606204	Point of Mountain Spring	SE NW	31	8N	29E	26 Bar Permittee
606205	Spence Cabin Spring	SW SW	16	6N	28E	26 Bar Permittee
606206	Coon Spring	SW NW	26	8N	28E	Town of Eagar
606207	Loco Trick Tank/Pipeline/Trough	SW NE	30	8N	29E	26 Bar Permittee
606300	Spence Cabin Corrals	NW NE	20	7N	28E	26 Bar Permittee

BASE PROPERTY

Base Property is land owned and used by the permittee for a farm or ranch operation and cannot be leased to another entity. Base property shall include basic livestock management facilities. The permittee will immediately notify the Forest Officer in charge of any change in control of base property. The following land parcel is recognized as base property for the permit:

The following described property is designated as the commensurate base property for this permit:

SW ¼ of Section 7, T 8N, R 29E, G&SRM.

Classified as 113 acres.

26 Bar Allotment Management Plan

CURRENT PERMIT AND NEPA HISTORY

The December 2004 Environmental Assessment (EA) and the August 5, 2005 Decision Notice (DN) for the Cross Bar, Pool Corral and Rudd Knoll Allotment is incorporated by reference into the Special Terms and Conditions of this permit. These allotments were combined in May 2011 to form the 26 Bar allotment to better reflect the intent of the DN and simplify administration.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLOTMENT

The 26 Bar Allotment consists of Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forest and open pine bunchgrass grasslands dominate the higher elevations. Arizona fescue (Festuca arizonica), mountain muhly (Muhlenbergia montana) and pine dropseed (Belpharoneuron tricholepis) dominate the pine bunchgrass types. Tufted hairgrass (Deschampsia caespitosa), Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis), redtop (Agrostis alba, and spike muhly (Muhlenbergia wrightii) dominate meadows interspersed throughout the allotment. In some places, canyons and ridgetops have denser tree canopies with lower amounts of herbaceous ground cover. The headwaters for the South Fork of the Little Colorado River and the North Fork of the East Fork of the Black River run through this allotment.

The lower elevation consists of Pinyon-juniper woodland with mostly blue grama (Boutelous gracilis) dominating and other grass species and forbes. Mountain mahogany, skunkbrush and Mexican cliffrose are common browse species in these areas.

A basalt rim forms a natural barrier between the low and high elevation pastures. The pastures above the basalt rim consists of open ponderosa pine stands with an Arizona fescue, mountain muhly, Junegrass (Koleria cristata) and muttongrass (Poa fendleriana) understory. Canyons and ridgetops have denser tree canopies with lower amounts of herbaceous ground cover. Wet meadows occur throughout the pasture and are composed of Kentucky bluegrass, tufted hairgrass and water sedges (Carex aquatalis). Approximately 1.19 miles of the South Fork of the Little Colorado River meanders through the west portion of the West Mexican Hay pasture. The headwaters to the North Fork of the East Fork of the Black River begins in the Pool Knoll Pasture.

Some invaders and increasers species were found in the Lower Pasture, they are crazy weed (Oxytropis lambertii), pinque (Hymenoxys richardsoni), and Lupine (Lupinus spp.).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Balance livestock use with the allotment capacity (page 10 of the EA).
2. Establish proper utilization of forage by livestock (page 10 of the EA).
3. Improved watershed and soil condition (page 10 and 11 of the EA).
4. Increase density and distribution of cool season herbaceous species where potential exist (page 11 of the EA).
5. Manage for satisfactory riparian conditions (page 10 of the EA).
6. The herbaceous vegetation is managed to achieve or maintain fair or better range conditions.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The management consists of 16 pastures rest-rotation grazing system with two herds. This management rests four or more pastures per year over the next 10 years and emphasizes full season rest in pasture with unsatisfactory riparian conditions.

