

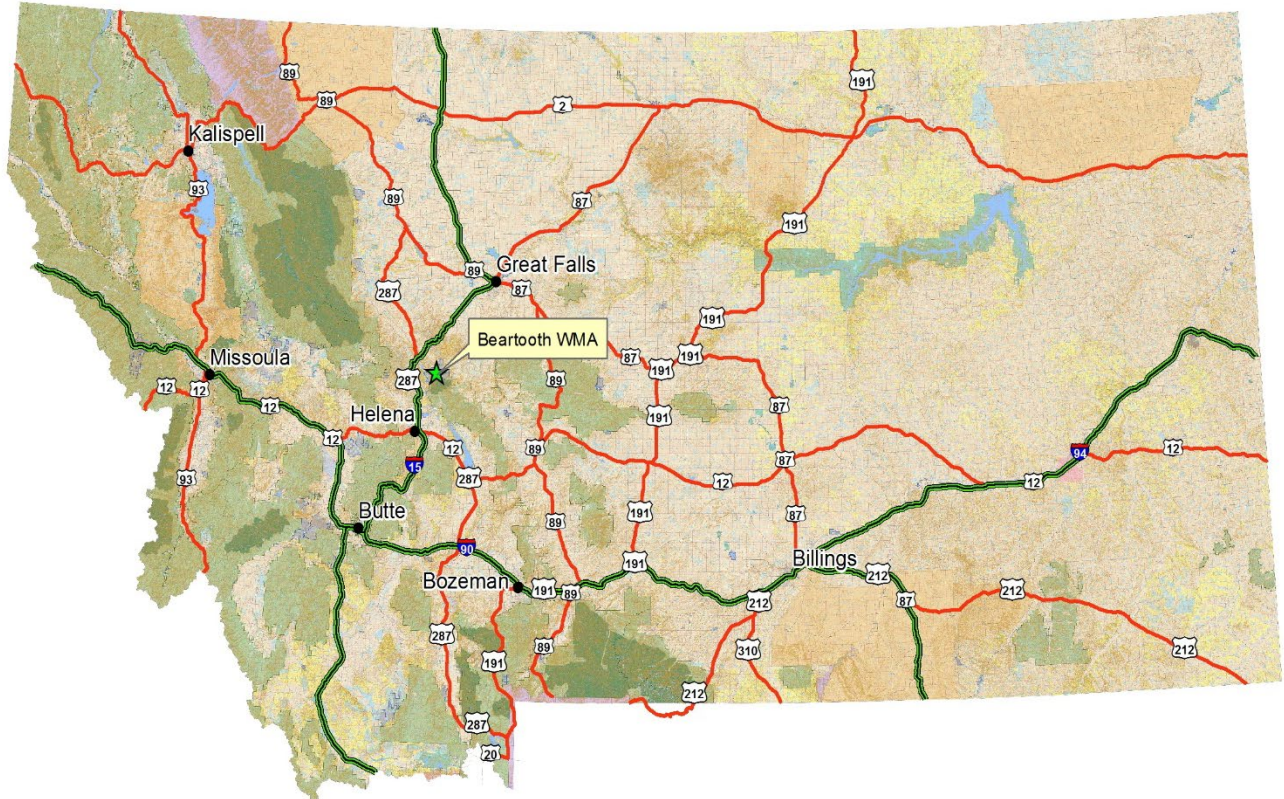
**EXHIBIT B. BTWMA / SIEBEN LIVE STOCK GRAZING LEASE PROPOSED PLAN, 2025 – 2030.**

**INTRODUCTION:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to renew two expiring livestock grazing leases on a portion of the Beartooth Wildlife Management Area for six years (2025 - 2030). Principles of rest-rotation and/or spot treatment grazing will continue to be used to maintain and/or enhance fish and wildlife habitat on the WMA. Specifically, this livestock grazing lease is designed to improve habitat quality and quantity for a variety of wildlife species, particularly elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, dusky grouse, and a variety of nongame wildlife species. This lease also focuses on riparian health, especially given the numerous habitat restoration and conservation projects for westslope cutthroat trout on both the WMA and adjoining lessee’s private lands.

The Beartooth Wildlife Management Area (BTWMA), located in west-central Montana along the northwestern edge of the Big Belt Mountains (Figure 1), encompasses almost 36,000 acres. The Wildlife Management Area (WMA) occupies land in both Lewis & Clark and Cascade Counties. Major drainages, including Cottonwood, Elkhorn and Willow Creeks flow into Holter Lake, an impoundment on the Missouri River. Secondary drainages including Wegner and Tyrrell Creeks also originate on the WMA. This rugged, mostly mountainous area ranges from 3,578 to 6,917 feet in elevation. The BTWMA was purchased in 1970 by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks from the M. Pierce Milton estate (32,320 acres). The Whitetail Prairie addition to the BTWMA was purchased from Voegelé’s Inc. in 2014 (3,680 acres).

**Figure 1. Beartooth Wildlife Management Area Location.**



Management Goals and Objectives for the BTWMA include:

**GOALS:**

"To manage for highly productive, diverse plant communities that provide quality forage and cover for native wildlife species, emphasizing elk, while providing opportunity for public hunting and other outdoor recreation."

Consistent with that goal, certain management objectives have been identified. They include (but are not limited to) the following:

"To provide the year-long habitat requirements of resident wildlife, including 500 elk, 100 bighorn sheep, 300 mule deer, 100 white-tailed deer, 50 antelope, black bear, game birds and non-game wildlife."

"To provide winter range for 5 1/2 months for an additional 1,000 elk, 200 mule deer and 100 white-tailed deer from surrounding public and private lands."

"To manage grassland vegetation, with emphasis on Rough Fescue (*Festuca scabrella*) and other native bunchgrass species, so that wildlife (particularly big game) species are provided abundant and nutritious forage."

**GRAZING/VEGETATION OBJECTIVES:**

\* Promote succession of desired native plant species into areas previously abused by domestic livestock grazing which occurred prior to FWP acquisition in 1970.

\* To provide maximum vegetative cover (abundance) and quality plant composition (nutrition/palatability) as related to wildlife needs and soil/watershed protection on native ranges associated with the BTWMA and adjoining private lands.

\* Promote plant production, vigor and nutrient content.

\* Increase the attractiveness of spring, summer and late fall forage to elk, thereby influencing distribution and minimizing depredation to adjacent private lands.

\* Implement a long term, beneficial grazing system on lands described in a sizeable portion of elk range in the upper Tyrrell, Cottonwood, Elkhorn and Wegner Creek drainages.

