



**Escalante Management Framework Plan Approved Amendment
and
Decision Record**

Prepared by
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANGE
UTAH STATE OFFICE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. William Lamb", written over a horizontal line.

G. William Lamb
State Director, Utah

3-15-99

Date

Decision: I hereby authorize and approve the Escalante Management Framework Plan (MFP) amendment as described in Alternative B in environmental assessment UT-049-98-043.

Finding of No Significant Impact: A finding of no significant impact was made on December 7, 1998 by the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument manager of the Bureau of Land Management. This determination was made based upon the analysis provided in environmental assessment UT-049-98-043. He determined the proposed amendment to the Escalante MFP will not create significant impacts to the human environment and that an environmental impact statement was not required.

The Amendment:

Alternative B is considered to be the environmentally preferable alternative for the proposed amendment to the Escalante MFP. The proposed amendment is as follows:

Alternative B

This alternative would close the following allotments to grazing and allocate the AUMs to uses other than livestock grazing.

Allotment	Number	Active AUMs
Escalante River	06011	2,422
McGath Point	06018	60
Saltwater Creek	06025	120
Steep Creek	06027	318

The portion of the Big Bowns Bench (598 AUMs), Deer Creek (83 AUMs), and Phipps (140 AUMs) allotments that are located in the Escalante River would be closed to grazing. The Cottonwood pasture (112 AUMs) of the Deer Creek allotment would also be closed to grazing. The available forage in these areas would be allocated to uses other than livestock grazing.

A grass bank or forage reserve would be created with the remaining AUMs on Phipps allotment (140 AUMs) and all available forage on Little Bowns Bench allotment (130 AUMs) and the Wolverine pasture (148 AUMs) of the Deer Creek allotment. This grass bank would only be used during emergencies or for research purposes. Emergencies would include, but would not be limited to, drought, insect outbreaks, fire or floods. Any emergency use would not exceed current authorized use and could occur from October 1 to March 31. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation may have to take place before research use would be authorized. Research proposals and/or emergency use would be approved by the Monument Manager.

Reductions would be implemented as follows; Moody allotment 799 AUMs; 125 AUMs on the Wagon Box Mesa allotment; and 453 AUMs on the Big Horn allotment.

On the remaining portion of the Big Bowns Bench allotment, 750 AUMs would be authorized for grazing, with the season of use from November 1 to March 31. Use in Horse Canyon would be restricted to that part of the trail going onto Big Bowns Bench to the trail leaving Horse Canyon going onto King Bench. This area would only be used as a holding pasture to gather livestock at the end of the grazing season.

All range improvements or livestock management facilities that are no longer needed would be evaluated for historic or interpretive value. Those that are identified as having no value for interpretation or that are not historic would be removed.

Rationale for Decision:

The selection of Alternative B will provide protection of approximately 45 miles more riparian areas than Alternative A. Alternative B will reduce or eliminate livestock recreation conflicts in six additional canyons. Riparian and wildlife habitat will be improved.