority and low-income populations)  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Fisheries                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No chemical or chemicals from the EPA's <u>Consolidated List of Chemicals Subject to Reporting Under Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986</u> , (10,000 pounds or more), will be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of in implementing the proposed action. No extremely hazardous substances, as defined in 40 CFR 355, will be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of in implementing the proposed action. <i>If this element is not checked, see EA document for further details concerning these chemicals and/or hazardous substances.</i> |                                     |                             |

Affected Resources: Elements which are present and are likely to be affected are discussed below.

**Threatened/Endangered Fish-Fisheries:** The East Fork Salmon River watershed is designated critical habitat for chinook salmon and steelhead trout with occupation generally being confined to the East Fork Salmon River. Occupation has been observed in the lower reaches of Big Boulder and Little Boulder Creeks as spawning and rearing habitat and is suspected in the lower reaches of Big Lake Creek. The threatened bull trout and sensitive westslope cutthroat trout occupy the main East Fork, Big Boulder, Little Boulder, and Wickiup Creeks. Rainbow trout occupy the main East Fork Salmon River, Big Boulder, Little Boulder, Big Lake, and Jimmy Smith Creeks. Jimmy Smith Lake also contains rainbow trout. The remaining perennial streams within the allotment (Bluett, Baker, Corral, and Marco Creeks) are non-fish bearing. The East Fork Salmon River Biological Assessments for Steelhead and Bull Trout (1998) described the aquatic habitat conditions as generally good with cool water temperatures and good in-stream features (pools, woody debris).

**Vegetation Types and Rangeland Resources:** The dominant vegetation types on the allotment are sagebrush/grass communities commonly comprised of Wyoming big sagebrush with bluebunch wheatgrass, bluegrasses, needlegrasses, indian ricegrass, and squirreltail grass. Communities of low sagebrush and three-tip sagebrush are also common with similar grass compositions. Mountain sagebrush with Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass are present on

the higher elevation mountain slopes. Range conditions (1978 survey) are generally fair to good. During the summer of 1999, the field assessment for Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing was completed on the allotment. Although the formal determination has not as yet been made, a cursory review indicates the uplands are biotically healthy and physically functioning. Observations indicate the uplands are generally in late seral based on species composition. Upland long term trend is static to upward. There are six permanent study plots located within the allotment; four are photo plots, two of which are on the big horn sheep pasture. The remaining two (EF-4 and EF-6) are nested frequency plots, both of which were re-read in 1999. EF-4 was erroneously re-read from its original reading of 1981 rather than its modified baseline character established in 1984. Therefore, comparison to the 1981 plot is not possible. EF-6 is located in the 1980 prescribed burn area that was last read in 1983. This plot shows a slow increase in Idaho fescue (from zero in 1983) and a slight increase of the dominant bluebunch wheatgrass (from 93% to 96% frequency). Mountain sagebrush also shows a steady increase (from zero in 1983 to co-dominant in 1999). Overall trend in this study area is upward even with the increase of wild and domestic ungulate grazing use normally expected on burned sites.

**Invasive/Non-native Species:** A variety of state listed noxious weeds occupy the allotment. Principle species include spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, and black henbane. Occupation and establishment has been limited to areas along roadways. Introduced exotic (invasive) species (cheatgrass) are present but have also been limited to established roadways. Avenues of weed and exotic species expansion have been linked to birds, rodents, grazing animals (i.e. elk, deer, livestock), and human activities.

**Threatened/Endangered/Sensitive Plants:** Special status plants known to occur on the allotment include wavy-leaf thelypodium and Challis milkvetch. Potential habitat also exists for the sensitive Lemhi penstemon, and Lemhi milkvetch, and the federally listed Ute ladies'-tresses although no populations of these species have been found.

**Soils:** Soil Groups are described as follows (derived from the Custer/Lemhi Soil Survey General Soils Map, NRCS): Zeebar-Friedman-Donkeyhill; gravelly loamy and gravelly clayey, shallow to very deep, well drained soils on mountains and foothills derived from extrusive igneous rocks. Water erosion hazard is moderate; Orthids-Dawtonia-Cronks; gravelly loamy, hilly to extremely steep, shallow to very deep, well drained soils on mountains and foothills derived dominantly from extrusive igneous rocks and quartzite. Water erosion hazard is slight to moderate. Soils associated with larger water courses with active floodplains are fluvial deposits of fine to coarse textured silts, sands, gravels, and cobbles.