\* Expand the effective influence of the BTWMA for wintering elk by bringing adjacent private land into similar management, simultaneously meeting Landowner needs and wildlife tolerance.

\* Heal bare ground and reduce/stop soil loss.

\* Enhance growth and restoration of native and other desirable plant species.

\* Utilize hoof action of livestock to break soil crust and plant seeds in the deferred [graze after seed ripe] treatment.

\* Stimulate root structure and build drought resistance through rest periods of the system.

Other management goals and objectives of the BTWMA address such issues as elk depredations on neighboring private lands, fisheries, hunting and recreational activities, deed restrictions addressing management, subdivision and commercial use limitations.

The two expiring leases (2024) are the “Polloch Meadows/Upper Cottonwood Creek Lease” and the “Cow Camp Lease”. Legal description of the lands included in this lease is detailed in Appendix A. Livestock from the same lessee (and adjoining landowner) Sieben Live Stock, have been utilized in some fashion to improve vegetation conditions and health on a portion of the Beartooth WMA through grazing leases with the Department since 1992. Expiring leased lands include about 9,520 acres FWP lands, 26,300 acres Sieben Live Stock deeded lands, and approximately 2,500 acres DNRC/BLM lands. Both expiring leases are incorporated into one grazing plan. The two systems are locally known as “Cow Camp” and “Cottonwood/Whitetail Prairie/Wegner”. These grazing pastures are located in the northern portion of the WMA (Figures 2, 3 and 4).

The systems will utilize one of two types of livestock grazing schemes: rest-rotation grazing or spot treatment grazing. Resting, deferring and rotating cattle grazing on certain pastures at precise times with appropriate stocking rates will ensure that the condition of the upland and riparian plant communities is maintained and/or improved. Grazing practices must meet FWP’s minimum standards for grazing as defined in Appendix B. A minimum of two years of growing season rest in three years will ensure long term health of plant communities (some pastures will receive at least two complete years of rest and some may never receive growing season grazing).

Incorporating 26,300 acres of private lands in the grazing system greatly increases FWP’s ability to maintain and/or enhance habitat for wildlife and fisheries on a larger landscape, not just on the WMA. Sieben Live Stock’s partnership with FWP has mutual benefits. With the combined acreages acting as one large system, Sieben Live Stock can completely rest one-third of enrolled summer range annually. A second third of summer range is rest during the growing season. This allows the private as well as the public lands to receive adequate rest during a 3-year rotation in a rest-rotation grazing system. Both private and public lands achieve improved range health which helps both parties meet ecological goals. Resting one third of summer range each year builds in drought resistance. The third rested all year insures there is one year’s stockpiled forage each spring. The two thirds rested during the growing season builds resilience during the growing season, which is the most sensitive time to graze. A spot-treatment approach private/public land cooperative effort allows more grazing options to become available on other portions of the lessee’s deeded lands, which allows increase rest periods on those acres. Direct benefits for Sieben Live Stock include more grazing acres and more options for grazing and land improvement. Both public and private lands are assured of enhanced management that benefits grass, soil and incorporated watersheds. Wildlife, livestock, the range resource, and ultimately the community all mutually benefit. Total FWP lands involved in the lease is approximately 9,520 acres, which is about 26% of the total acreage of the Beartooth WMA and 25% of the grazing system.

**Lands included in the two grazing systems include:**

|                              | <b>FWP - BTWMA</b> | <b>Sieben Live Stock</b> | <b>BLM</b>   | <b>DNRC</b> | <b>SUM</b>    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>Cow Camp</b>              | 4,960              | 15,600                   | 800          | 80          | <b>21,440</b> |
| <b>Cottonwood/WTP/Wegner</b> | 4,560              | 10,700                   | 1,400        | 240         | <b>16,900</b> |
| <b>SUM ACRES</b>             | <b>9,520</b>       | <b>26,300</b>            | <b>2,200</b> | <b>320</b>  | <b>38,340</b> |
| <b>% of Total Acres</b>      | <b>(25%)</b>       | <b>(69%)</b>             | <b>(5%)</b>  | <b>(1%)</b> | <b>(100%)</b> |

**PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION - “COTTONWOOD, WHITETAIL PRAIRIE, WEGNER”**

Various areas within the BTWMA were seeded to domestic grasses prior to FWP’s acquisition of the WMA, specifically the “Polloch Meadows” area of the Cottonwood Creek drainage. Domestic grass species included Timothy and Smooth Brome. From 1987-1990, a grazing system in Polloch meadows was attempted, with limited success (Table 1).

**Table 1. BTWMA Polloch Meadows Grazing Treatments, 1987-1990.**

| Year | Grazing Dates | AUM’s | Cost/AUM | Grazing Fee |
|------|---------------|-------|----------|-------------|
| 1987 | 8/1 – 9/15    | 269   | \$1.35   | \$453.94    |
| 1988 | Rest          | 0     | N/A      | 0           |
| 1989 | 8/1 – 9/15    | 316   | \$1.86   | \$587.76    |
| 1990 | Rest          | 0     | N/A      | 0           |

Without livestock use, these tame grasses became very unpalatable during most times of the year, especially for winter forage for deer and elk. Several years of non-use by livestock and minimal use by elk resulted in stands of rank, minimally productive vegetation. Residual plant material that built up over time limited and/or delayed annual growth. This residual vegetation limited the amount of new (more succulent) plant growth available to deer and elk, especially during spring and fall months. Livestock grazing is one management tool that can be utilized to address these residual plant material and surface litter conditions. Livestock grazing can also be used to help achieve other goals including promoting maximum plant production, promoting plant vigor and nutrient content, improving soil health, and increasing the attractiveness of late fall and spring forage to wildlife species, especially elk and deer. Altered stocking rates, locations and grazing timing has much improved the effectiveness of the system compared to attempts in 1987-1990. Upper meadow areas near timber line in Polloch Meadows consist primarily of rough fescue, Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass. Riparian areas of Cottonwood Creek consist of aspen, dogwood, willow, birch, black cottonwood, Rocky Mountain maple and chokecherry.

In 2006, in the “Polloch Meadows” area of the BTWMA, a single 475-acre pasture grazing treatment was implemented to improve forage quality. This system has greatly enhanced the palatability of the remnant introduced hay fields (consisting of mostly smooth brome). The 6-year grazing lease expired in 2011. From 2012-2017, the lease was renewed and expanded to include a 400-acre pasture near Upper Cottonwood Creek on BTWMA. The lease was renewed with a one-year lease which expired in 2018. From 2019-2024, these two pastures were incorporated into a larger system to include White-tail Prairie portion of the WMA, Table 4.

