

Del Shay
Allotment Management Plan

Tonto Basin Ranger District

Tonto National Forest

Region III

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9/28/94
Date

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Sept. 1, 1994
Date

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12/15/94
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12/14/94
Date

DEL SHAY
ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Allotment Description and Background

The Del Shay Allotment consists of approximately 14,163 acres north of Theodore Roosevelt Lake. It is adjacent to the Hardt Creek and Seventy-Six allotments on the north, Heber-Reno sheep driveway on the east, Tonto Basin allotment and Heber-Reno sheep driveway on the south, and the H-4 allotment on the west. The elevation ranges from 2400 feet along Tonto Creek to 5900 feet near Jump Off Spring in the eastern portion of the allotment. Vegetation consists of mostly short grasses on the steep slopes and the rim of Del Shay Basin, but the western portion is desert scrub bench heavily infested with cholla. The higher elevations support mixed chaparral and juniper vegetation. Topography consists of rolling mountains with areas that are steep and rough. Soils are of three main classes: sandy granite along Tonto Creek, a gray slake limestone on several isolated sites, and the remainder of the allotment is comprised of heavy clay soil. That portion of the allotment which contains Tonto Creek will be managed as prescribed by the Tonto Creek Riparian Unit. The Del Shay allotment is situated on the Tonto Basin Ranger District, Tonto National Forest in Gila County, Arizona.

The present permittee has been very cooperative in contributing money and labor for the construction of range improvement projects. He understands the importance and necessity of meeting Land Management Plan goals and objectives through the Integrated Resource Management process as presently directed by the Forest Supervisor.

Ranch and Livestock Operation

The Del Shay Allotment is strictly a cattle operation. This operation consists of a commercial cow-calf herd. Mother cows are kept yearly with calves usually held over to take advantage of winter and spring annuals in the desert ecosystem. The herd generally consist of mixed breed cattle. The allotment has a permit for 127 cattle + 126 yearling currently held by Mitchell Holder.

Throughout the years, water developments (springs) have been constructed on the allotment to relieve some of the distribution problems, but these are very limited. There are several existing fences in place to form pastures, but these pastures can not be utilized until a more diverse watering system is developed. Extensive management has been very limited as a result of insufficient water. The permittee has instigated a "herding practice" to compensate for the lack of water and to improve livestock distribution. During drought periods, he has voluntarily removed some animals to help relieve grazing pressure.

Management Goals and Objectives

The basic goal of this management plan is to improve resource conditions on the Del Shay management unit while maintaining a viable livestock operation.

Based on this goal, the management objectives, formulated by the Interdisciplinary Team, are:

- accommodate riparian recovery on Tonto Creek and in other riparian areas.
- improve management to increase the area of distribution of livestock from 45% to 80-90% of suitable acres on the allotments using Forest Service Guidelines and Standards.
- achieve proper use of rangeland vegetation on a greater percentage of allotment acreage to improve rangeland resource objectives.
- use smaller pastures and more intense grazing for a shorter time period as a tool to accomplish more unified distribution.
- through better resource management, improve water based recreation opportunities, and Resource Access Travel Management (RATM) with minimal conflicts between livestock and recreation.
- manage livestock to achieve multiple resource objectives while maintaining an economical livestock operation.
- improve forage species abundance and diversity in the semi-desert grassland, jojoba-mixed shrub, and desert scrub vegetation types.
- intensely manage the southwest portion of the allotment to reduce the abundance of cholla.

