APPENDIX B

SIERRA FRONT-NORTHWESTERN GREAT BASIN AREA

PREAMBLE

The Standards and Guidelines for livestock grazing on Bureau of Land Management lands are written to accomplish the four fundamentals of rangeland health, insofar as they are affected by livestock grazing practices. Those fundamentals are:

- Watersheds are properly functioning;
- Ecological processes are in order;
- Water quality complies with State Standards; and
- Habitats of protected species are in order.

Other uses can affect the health of the land, and Guidelines for these currently exist or will be developed as needed. In addition, implementation of livestock grazing guidelines must be coordinated with other uses of the land, and collectively these uses should not detract from the goal of achieving public land health.

Standards, Indicators and Guidelines will be implemented through Standard public land management practices as defined in the Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook and the other documents listed in Appendix A [of this appendix].

Standards: The goal to be achieved.

Indicators: Indicators are observations or measurements of physical, chemical or biological factors that should be used to evaluate site conditions or trends, appropriate to the potential of the site. Indicators assist in determining whether Standards are met or Guidelines followed.

Guidelines: Guidelines are livestock management practices (e.g., tools, methods, strategies and techniques) designed to achieve healthy public lands as defined by Standards and portrayed by Indicators. Guidelines are designed to provide direction, yet offer flexibility for local implementation through activity plans and grazing permits. Activity plans may add specificity to the Guidelines based on local goals and objectives as provided for in adopted manuals, handbooks and policy. Not all Guidelines fit all circumstances. Monitoring and site specific evaluation will determine if the Standards are being met or the trend on a particular site is toward desired objectives, and if the correct Guidelines are being applied. The BLM Authorized Officer, in consultation with public land users, will identify and document acceptable or unavoidable exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

STANDARDS FOR RANGELAND HEALTH

STANDARD 1. SOILS:

Soil processes will be appropriate to soil types, climate and land form.

As indicated by:

- Surface litter is appropriate to the potential of the site;
- Soil crusting formations in shrub interspaces, and soil compaction are minimal or not in evidence, allowing for appropriate infiltration of water;
- Hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle and energy flow are adequate for the vegetative communities;
- Plant communities are diverse and vigorous, and there is evidence of recruitment; and
- Basal and canopy cover (vegetative) is appropriate for site potential.

STANDARD 2. RIPARIAN/WETLANDS:

Riparian/Wetland systems are in properly functioning condition.

As indicated by:

- Sinuosity, width/depth ratio and gradient are adequate to dissipate streamflow without excessive erosion or deposition;
- Riparian vegetation is adequate to dissipate high flow energy and protect banks from excessive erosion; and
- Plant species diversity is appropriate to riparian-wetland systems.

STANDARD 3. WATER QUALITY:

Water quality criteria in Nevada or California State Law shall be achieved or maintained.

As indicated by:

- Chemical constituents do not exceed the water quality Standards;
- Physical constituents do not exceed the water quality Standards;
- Biological constituents do not exceed the water quality Standards; and

- The water quality of all water bodies, including ground water located on or influenced by BLM lands will meet or exceed the applicable Nevada or California water quality Standards. Water quality Standards for surface and ground waters include the designated beneficial uses, numeric criteria, narrative criteria, and antidegradation requirements set forth under State law, and as found in Section 303(c) of the Clean Water Act.

STANDARD 4. PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITAT:

Populations and communities of native plant species and habitats for native animal species are healthy, productive and diverse.

As indicated by:

- Good representation of life forms and numbers of species;

- Good diversity of height, size, and distribution of plants;

- Number of wood stalks, seed stalks, and seed production adequate for stand maintenance; and

- Vegetative mosaic, vegetative corridors for wildlife, and minimal habitat fragmentation.

STANDARD 5. SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES HABITAT:

Habitat conditions meet the life cycle requirements of special status species.

As indicated by:

- Habitat areas are large enough to support viable populations of special status species;

- Special status plant and animal numbers and ages appear to ensure stable populations;

- Good diversity of height, size, and distribution of plants;

- Number of wood stalks, seed stalks, and seed production adequate for stand maintenance; and

- Vegetative mosaic, vegetative corridors for wildlife, and minimal habitat fragmentation.

GUIDELINES FOR GRAZING MANAGEMENT:

1. Waters must be free from high temperature, biocides, organisms pathogenic to human beings, toxic, corrosive or other deleterious substances attributable to domestic or industrial waste or other controllable sources at levels or combinations to interfere with any beneficial use of the water. Compliance with the provisions of this subsection may be determined in accordance with methods of testing prescribed by the State. If used as an Indicator, survival of test organisms must not be significantly less in test water than in control water.