**Table 2. BTWMA Polloch Meadows Grazing Treatments 2006 – 2024.**

| Year | Treatment | AUM’s              | Grazing Dates | Grazing Fee |
|------|-----------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 2006 | A         | 464                | 5/18 – 6/29   | \$3,480     |
| 2007 | C         | Rested due to fire | N/A           | \$0         |
| 2008 | A         | 510                | 6/3 - 6/30    | \$3,825     |
| 2009 | B         | 341.7              | 7/17-8/19     | \$2,562.84  |
| 2010 | C         | Rested             | N/A           | \$0         |
| 2011 | A         | 440.3              | 5/27 – 6/20   | \$3,302     |
| 2012 | B         | 486                | 7/19 – 8/15   | \$3,392.25  |
| 2013 | C         | Rested             | N/A           | \$0         |
| 2014 | A         | 276                | 5/19-6-19     | \$2,180.00  |
| 2015 | B         | 279                | 7/8 – 8/21    | \$2,204.10  |
| 2016 | C         | Rested             | N/A           | \$0         |
| 2017 | A         | 453                | 5/19 – 7/13   | \$3,578.70  |
| 2018 | B         | 284                | 6/15 – 7/5    | \$3,479.00  |
| 2019 | C         | Rested             | N/A           | N/A         |

|             |   |               |             |                 |
|-------------|---|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>2020</b> | A | 485           | 5/21 – 6/17 | Exchange of Use |
| <b>2021</b> | C | Rested (Fire) | N/A         | N/A             |
| <b>2022</b> | A | 476           | 5/25 – 7/13 | Exchange of Use |
| <b>2023</b> | C | Rested        | N/A         | N/A             |
| <b>2024</b> | A | Scheduled     |             | Exchange of Use |

Approximate Grazing Treatment Dates: 475 ACRES

A = Full Season Grazing (May 15-July 1)

B = Post Seed Ripe Grazing (July 1-August 31)

C = Complete Rest

The Upper Cottonwood area is a northerly facing slope which is primarily used during summer and fall months by elk and deer, along with other wildlife species. The pasture includes the “headwaters” of Cottonwood Creek. Native grass species including rough fescue, Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass are the primary focus. North facing timber stands consist mainly of lodgepole pine and Douglas fir, along with an aspen community in/around the headwaters of Cottonwood Creek. Prior to 2012, the area had not been manipulated by livestock and had copious amounts of residual cover. Removing this old litter stimulated regrowth, improved vegetative conditions and vigor. This, in turn, is now much more attractive to wildlife.

**Table 3. BTWMA Upper Cottonwood Pasture Grazing Treatments 2012 – 2024.**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Treatment</b> | <b>AUM's</b> | <b>Grazing Dates</b> | <b>Grazing Fee</b> |
|-------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>2012</b> | A                | 487          | 6/28 – 7/18          | \$1,005.75         |
| <b>2013</b> | B                | 190          | 8/14 – 9/4           | \$1,501.00         |
| <b>2014</b> | C                | Rested       | N/A                  | \$0                |
| <b>2015</b> | A                | 261          | 5/27 – 7/7           | \$2,061.90         |
| <b>2016</b> | B                | 219          | 6/28 – 7/0           | \$1,730.10         |
| <b>2017</b> | C                | Rested       | N/A                  | \$0                |
| <b>2018</b> | A                | 396          | 5/18 – 6/15          | 4,851.00           |
| <b>2019</b> | C                | Rested       | N/A                  | N/A                |
| <b>2020</b> | C                | Rested       | N/A                  | N/A                |
| <b>2021</b> | A                | 172          | 5/27 – 6/7           | Exchange of Use    |
| <b>2022</b> | B                | 169          | 7/13 – 7/26          | Exchange of Use    |
| <b>2023</b> | C                | Rested       | N/A                  | N/A                |
| <b>2024</b> | A                | scheduled    |                      | Exchange of Use    |

Approximate Grazing Treatment Dates: 400 ACRES

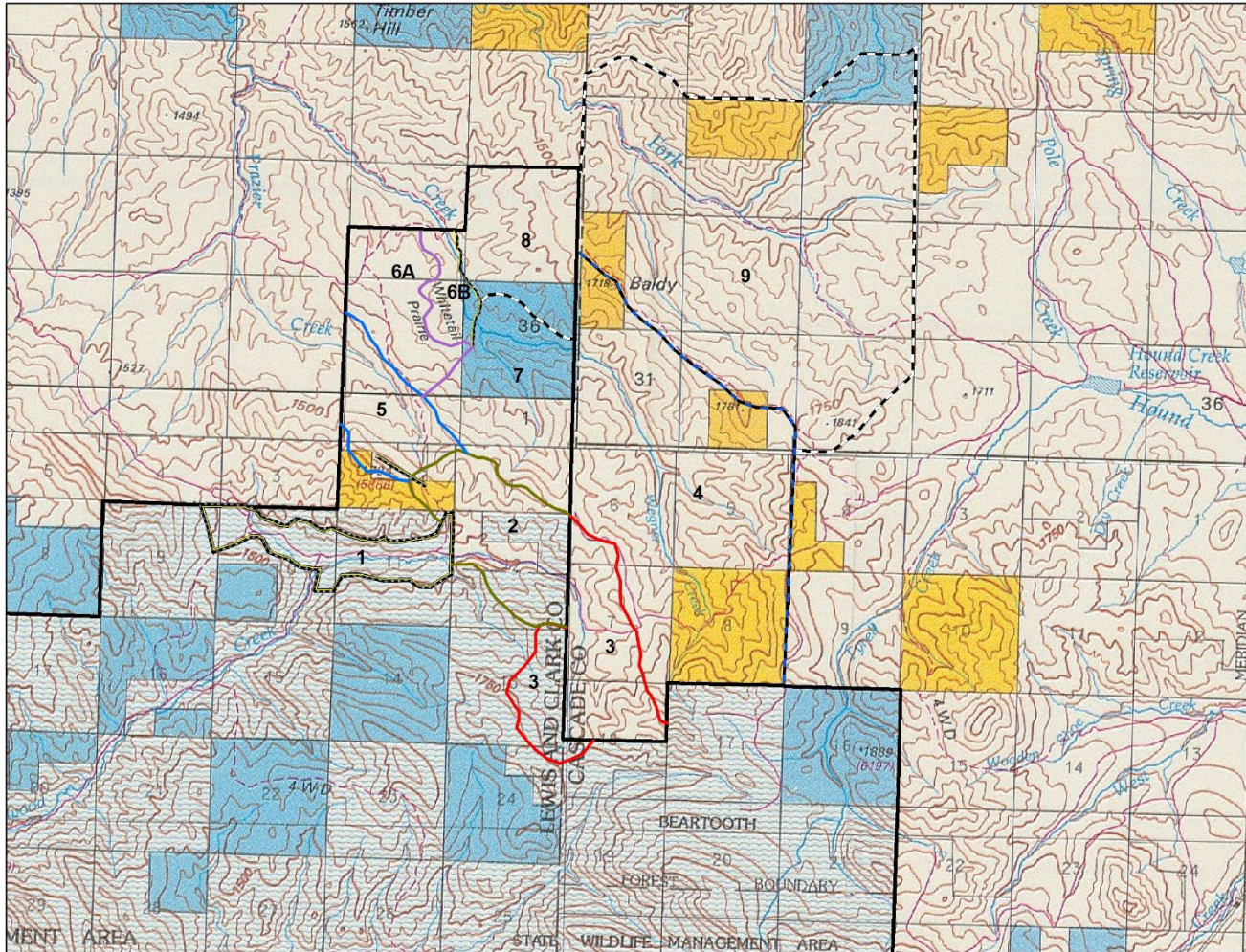
A = Full Season Grazing (May 15-July 15)