Grazing System and Schedule

The Del Shay grazing management is a rest-deferred rotation grazing system. Eight pastures are included in the rotation system (excluding the Tonto Creek Riparian Unit). Periods of rest vary, but generally the higher elevation pastures will receive between 18 and 27 months rest between use and lower elevation pastures will receive between 21 and 33 months rest between use. The Mesa Pasture will only be used as a yearling weaning pasture by a portion of the herd in conjunction with the TCRU and one of the low elevation pastures. Grazing treatments will change throughout the year and by season. The technical advantage of this system is the improved amount of annual growing season rest which it affords. In the Windmill Pasture it is proposed to attempt to reduce the density of the cholla through a controlled burning and grazing system. As noted in the grazing schedule, this pasture is not included in the normal rotation. This will allow for maximum production of annuals forbs and grasses in the understory, which will be necessary to carry a fire of sufficient intensity to affect the cholla. Given the topography, understory fuels, and physiological characteristics of the jumping cholla, most of the cactus will not be killed by a prescribed fire. However, it is possible to remove a high percentage of the spines with a fire. It is for this reason that livestock will be put in the area after it is burned. Cattle will readily eat and knock down the spineless cholla. In addition, burned areas will be broadcast seeded with native perennial grass species prior to cattle being brought in. Ash on the ground, combined with ground surface disturbance by livestock, should provide for adequate seed set. Obviously, more than one treatment on a given site will be necessary to achieve the desired objectives.

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The grazing schedule and intended numbers of cattle in each unit are displayed on form R3-2200-18.

The grazing schedule is intended to be flexible enough to allow for minor shifts in livestock movements between units to adjust for moisture conditions and available water. Major changes or shifts in movement dates must be jointly agreed upon by the permittee, and the Tonto Basin District Ranger.

Implementation of each unit grazing system will occur upon installation of necessary water developments and fences. Any change in current management practices will be jointly agreed upon and documented in the annual plan of instructions.

Range Development and Improvements

Fencing and extensive water developments are critical to the effectiveness of this management plan. Presently there are only eight grazing pastures and two pastures included in the Tonto Creek Riparian Unit.

Implementing the grazing management system will require the construction of 14 structural projects, including spring developments, pipelines, fences, cattleguards, storage tanks and drinkers. Non-structural projects include one continuing prescribed burn.

Range developments and improvements will be constructed under permit modification using the following procedure:

- 1) Forest Service and Permittee (or representative) will locate improvement or development on-the-ground and flag the site.
- 2) Forest Service will prepare NEPA documentation and permit modification authorizing the work for any additional projects not included in the Environmental Assessment associated with this Plan .
- 3) Upon completion of the work and acceptance by the Forest Service, the permittee will provide the Forest Service an itemized invoice of his costs associated with the improvements.

Generally, range improvements will be a cost-share effort between the Forest Service and the permittee. Due to the Central Arizona Project, Plan 6, those improvements already existing on the lower one-third of the Del Shay Allotment will need to be replaced. The replacement of these projects will be funded by the Bureau of Reclamation. A separate schedule attached itemizes the improvements along with the share to be paid or supplied by the Forest Service and that of the Permittee.

Each improvement will be constructed under a permit modification which will outline specific details of cost-share and details of construction.

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When funding limitations exist in any fiscal year, water developments will have priority over fence construction.

Range Improvement Schedule

See appendix - Range Improvement Schedule

Range Improvement Maintenance

The attached list of range improvements will be maintained by the permittee to a functional standard throughout the life of the plan. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining allotment boundary fences and maintaining existing spring developments.

The use of heavy equipment such as crawler tractors must be approved in advance by District Ranger.

Cleaning dirt stock tanks is considered a maintenance item and will require only advance notice via phone call. Any major work which significantly alters the structure, spillway or increases the original capacity of the tank is considered reconstruction and will require a joint on-site inspection to determine the extent of work to be done.

General Management Considerations

A. Actual Use Records

The permittee will keep accurate accounting of cattle numbers entering each unit and the length of time the unit was grazed. These records will be presented to the District at the end of each grazing season.

B. Annual Plan

The Annual Operating Plan will be the action plan that implements management decisions for the current year. These instructions will serve as a working understanding with the permittee for carrying out actions described in the management plan. The annual plan will outline items of permittee responsibility such as salting, range improvement construction and maintenance, and livestock movement between units.

C. Followup Action and Monitoring

Follow-up action and monitoring will be consistent with the Interagency Review Team's Monitoring Plan for Plan 6 allotments and base data collected prior to new management agreements. Designated photo points will be taken every year by the permittee. Vegetative sampling associated with the Monitoring Plan will be conducted in FY96. The purpose of this is to determine the effectiveness of the management plan in terms of livestock distribution and location of range developments. The effective implementation of this management plan and the

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availability of adequate waters in the different grazing units will improve both the resource conditions and grazing capacity on the Del Shay Allotment.