**Water Quality:** Of the numerous perennial streams located on the allotment, none are identified on the DEQ 303(d) water quality impairment list as water quality limited due to not meeting designated or identified beneficial uses. Those streams with BLM "identified" beneficial uses include: Big Boulder Creek for primary contact recreation, secondary contact recreation, cold water biota, salmonid spawning, and agricultural water supply; Big Lake, Jimmy Smith, Little

Boulder, and Wickiup Creeks for secondary contact recreation, cold water biota, salmonid spawning, and agricultural water supply; Corral, Bluett, and Baker Creeks for cold water biota and agricultural water supply; and Marco Creek for agricultural water supply. Water quality on the perennial streams is generally good.

**Wildlife:** Elk, mule deer, antelope, bighorn sheep, chukar partridge, sage grouse and blue grouse are some of the more common wildlife species found yearlong on this allotment. A variety of non-game and predatory birds and mammals, and a small number of reptile and amphibian species are also present. Riparian zones along perennial and intermittent streams are the most important habitats for nongame wildlife. Lower elevation foothill habitats provide winter range for big game animals.

**Wild and Scenic Rivers:** The East Fork of the Salmon River is eligible for further study to determine potential for inclusion in a National rivers system, with a suitability finding deferred until further coordination with other agencies is completed. Outstandingly remarkable (OR) values on the East Fork of the Salmon River are recreation, fisheries, and scenic with a tentative classification of recreational.

**Recreation Use:** Diverse recreational activities are provided on the allotment in the form of hunting, hiking, fishing, scenic travel, wildlife viewing, backpacking and dispersed camping. A BLM campground, with two pit toilets is located adjacent to the East Fork Road at Big Boulder Creek, which provides 5 semi-primitive campsites. The Jimmy Smith Lake trail originates at a parking area (supplied with one pit toilet) off the Big Lake Creek road and extends part way around the north shore of Jimmy Smith Lake providing access to the lake and surrounding creeks. The lake is a popular ice fishing location. Licensed outfitter activities occur within the allotment and adjacent National Forest and SNRA lands specifically in the upper Corral Creek drainage during big game hunting seasons.

**Cultural Resources:** Approximately 28 % of the BLM lands with the allotment have been inventoried for cultural resources. Many areas exist within the allotment that have not been inventoried for cultural resources but appear to have a high probability for containing sites. As a result of the inventories many cultural sites have been recorded on the allotment. In general, lithic scatter sites represent the most frequent known site type found within the allotment. Most sites appear to be situated near riparian areas (including seeps and spring sources) and in areas which may have supported water and riparian vegetation at one time.

**Economic/Social Values:** Each of the three permittees operate full time livestock/agriculture businesses and employ permanent and seasonal workers which support local economies on the East Fork Salmon River and at Clayton and Challis, Idaho. The livestock operations are dependent upon both public and NF lands for their overall operation.

**Floodplains/Wetlands/Riparian Zones:** The allotment contains approximately 12.9 miles of riparian stream habitat on BLM. Principal streams are briefly described in the table below. This

information is summarized from data obtained through contracted riparian inventories in 1994, 1998 and 1999.

Stream	Reach	Length (miles)	Functionality/Trend	Vegetation Types	Comments
East Fork Salmon River	EFR-003	.2	PFC	Cottonwood/mixed willow Mixed grass	No livestock access
	EFR-004	.4	PFC	Alder/mixed grass Cottonwood/mixed willow	No livestock access
	EFR-005	.3	PFC	Cottonwood/alder Cottonwood/alluvial bar Mixed grass	
	EFR-006	.5	PFC	Cottonwood/mixed willow Alder/mixed grass	
Marco Creek	MARC-01	1.1	FAR-NT	Upland shrub/grass Rose/grass	Intermittent-sub in middle reach
	MARC-02	.8	FAR-NT	Rose/upland grass Aspen/grass	
Jimmy Smith Cr	JSC-001	.5	PFC	Aspen/dogwood Geyers willow	Well wooded
	JSC-002	.5	FAR/NT	Doug fir/rose Geyers willow/mixed grass	
	JSC-003	.4	PFC	Aspen/mixed willows	
Corral Creek	CC-001	.5	FAR-DT	Geyers willow/mixed grass	
	CC-002	.5	FAR-NT	Geyers willow/mixed grass	
	CC-003	1.0	FAR/NT	Aspen/mixed willow	
Big Lake Creek	BLC-001	.5	FAR-NT	Mixed willows/mixed grass Cottonwood/rose	
	BLC-002	.8	PFC	Aspen/rose Cottonwood/dogwood	Well wooded
Bluett Creek	BLUE-01	.4	PFC	Aspen/mixed willow Aspen/dogwood/grass	Limited livestock access
Big Boulder Cr	BBC-001	.2	PFC	Alder/mixed grass	No livestock access
	BBC-002	.3	PFC	Aspen/alder Cottonwood/alder	No livestock access
	BBC-003	.6	PFC	Cottonwood/alder Alder/dogwood Doug fir/alder	No livestock access