B = Post Seed Ripe Grazing (July 15-August 31)

C = Complete Rest

The 3,680 acre “Whitetail Prairie” portion of the Beartooth WMA consists of native intermountain habitats. Whitetail Prairie was purchased by FWP as an addition to the Beartooth WMA in 2014. Sieben Live Stock held a livestock grazing lease on these acres from 1982 - 2014. The lease was terminated when FWP purchased the property from the Voegle family and completely rested from livestock grazing until 2019. This area of the WMA is primarily used by big game species during spring, summer and fall months. Big game winter ranges are mainly blown off ridge tops during winter months. Many wildlife species use the area year-round. The landscape changes quickly from lush creek bottom and riparian stringers to steep, rugged mountainous terrain. Pasture sizes and locations are indicative to these features. Water is a limiting factor for livestock in some of this area. Primary grass, forb and tree species in the Whitetail Prairie are very similar to the Sieben Live Stock portion of this grazing system. From 2019-2024, a new lease was implemented incorporating Polloch Meadows, Upper Cottonwood, and Whitetail Prairie into a larger landscape grazing plan (Figure 2). This area incorporates approximately 16,900 acres (10,700 SLS / 4,560 FWP / 1,400 BLM / 240 DNRC), Table 4. The area includes portions of the Cottonwood, Wegner, Stickney and Frazier Creek drainages, which are tributaries of the Missouri River. The 12,340 deeded and leased acres of Sieben Live Stock incorporates portions of the Cottonwood, Wegner and Stickney Creek drainages.

**Figure 2. “Cottonwood/Whitetail Prairie/Wegner” Spot Treatment Grazing System Pasture Locations.**



**Table 4. Sequence of Grazing Treatments and Pasture Identification, 2019-2024.**

| Pasture ID                  | 2019       | 2020       | 2021       | 2022       | 2023          | 2024          | Acres         |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 – Polloch Meadows         | Rest       | Early      | Rest       | Early      | Rest          | Early         | 450           |
| 2 – Cottonwood Main         | Rest       | Late       | Rest       | Rest       | Rest          | Early or Late | 800           |
| 3 - Upper Cottonwood        | Late       | Rest       | Early      | Late       | Rest          | Early         | 1,025         |
| 4 – Wegner Basin            | Late       | Late       | Rest       | Rest       | Rest          | Rest          | 2,925         |
| 5 – WTP Frasier Creek       | Rest       | Early      | Rest       | Late       | Early or Late | Late          | 525           |
| 6a – WTP Main               | Early      | Rest       | Early      | Rest       | Early         | Rest          | 550           |
| 6b – WTP Wegner Cr. West    | Rest       | Rest       | Late       | Rest       | Rest          | Rest          | 300           |
| 7 – WTP Jackleg             | Rest       | Late       | Late       | Rest       | Late          | Rest          | 825           |
| 8- WTP Wegner Cr. East      | Early      | Rest       | Late       | Rest       | Rest          | Rest          | 800           |
| 9- Stickney Cr.             | Late       | Late       | Rest       | Late       | Rest          | Early/ Late   | 8,700         |
| <b>SUM ACRES</b>            |            |            |            |            |               |               | <b>16,900</b> |
| <b>% of Pastures Rested</b> | <b>44%</b> | <b>44%</b> | <b>56%</b> | <b>33%</b> | <b>56%</b>    | <b>56%</b>    |               |

WTP: FWP Whitetail Prairie

## HABITAT GRAZING SYSTEM STIPULATIONS

Due to the complex nature of the system, logistics in relation to ranching headquarters, water resources and terrain, flexibility in this lease is critical in effective operation of a grazing system of this magnitude and of such public interest. Pastures fences may have to be slightly altered and water developed to address cattle use, distribution and requirements of the lease proposal to ensure needs of wildlife habitat are met.

Due to the rough topography in this area, yearling cattle have worked very well to achieve grazing objectives and will most likely continue to do so. This does not prohibit the lessee from using cow/calf pairs in place of yearling cattle to achieve the same desired results. Dates of grazing use will be dictated by 1) plant phenology to include spring green-up and plant availability and 2) forage consumption in the active pasture and 3) hunting and recreational demands upon the area (cattle moved out of BTWMA/WTP at least by August 31<sup>st</sup> due to archery season). Due to the complex ecosystem that exists in this area, "spot treatment" grazing will be utilized to meet and exceed FWP's minimum standards of grazing. Based on grass, forb and woody species demands in a given pasture, livestock may be used differently in each pasture. This "spot treatment" approach is best suited in maintaining long term quality wildlife and fishery habitats in this part of the BTWMA and adjoining private lands. Extended rest periods of pastures after use are key in maintaining quality riparian habitats along with proper plant root establishment and maintenance in these drier sites. If a pasture in the WTP system is allotted to be grazed and in any given year goes ungrazed, then that pasture could be incorporated to be grazed the subsequent year if FWP management believes it's use would be in accordance with the grazing principles of the lease. This will provide the land managers the flexibility needed to apply the prescriptive grazing as indicated. Some pastures scheduled "early," may opt to graze "late" treatment for logistical or environmental reasons. Table 5 illustrates proposed spot treatment grazing sequences and pasture identification(s).