Reports of the monitoring results will be sent to the Bureau of Reclamation. The status of new improvements, whether completed and/or their progress, will be noted after the four year monitoring review and the preparation for the modification of the 5-year plan. The status of these improvements is important when determining their usefulness and effectiveness as it pertains to the monitoring results.

D. Biological Evaluation Follow-up Action

Recommendations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning the Biological Evaluation will be followed. If any range improvement locations are not as specified in the Biological Evaluation, the Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted.

RANGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

FY YEAR PASTURE PROJECT	UNIT	EST. COST		PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY COST SHARE ECT.		COMMENT
		MATERIALS	LABOR	FS/SCS/BOR	PERMITTEE (P)	
<u>RATTLESNAKE H.P.</u> RATTLESNAKE PASTURE FENCE	1 MI. CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE FENCE	2,000	1,650	2,000 (ASCS)	1,650 (P)	
<u>UPPER HORSE CANYON</u> HORSE CANYON PASTURE FENCE	2.5 MI CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE	4,000	3,300	4,000 (ASCS)	3,300 (P)	
<u>ROCK HOUSE H.P.</u> SOUTH PASTURE FENCE	1.2 MI CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE	2,200	1,850	2,200 (ASCS)	1,850 (P)	
FY '94 <u>FELTON</u> RATTLESNAKE SPRING	2.6 MI 1" 250 PSI BLACK PIPE 6 TROUGHS & 1 10,000 GAL STORAGE TANK	1,500-5 TR 5,000-1 STRG TANK AND PIPE	3,500	1,500 (RBF) 5,000 (BOR)	3,500 (P)	
<u>WINDMILL</u> CHOLLA BURN N.E.	631 ACRES \$5/AC	3,000	-0-	3,000 (RBF)	-0-	
FY '95 CHOLLA BURN S.W.	800 ACRES \$3/AC	2,400	-0-	2,400 (RBF)	-0-	
<u>BOOTLEG</u> BOOTLEGGER SPRING	1.5 MI 1" 250 PSI BLACK PIPE 5 TROUGHS & 1 10,000 GAL STORAGE TANK	5,000 3,500	3,000 3,500	5,000 (BOR) 3,500 (RBF)	3,000 (P) 3,500 (P)	
FY '96 <u>WINDMILL</u> MESA WELL PIPELINE & STORAGE TANK	.75 MI 1" 250 PSI BLACK PIPE 1 10,000 GAL STORAGE TANK	1,200	1,200	1,200 (RBF)	1,200 (P)	

RANGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

DEL SHAY

FY YEAR PASTURE PROJECT	UNIT	EST. COST		PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY COST SHARE ECT.		COMMENT
		MATERIALS	LABOR	PS/SCS/BOR	PERMITTEE (P)	
FY '97 LANE LANE FENCE	1.5 MI CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE	3,000	3,000	3,000 (RBF)	3,000 (P)	
FY '98 ROCK HOUSE NORTH PASTURE FENCE	1 MI CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE	2,000	2,000	2,000 (RBF)	2,000 (P)	
FELTON FELTON PASTURE FENCE	.6 MI CONVEN. 4 STRAND BARBED WIRE	1,200	1,200	1,200 (RBF)	1,200 (P)	
FELTON BURN	640 ACRES \$5/AC	3,200	-0-	3,200 (RBF)		NOT IN EA OR BAE
MAINTENANCE PROJECTS						
ROCK SPRING	REDO SPRING	.25 MI PIPE 2 TROUGH				
FELTON SPRING	REDO SPRING	TIE TO RATTLESNAKE PIPELINE				
WINDMILL CORRAL	MAINTAIN CORRAL					
DEL SHAY SPRING	RE-DO SPRING	.125 MI PIPE/1 TR				
ROCK HOUSE FENCE REMOVAL	REMOVE .5 MI EXISTING FENCE					
NOT FUNDED GUN PIPELINE	1.5 MI PIPE & 4 TROUGHS					