

Legislative Language Related to Grazing on Bureau of Land Management Public Lands from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (P.L. 112-74) – December 23, 2011

**DIVISION E—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND
RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012**

TITLE I - GENERAL PROVISIONS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS REGARDING GRAZING ON PUBLIC LANDS
SEC. 122.

(a) EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW REQUIRED.— (1) For fiscal years 2012 and 2013 only, a person may bring a civil action challenging a decision of the Bureau of Land Management concerning grazing on public lands (as defined in section 103(e) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702(e))) in a Federal district court only if the person has exhausted the administrative hearings and appeals procedures established by the Department of the Interior, including having filed a timely appeal and a request for stay. (2) An issue may be considered in the judicial review of a decision referred to in paragraph (1) only if the issue was raised in the administrative review process described in such paragraph. (3) An exception to the requirement of exhausting the administrative review process before seeking judicial review shall be available if a Federal court finds that the agency failed or was unable to make information timely available during the administrative review process for issues of material fact. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term “timely” means within 120 calendar days after the date that the challenge to the agency action or amendment at issue is received for administrative review.

(b) ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION OF CERTAIN EXISTING PERMITS OR LEASES.— (1) During fiscal year 2012 and thereafter, the Secretary of the Interior shall accept the donation of any valid existing permits or leases authorizing grazing on public lands within the California Desert Conservation Area. With respect to each permit or lease donated under this paragraph, the Secretary shall terminate the grazing permit or lease, ensure a permanent end (except as provided in paragraph (2)), to grazing on the land covered by the permit or lease, and make the land available for mitigation by allocating the forage to wildlife use consistent with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan, section 10(a)(1)(B) permit, or section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). (2) If the land covered by a permit or lease donated under paragraph (1) is also covered by another valid existing permit or lease that is not donated under such paragraph, the Secretary of the Interior shall reduce the authorized grazing level on the land covered by the permit or lease to reflect the donation of the permit or lease under paragraph (1). To ensure that there is a permanent reduction in the level of grazing on the land covered by a permit or lease donated under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall not allow grazing use to exceed the authorized level under the remaining valid existing permit or lease that is not donated.

TRAILING LIVESTOCK OVER PUBLIC LAND SEC. 123.

During fiscal years 2012 through 2013 only, the Bureau of Land Management may, at its sole discretion, review planning and implementation decisions regarding the trailing of livestock across public lands, including, but not limited to, issuance of crossing or trailing authorizations or permits, under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). Temporary trailing or crossing authorizations

across public lands shall not be subject to protest and/or appeal under subpart E of part 4 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, and subpart 4160 of part 4100 of such title.

TITLE IV - GENERAL PROVISIONS

EXTENSION OF GRAZING PERMITS SEC. 415. The terms and conditions of section 325 of Public Law 108–108 (117 Stat. 1307), regarding grazing permits at the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service, shall remain in effect for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. A grazing permit or lease issued by the Secretary of the Interior for lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management that is the subject of a request for a grazing preference transfer shall be issued, without further processing, for the remaining time period in the existing permit or lease using the same mandatory terms and conditions. If the authorized officer determines a change in the mandatory terms and conditions is required, the new permit must be processed as directed in section 325 of Public Law 108–108.

TITLE IV - GENERAL PROVISIONS

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK GRAZING SEC. 431. (a) PROHIBITION REGARDING POTENTIAL DOMESTIC SHEEP AND BIGHORN SHEEP CONTACT ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation (other than the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and regulations issued under such Act), none of the funds made available by this Act or made available by any other Act for fiscal year 2012 only may be used to carry out— (1) any new management restrictions on domestic sheep on parcels of National Forest System land (as defined in the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a))) with potential domestic sheep and bighorn sheep (whether native or nonnative) contact in excess of the management restrictions that existed on July 1, 2011; or (2) any other agency regulation for managing bighorn sheep populations on any allotment of such National Forest System land if the management action will result in a reduction in the number of domestic livestock permitted to graze on the allotment or in the distribution of livestock on the allotment.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture may make such management changes as the Secretary determines to be necessary to manage bighorn sheep if the management changes— (1) are consistent with the wildlife plans of the relevant State fish and game agency and determined in consultation with that agency; and (2) are developed in consultation with the affected permittees.

(c) BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LANDS.—In circumstances involving conflicts between bighorn sheep and domestic sheep grazing on public lands (as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702)), the Bureau of Land Management may only modify or cancel domestic sheep grazing permits after consulting with the appropriate State fish and game agency. However, if the State in question has an approved State Wildlife Management Plan that addresses, with specificity, bighorn sheep management, then the Bureau of Land Management modification or cancellation of permits in that State shall conform to the bighorn sheep management objectives in the State Wildlife Management Plan, unless conformance would be inconsistent with Federal statute or regulation. The Bureau of Land Management shall be bound by the requirements of this subsection until September 30, 2012.

(d) VOLUNTARY CLOSURE OF ALLOTMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the voluntary closure of existing domestic sheep allotments when the closure is agreed to in writing between

the permittee and the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture and is carried out for the purpose of reducing conflicts between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep.

(e) WAIVER OF GRAZING PERMITS AND LEASES.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may accept the voluntary waiver of any valid existing lease or permit authorizing grazing on National Forest System land described in subsection (a) or public lands described in subsection (c). If the grazing permit or lease for a grazing allotment is only partially within the area of potential domestic sheep and bighorn sheep contact, the affected permittee may elect to waive only the portion of the grazing permit or lease that is within that area. The Secretary concerned shall— (1) terminate each permit or lease waived or portion of a permit or lease waived under this subsection; (2) ensure a permanent end to domestic sheep grazing on the land covered by the waived permit or lease or waived portion of the permit or lease unless or until there is no conflict with bighorn sheep management; and (3) provide for the reimbursement of range improvements in compliance with section 4 of the Act of June 28, 1934 (commonly known as the Taylor Grazing Act; 43 U.S.C. 315c).