General grazing season schedules will approximate the following: May 15 – July 15 for full season grazing (early treatment), July 15 – August 31 for post seed ripe grazing (late treatment), followed by a year of complete "Rest" (no livestock grazing). "Late" treatments shall not occur past August 31 on FWP lands due to archery hunting season. Late treatments may run into September and October on Sieben Live Stock deeded lands as livestock are transitioned from the higher elevations northerly towards ranch Headquarters for winter months.

The BTWMA boundary has permanent fence construction. Within the proposed grazing system there is a permanent high tensile fence separating pasture #'s 2, 3 from pasture #4, and pasture #4 from #9. All other pasture designs are constructed using temporary electric poly wire fence. The lessee will be required to provide labor to install temporary electric poly wire fence on pasture boundaries where permanent fence does not exist to implement the grazing system. Temporary electric poly wire fence may also be used to prevent overuse of riparian areas when pastures are scheduled for grazing. The lessee will also be responsible for both temporary and permanent fence maintenance in the pastures, cattle movement during active grazing seasons, and prevent and remedy trespass livestock problems if they arise. After each grazing rotation, the lessee will be required to remove the temporary electric fence each of those years within 7 days after cattle are removed from the pasture. The lessee may access the area via motorized travel from adjoining private lands to conduct such activities along with routine livestock checks. Another consideration in this system is there may be a need for water improvements (tanks) for better livestock distribution, especially in the northern portion of the area. Should any fence and/or water developments be considered on FWP lands, it will be mutually agreed upon by FWP and the Landowner and may be cost shared by such. Typically, FWP provides the materials, the lessee provides the labor. The Landowner may improve water resources on their deeded lands at their discretion. FWP may provide technical assistance if requested. The lessee will be required to maintain all livestock watering systems.

**Table 5. Proposed Sequence of Grazing Treatments and Pasture Identification, 2025-2030.**

| Pasture ID                  | 2025          | 2026       | 2027          | 2028          | 2029          | 2030          | Acres         |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 – Polloch Meadows         | Rest          | Early      | Late          | Early         | Rest          | Early         | 450           |
| 2 – Cottonwood Main         | Rest          | Late       | Rest          | Early or Late | Rest          | Early or Late | 800           |
| 3 - Upper Cottonwood        | Late          | Rest       | Early         | Late          | Rest          | Early         | 1,025         |
| 4 – Wegner Basin            | Late          | Late       | Rest          | Late          | Late          | Rest          | 2,925         |
| 5 – WTP Frasier Creek       | Rest          | Early      | Late          | Rest          | Early or Late | Late          | 525           |
| 6a – WTP Main               | Early         | Rest       | Early         | Rest          | Early         | Rest          | 550           |
| 6b – WTP Wegner Cr. West    | Rest          | Rest       | Rest          | Early or Late | Rest          | Rest          | 300           |
| 7 – WTP Jackleg             | Early or Late | Late       | Rest          | Early or Late | Late          | Rest          | 825           |
| 8- WTP Wegner Cr. East      | Early or Late | Rest       | Rest          | Rest          | Early         | Rest          | 800           |
| 9- Stickney Cr.             | Late          | Late       | Early or Late | Late          | Rest          | Rest          | 8,700         |
| <b>SUM ACRES</b>            |               |            |               |               |               |               | <b>16,900</b> |
| <b>% of Pastures Rested</b> | <b>44%</b>    | <b>44%</b> | <b>56%</b>    | <b>33%</b>    | <b>56%</b>    | <b>56%</b>    |               |

WTP = FWP Whitetail Prairie

**PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION - “COW CAMP”**

In 1992, on the BTWMA and adjoining Sieben Live Stock lands, a 3-pasture, rest-rotation grazing system was implemented on 21,440-acres (Cow Camp Lease). This grazing system remains in place today with a lease expiring in 2024. This 3-pasture system is the second part of overall larger lease proposed to renew for another six years (2025 - 2030). Half of Pasture 1 is located on the BTWMA, with the remainder on Sieben Live Stock deeded and leased lands. Pastures 2 & 3 of the system are located entirely Sieben Live Stock private and leased lands. Bureau of Land Management Lands (BLM) incorporated in these pastures are leased by Sieben Live Stock (Figure 3). This grazing system has greatly benefited both the BTWMA and the cooperators’ lands involved, improving vegetative conditions for wildlife species, especially elk. Riparian heath has also greatly improved over time. Watersheds included in the area are Cottonwood, Elkhorn and Tyrrell Creeks.

**Table 5. BTWMA Staunton Cow Camp Stocking Rates, 1992 - Present.**

| Year | Dates of Use | AUM's   | Days of Use | AUM's/acre <sup>1</sup> | Acres/AUM <sup>1</sup> | % AUM's Allowed <sup>2</sup> | Grazing Fee |
|------|--------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1992 | 5/21 – 8/25  | 2,125   | 97          | .43                     | 2.3                    | 61%                          | \$10,624.00 |
| 1993 | 8/2 – 9/30   | 578     | 60          | .12                     | 8.6                    | 33%                          | \$5,780.00  |
| 1994 | Rested       | -       | -           | -                       | -                      | -                            | N/A         |
| 1995 | 6/21 – 8-/30 | 1,645   | 68          | .33                     | 3.0                    | 47%                          | \$8,225.00  |
| 1996 | 7/27 – 9/29  | 1,204   | 66          | .24                     | 4.1                    | 69%                          | \$7,826.00  |
| 1997 | Rested       | -       | -           | -                       | -                      | -                            | N/A         |
| 1998 | 6/1 – 9/1    | 1,584   | 86          | .32                     | 3.1                    | 45%                          | \$10,296.00 |
| 1999 | 8/3 – 9/29   | 1,224   | 57          | .25                     | 4.1                    | 70%                          | \$7,956.00  |
| 2000 | Rested       | -       | -           | -                       | -                      | -                            | N/A         |
| 2001 | 5/29-8/31    | 1,830   | 93          | .42                     | 2.7                    | 52%                          | \$13,725.00 |
| 2002 | 8/1-9/27     | 1,375   | 58          | .27                     | 3.6                    | 61%                          | \$10,312.50 |
| 2003 | Rested       | -       | -           | -                       | -                      | -                            | N/A         |
| 2004 | 6/28-8/31    | 1,536.5 | 64          | .31                     | 3.2                    | 44%                          | \$11,523.75 |

