UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

November 13, 2007

Cheryl Probert
District Ranger
Bridgeport Ranger District
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
HC 62 Box 1000
Bridgeport, CA 93517

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement for Great Basin South Rangeland Management Project (CEQ # 20070423)

Dear Ms. Probert:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above referenced document. Our review and comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementation Regulations at 40 CFR 1500-1508, and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Our detailed comments are enclosed.

EPA reviewed the Great Basin South Rangeland Management Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and provided comments to the U S Forest Service on March 5, 2007. We rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns-Insufficient Information (EC-2). We raised several issues to the Forest Service regarding the need to provide specific information concerning future planning actions along with a commitment to tiered environmental documentation for these plans.

These issues were not clearly addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). We recommend that the Record of Decision (ROD) for this project include updated information on these two issue areas.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. If you have any questions, please call me at (415) 972-3846 or Laura Fujii, the lead reviewer for this project. Laura can be reached at (415) 972-3852 or fujii.laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Nova Blazej
Environmental Review Office

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Enclosure: EPA's Detailed Comments

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EPA DETAILED COMMENTS FOR THE FEIS GREAT BASIN SOUTH RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT, LYON & MINERAL COUNTIES, NV., AND MONO COUNTY, CA., NOVEMBER 2007

Disclosure in the Record of Decision

Several of our comments on the Draft Environmental Impacts Statement (EIS) are not sufficiently addressed in the Final EIS.

Because several important analyses and mitigation needs are left unaddressed in the Final EIS, the Forest Service should address them in the Record of Decision (ROD). In accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(c), RODs shall:

> "State whether all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the alternative selected have been adopted, and if not, why not. A monitoring and enforcement program shall be adopted and summarized where applicable for any mitigation."

Our comments below identify the issues that should be addressed in the Forest Service ROD.

Specific Information Concerning Future Planning Actions

EPA would like to reiterate our recommendation that the Forest Service provide detailed information concerning future planning actions along with a commitment to tiered environmental documentation for these plans.

> **Recommendation:** The ROD should include a schedule for the development of revised allotment management plans along with a commitment to tiered environmental documentation for these plans.

Possible Future Restoration Opportunities

> EPA continues to recommend that the Forest Service consider active ecosystem restoration opportunities in their rangeland management plans for the Great Basin where feasible.