2. Grazing management practices should be planned and implemented to meet water quality provisions in either California State water law or Nevada Administrative Code Section 445A.120-121 as applicable.

3. Management practices within allotments will maintain or promote stream channel morphology, appropriate soil organisms; adequate amounts of ground cover to support infiltration, maintain soil moisture storage, and stabilize soils; and the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle and energy flow.

4. After a range fire or other natural catastrophic event, vegetation should be returned to the native species as rapidly as possible, to afford forage and habitat for native animals. If a nurse crop is needed to protect the land from erosion, all native nurse crops should be used first.

5. Treated areas will be rested from livestock grazing for two growing seasons or until seedlings are established or the vegetative response has achieved objective levels. Wild horse and burros removed from Herd Management Areas will be restored after rehabilitation objectives have been met.

6. Alternative solutions (e.g., reseeding, funding, labor, equipment use or rental) to facilitate fire rehabilitation may be included in cooperative agreements involving qualified groups and individuals who want to participate.

7. Appropriate livestock grazing treatments will be implemented to control the frequency, duration, and level of grazing use. Where livestock grazing is authorized, grazing systems will provide within any one grazing year one or more of the following treatments:

    a. Rest or deferment from livestock grazing on a specified area as appropriate to meet Standards.

    b. Systematic rotation of deferred use and/or rest from livestock grazing among two or more units.

    c. Continuous, season-long use where it has been demonstrated to be consistent with achieving identified Standards. Once season long use is determined to be unacceptable, an alternative system will be developed and implemented before termination of season

long use, prior to the next grazing season.

d. Excluding further livestock grazing within the affected use area through appropriate techniques when utilization objectives are reached.

8. Conservation of Federal threatened or endangered, proposed, species of concern (formally Category One and Two) and other special status species is promoted by the restoration and maintenance of their habitats.

9. Salt and/or supplements will be placed at least ¼ mile from live waters (springs/streams) and outside of associated riparian areas, permanent livestock watering facilities, wet or dry meadows, and aspen stands. Also salt should not be placed in known historic properties.

10. Night bedding of sheep will be located at least ¼ mile from live waters, streams, springs, seeps, associated riparian areas, wet or dry meadows, and aspen stands.

11. Encourage the use of prescribed and natural fires, meeting prescription objectives, for the restoration and maintenance of healthy rangelands.

12. Departure from traditional grazing management practices may be authorized by BLM to achieve Standards on a case by case experimental basis for rangeland restoration and rehabilitation.

13. The best available science and technology will be utilized in monitoring and assessing the condition of rangelands from the pasture to the BLM District level.

14. Recognizing State Water Law requirements, wildlife and wild horses/burros within their Herd Management Areas will have access to surface water they customarily use.

15. Design of water facilities will incorporate features to ensure safe access and escape for small animals and birds.

16. The development of springs and seeps or other projects affecting water and associated resources shall be designed to maintain the associated riparian area and assure the attainment of Standards.

17. Grazing management practices shall be planned and implemented to allow for habitat requirements of wildlife and wild horses and burros within Herd Management Areas.

18. Implement aggressive action to reduce the invasion of exotic plant species into native plant communities. Control the spread of noxious weeds through various methods such as, grazing management, fire management and other vegetative management practices.

19. Riparian structural developments (i.e., gabions, dams, etc.) designed to achieve improvement in riparian and wetland conditions shall only be implemented in conjunction

with changes in existing grazing management practices, where grazing is a significant factor contributing to a riparian condition needing such attention. Where grazing is not a significant factor causing a riparian condition needing attention, structural developments designed to achieve improvement in riparian and wetland conditions may be implemented independent of changes in existing grazing management practices.

20. The utilization, monitoring and evaluation process will be used as a tool to promote healthy rangelands and achieve Standards.

21. Implement grazing management practices that sustain biological diversity across the landscape.

22. To prevent transmission of disease between domestic and bighorn sheep, adopt and implement the "Guidelines for Domestic Sheep Management in Bighorn Sheep Habitats" contained in Mountain Sheep Ecosystem Management Strategy in the 11 Western States and Alaska.

23. Rangeland management plans will consider listings of known historic properties and new eligible properties as they become known.

APPENDIX A

Nevada Rangeland Monitoring Handbook, 1984
Mountain Sheep Ecosystem Management Strategy in 11 Western States and Alaska, 1995
Riparian Area Management Technical Reference 1737-9, 1993
BLM Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's
Riparian Area Management Technical Reference 1737-11, 1994
"National Environmental Policy Act Quarterly Update", Volume 1, Number 2
"Programmatic Agreement Among BLM, SHPO and ACHP", August 24, 1990