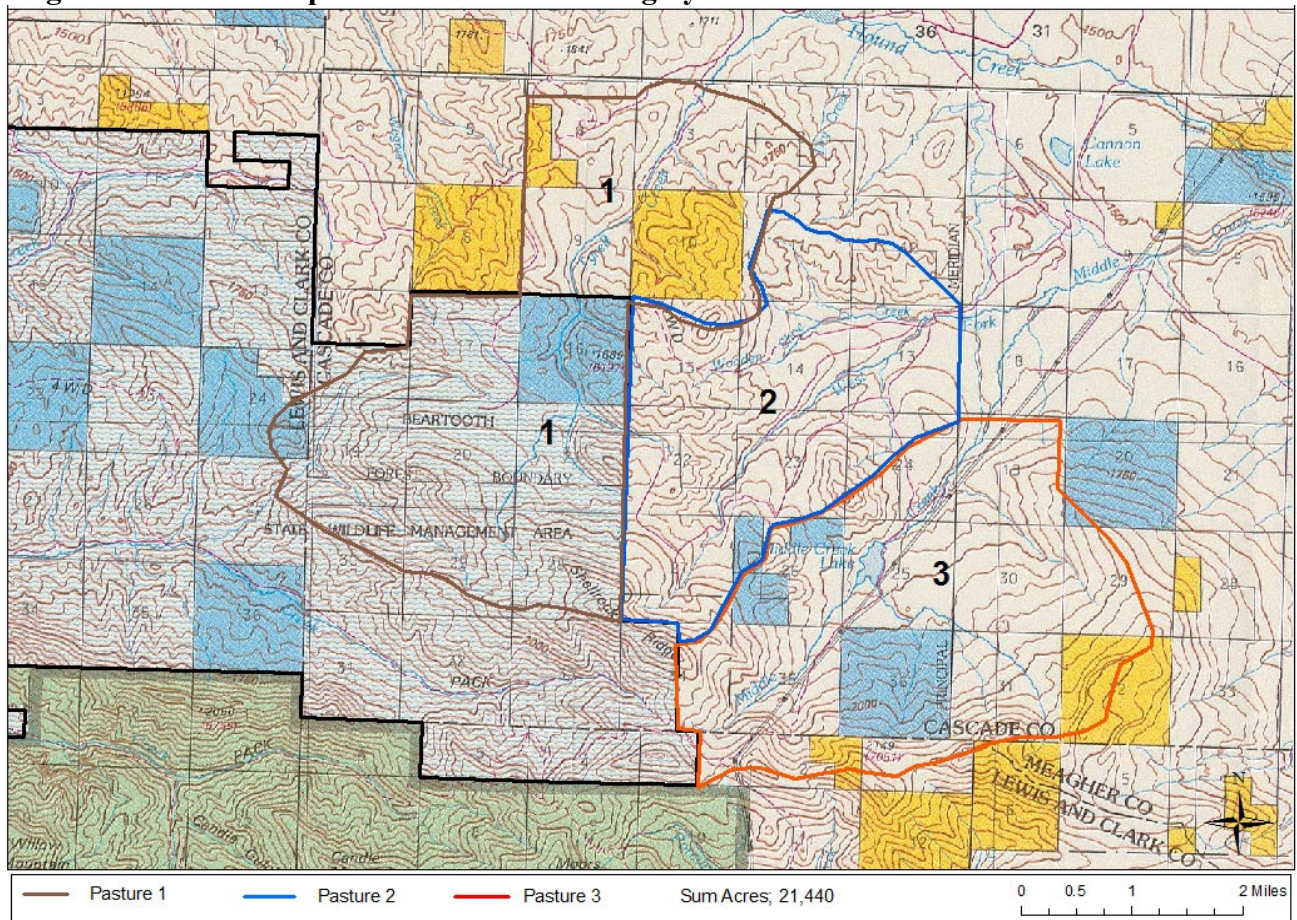


|      |                   |         |    |      |       |      |                 |
|------|-------------------|---------|----|------|-------|------|-----------------|
| 2005 | 8/10-10/6         | 1,882   | 57 | .39  | 2.6   | 108% | \$14,115.00     |
| 2006 | Rested            | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |
| 2007 | 6/15 – 7/30       | 1,482.5 | 45 | .30  | 3.3   | 42%  | \$11,119.00     |
| 2008 | 8/1 – 9/11        | 2,348   | 42 | .47  | 2.1   | 134% | \$17,610.00     |
| 2009 | Rested            | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |
| 2010 | 6/9 – 7/28        | 1,944   | 49 | .39  | 2.55  | 55%  | \$14,580        |
| 2011 | 7/29 – 9/2        | 1,048   | 35 | .21  | 4.73  | 60%  | \$7,860         |
| 2012 | Rested            | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |
| 2013 | 6/11 – 7/1        | 1,744   | 27 | .35  | 2.84  | 50%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2014 | 7/30 – 8/29       | 1,020   | 31 | .21  | 4.86  | 58%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2015 | Rested            | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |
| 2016 | 5/30 – 8/25       | 1,289   | 57 | .25  | 3.85  | 37%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2017 | 8/2 – 8/29        | 1,008   | 27 | .20  | 3.47  | 58%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2018 | Rested            | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |
| 2019 | 5/30 – 7/26       | 1,814   | 57 | 0.36 | 2.73  | 52%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2020 | 7/17 – 8/26       | 522     | 40 | 0.10 | 9.5   | 30%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2021 | (FIRE) 8/9 – 8/30 | 210     | 21 | 0.04 | 23.62 | 12%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2022 | 6/9 – 7/21        | 1,796   | 42 | 0.36 | 2.76  | 51%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2023 | 7/17 – 8/28       | 454     | 42 | 0.09 | 10.93 | 26%  | Exchange of Use |
| 2024 | Rest              | -       | -  | -    | -     | -    | N/A             |

<sup>1</sup> Based on 4,960 acres in Beartooth WMA pasture

<sup>2</sup> Based on maximum of 3,500 AUMs in full season, 1,750 AUMs in post-seed ripe grazing years

**Figure 3. “Cow Camp” Rest Rotation Grazing System Pasture Locations 2019 - 2024.**



An average monthly stocking rate is indicated based on available forage and water supply, pasture size and layout, desired grazing effectiveness and previously observed effectiveness of livestock grazing abilities in the immediate area. Using turn-on and turn-off dates and seed ripe as reference points (May 15, August 31, and July 15 respectively), each pasture could provide the following measured grazing capacity in any one year (unit of measure = animal unit month):

Full season grazing (A) = 3,500 AUM's  
 Seed ripe grazing (B) = 1,750 AUM's  
 Complete Rest (C) = 0 AUM's

Total size of the Cow Camp grazing system is about 21,440 acres, including the following:

Pasture 1a — 3,322 acres (FWP + SLS Tyrrell Creek West)  
 Pasture 1b — 4,838 acres (FWP + SLS Tyrrell Creek East)  
 Pasture 2 — 6,880 acres Sieben Live Stock (Wooden Shoe + Dog Cr)  
 Pasture 3 — 6,400 acres Sieben Live Stock (Middle Creek Basin)  
 SUM = 21,440 acres (15,600 SLS / 4,960 FWP / 800 BLM / 800 DNRC)

In this proposed lease renewal, a modified approach will be taken to the “Cow Camp” pastures. In previous years, much of Pasture 1 (Figure 3) has gone under-utilized with some areas not being grazed at all by cattle. The pasture has some areas with steeper slopes and cattle tend to stay on the gentler slopes of the pasture. This combined with the timing of needing to move on to the next pasture leads to this under-utilization. The under-utilization prevented us from achieving habitat goals for this pasture during the previous lease period. Splitting this pasture into two pieces allows the lessee to force cattle into areas that currently receive very little use. Increasing use in these areas should create the impacts that will help us achieve habitat goals. This new split of Pasture 1 into Pastures 1a and 1b (Figure 4) does present a logistical problem of moving cattle. In order to address logistical concerns while keeping to the principle of not grazing any pasture during the growing season (before seed ripe) more than once in a three year period, Pasture 1b will be grazed in a slightly atypical manner. In 2025, Pasture 1b shall be deferred (treatment B, grazed after seed ripe) and then grazed during the growing season (treatment A, grazed in early season) the following year. Both Pastures 1a and 1b will receive a full season of rest in 2027. This slight change in the order of grazing times for Pasture 1b is not expected to have negative consequences, but its novel approach will be monitored to evaluate the impacts, if any, on the vegetation community and overall health of the pasture.

**Table 6. Proposed Cow Camp Sequence of grazing treatments and pasture numbers, 2025-2030.**

|  | YEAR      |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|  |           | 2025     | 2026     | 2027     | 2028     | 2029     | 2030     |
| <b>P<br/>A<br/>S<br/>T<br/>U<br/>R<br/>E<br/>#</b> | <b>1a</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> |
|  | <b>1b</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>C</b> |
|  | <b>2</b>  | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>A</b> |
|  | <b>3</b>  | <b>C</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> |

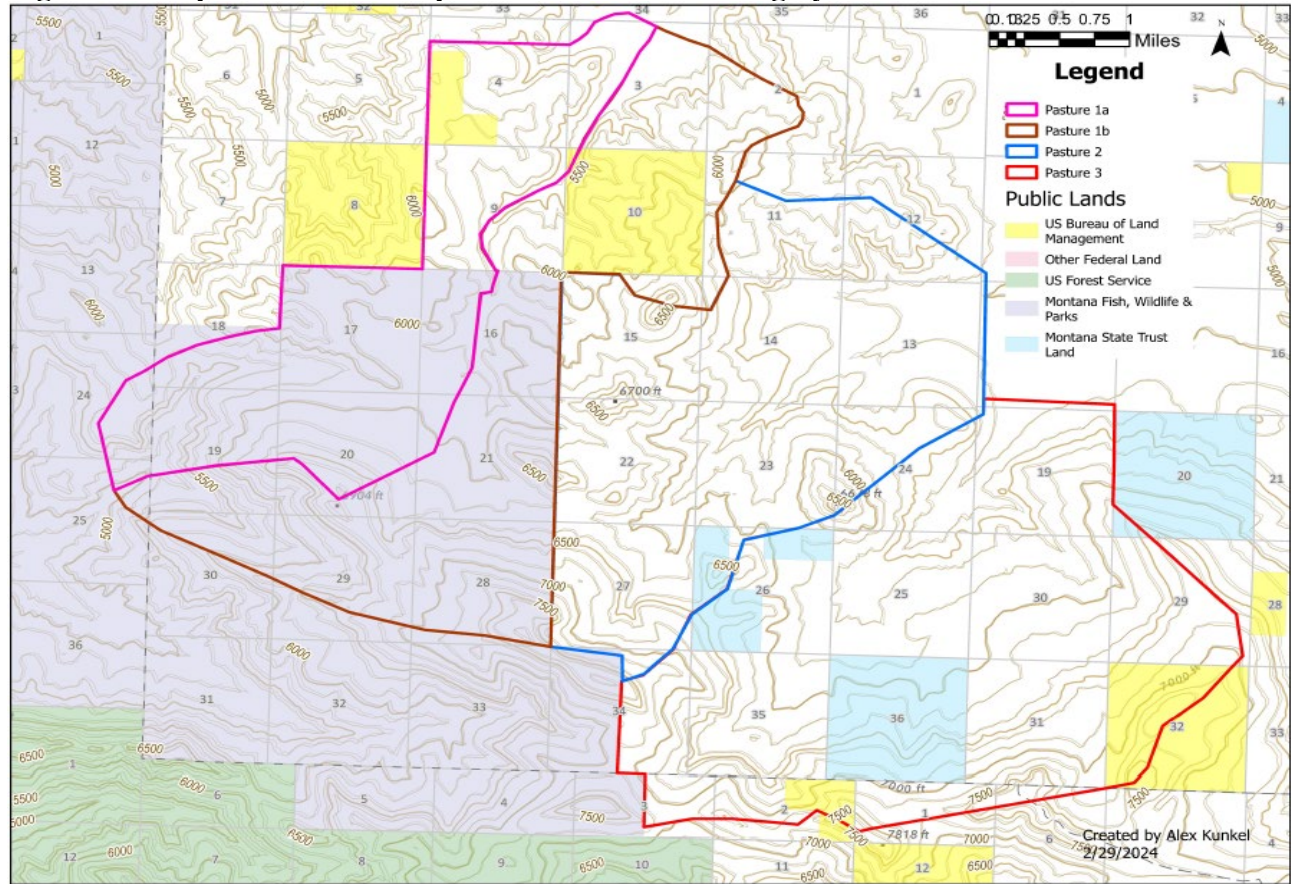
Treatments

*A* = May 15 – July 15

*B* = July 15 – August 31

*C* = Complete Rest

**Figure 4. Proposed “Cow Camp” Rest-Rotation Grazing System Pasture Locations.**



## HABITAT GRAZING SYSTEM STIPULATIONS

Flexibility is critical in effective operation of a grazing system of this magnitude and of such public interest. While certain dates, stocking rates and pasture layouts are represented as actual planned events and timing, each is subject to alteration given prudent examination of on-the-ground events as the program evolves. Climatological events and their influence upon plant phenology will dictate adjustments in grazing schedules, as will actual livestock distribution predict the uniform level of grazing treatment and stocking rate throughout an entire pasture. Only the actual grazing scheme (including absolute rest periods) is held inviolate and not subject to change.

The six-year grazing lease renewal will use similar grazing schematics as the expiring lease. This system used cow/calf pairs in the past to achieve grazing objectives and will most likely continue to do so. This does not prohibit the lessee from using yearlings in place of cow/calf pairs to achieve the same desired results. Dates of grazing use will be dictated by 1) plant phenology to include spring green-up and plant availability and 2) forage consumption in the active pasture and 3) hunting and recreational demands upon the area (out of BTWMA by August 31 due to archery season). General season grazing schedules for these events will approximate the following: May 15 – July 15 for full season grazing, July 15 – August 31 for post seed ripe grazing, followed by a third year of complete rest. All pastures in the rest rotation grazing plan continue to have 2 growing seasons of rest (one full season) per 3-year grazing cycle (Table 6).

The lessee will be required to provide labor and materials to install temporary electric poly wire fence on pasture boundaries where permanent fence does not exist to implement the grazing system. Temporary

electric fence may also be used to prevent overuse of riparian areas when pastures are scheduled for grazing. The lessee will also be responsible for both temporary and permanent fence maintenance in the pastures, cattle movement during active grazing seasons, and prevent and remedy trespass livestock problems if they arise. The lessee will be required to maintain all livestock watering systems. The lessee may access the area via motorized travel from neighboring private lands to conduct such activities. After each grazing rotation, the lessee will be required to remove the temporary electric fence each of those years within 7 days after cattle are removed from the pasture.

## **PUBLIC ACCESS**

As part of grazing FWP lands through this lease, Sieben Live Stock is required to allow reasonable free public hunting on their deeded lands during Fish and Wildlife Commission approved seasons. Sieben Live Stock has been enrolled in FWP's Block Management Program since the programs' inception. Sieben Live Stock has 68,400 acres enrolled in FWP's Block Management Program in FWP Regions 2 and 4, provides almost 2,000 public hunter days annually and is a model Landowner to area sportspeople.

## **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

As per FWP's WMA Grazing Lease Payment Schedule Guidelines, this lease agreement falls under the "Exchange of Use" or a fee of \$0.00 per AUM. Criteria used to determine this fee is that as part of FWP's standard grazing rotation, the lessee effectively exchanges resting 1 pasture of private land (C Treatment) for use of 1 pasture of WMA land (A or B Treatment) every 2 of 3 years. On the 3rd year, the lessee does not exchange rest, but maintains structured grazing treatments (A and B treatments), but FWP receives the value of having the WMA pasture rested (C Treatment) –OR– As a direct exchange of grazing for rest, the lessee is trading a yearlong rest treatment on private land for a grazing treatment of equal value on the WMA. In either of the two scenarios, the lessee's payment is in grass instead of cash. Exchange of Use Fee = \$0. The intent of \$0 Exchange of Use is NOT to expand the herd size through grazing on the WMA. It is instead to use the WMA as an incentive for managing livestock grazing in a manner that meets wildlife objectives. The WMA grazing lease incorporates private lands that provide important wildlife habitat values (as determined by FWP) and comprises a significant portion of the total grazing system. The lessee also provides services and maintenance that at least meet minimums required to qualify for the low grazing rate as set forth in FWP's Grazing Lessee Responsibilities Document. Following these FWP guidelines in this proposed lease, the lessee provides 75% of the land base in the proposed lease agreement (deeded and public leases). With this lease, FWP is able to maintain and/or enhance wildlife and fishery habitats on an additional 28,820 acres adjacent to the Beartooth WMA.

Salting, and/or mineral grounds will be the responsibility of the lessee. Salt/mineral grounds shall be placed at locations mutually agreed upon by the lessee and FWP. Sites are to be moved periodically to locations agreed upon by both parties. Spring/water developments will be considered on an as-needed basis and will be approved on any WMA lands upon agreement of both parties as in past leases. Other contingencies may apply to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Department of State Lands (DNRC) leases which are the responsibility of the lessee.

## **MONITORING/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:**

Trends in vegetation composition and livestock use will continue to be monitored via photo plots and/or photos. Monitoring will be a cooperative effort by the FWP Area Biologist and Range Specialist. Owing to the keen public interest in the area, its resources and accessibility, public education and informational efforts may be necessary to showcase the grazing pastures. In 2016, 23 photo points were established in the Whitetail Prairie portion of the BTWMA by FWP Area Biologist and Range Specialist. Grazing transects are also located in the "Cow Camp" area and Sieben Live Stock lands. These photo points and transects will continue to be monitored by both parties to ensure wildlife and fishery habitats are maintained and/or

enhanced through time. The expiring grazing system is currently meeting and exceeding objectives of both FWP and Sieben Live Stock Company.

Livestock grazing on publicly owned FWP Wildlife Management Areas can sometimes draw attention from recreational users and environmental groups. Owing to the keen public interest on this WMA, its resources and accessibility, public education and information has been, and continues to be necessary. These efforts include contact with the public via media outlets, public meetings and informal contacts with the public that utilize the BTWMA during summer months and hunting seasons. The Devil's Kitchen Working Group, along with sporting groups such as Montana Sportsman Alliance, Russell Country Sportsmen, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation and Great Falls Chapter Safari Club International will also continue to be a vital part in public communication efforts for this grazing lease. Previous discussions on habitat manipulation techniques and wildlife management efforts on the WMA have received much support from these groups.

Grazing tours have been offered and provided in the past to sportspeople, Landowners, County Commissioners, FWP Foundation, F&W Commissioners, Legislators, Russell Country Sportsmen, Russell Country Backcountry Horsemen, East Front Backcountry Horsemen, MT Stockgrowers Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Great Falls Chapter SCI, Montana Sportsmen Alliance, and the Devil's Kitchen Working Group, to name a few, with full endorsement. Grazing tours are often conducted for the summer Devil's Kitchen Working Group meeting. In 2010, a range and elk management tour of the BTWMA and Sieben Live Stock lands was provided to the Ranch Management Consultants: Executive Link Program with 95 people attending from CA, CO, ID, KS, MO, MT, NE, NV, OR, TX, UT, WA, WY, and Mexico.

**Appendix A. Legal description of FWP lands included in proposed grazing system.**

**Appendix B. FWP minimum standards for grazing.**