A total of 5,329 AUMs will be divided among the cow/calf and yearling herds according to the livestock operation. The season of use or planning dates for the three allotments is from June 15 to October 31. However, entry date/season of use would be determined annually based on range readiness and management needs of the allotment. Entry date is expected to vary annually due to temperature and elevation ranges and is generally expected to occur June 15 for the low elevation rangeland and around July 1 for the high elevation rangeland. Livestock removal date will occur on or prior to utilization of forage capacity but not later than October 31.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

1. Effectiveness Monitoring:

The effectiveness monitoring determines whether management practices are effective in moving the allotment toward desired conditions as described in the Forest Plan and AMP objectives. Effectiveness monitoring is long-term monitoring.

A. Range Readiness:

Range readiness checks will be conducted in anticipation of livestock entry in seasons when spring growth is delayed. The main objective is to determine whether plants are physiologically capable of being grazed and trampled without causing long term damage to the vegetation and soils.

This monitoring will be completed prior to the scheduled turnout date.

1. Soil condition – The soil is firm, at or below field capacity.
   a. Saturated soils are not present, Soil compaction is minimal.
   b. Standing water and ponding from snowmelt is not present.

2. Vegetation development stage – With rest or deferment it may be possible to graze at earlier stages however not on an annual basis. The range is considered ready for grazing when the forage plants three fully developed leaves and the fourth is half as long as the leaf.

B. Allowable Use:

Allowable use is the degree of utilization considered desirable and attainable on various specific part of an allotment considering the present resource condition, management objectives, and management levels.

Allowable use of 25% will be applied to stream bottoms in SU and other riparian areas classified as functioning at risk. Other utilization standards are 40% in the uplands and 35% on the remaining key areas as shown on the map. The primary main objective is to leave adequate stubble height of herbaceous vegetation to reduce soil surface erosion and filter out sediment in riparian rated as unsatisfactory and manage to achieve or maintain herbaceous vegetation in fair or better range conditions.

C. Grazing Utilization:

To determine if the implementation of the management actions proposed are effective, one or more of the following methods will be used to monitoring or document the actions:

1. Allotment inspection
2. Field reconnaissance
3. Ocular
4. Pre-livestock check
5. Midpoint check
6. Post-livestock check

Grazing utilization checks will be done just prior to livestock entry in a pasture if wild ungulate use is prominent.

2. Validation Monitoring:

Validation monitoring determines whether the information upon which the basis for standards, guidelines, and objectives is valid and correct.

Balancing permitted livestock use with the allotment capacity and functional at-risk riparian condition was identified as the two significant issues on the allotments in the EA, page 13. To determine if management actions are resolving the two significant issues, monitoring will focus on following specific areas:

A. Herbaceous vegetation
   a. Upland (Region 3 Rangeland Analysis and Management Training Guide and the amended Forest Plan).
   b. Riparian (PFC survey methods and GAWS surveys will be utilized). PFC surveys will be conducted five years after full implementation of the proposed action, pending funding
B. Shrub vegetation
   a. Upland (Region 3 Rangeland Analysis and Management Training Guide and the amended Forest Plan).
   b. Riparian PFC survey methods and GAWS surveys will be utilized). PFC surveys will be conducted five years after full implementation of the proposed action, pending funding.

3. Livestock Distribution Aids

The following improvements and strategies would be used to improve livestock grazing distribution and maximize use of allowable forage. The Forest Service will provide the materials when funding becomes available and assist with the construction. The permittee will provide labor for construction of these projects except the elk exclosure. The developed and improved waters will be maintained by the permittee when constructed except the elk exclosure. The elk exclosure will be maintained by the Arizona Game and Fish Dept.

The measures below will help facilitate improved management but are not mandatory or a determining factor in the analysis.

1. Move salt or mineral block to areas of light use or move them frequently.
2. Herding – Move cattle out of the riparian areas to light use areas on the uplands.
3. Develop new and existing waters:
   a. In SU Pasture - Develop Spence Cabin spring, extend pipeline outside the fenced area and setup float box and a trough. This will provide water on the upland and alleviate grazing pressure in the Black River for watering.
   b. Develop unnamed spring ½ mile north of Spence Cabin Spring in SU Pasture.
   c. Construct elk proof exclosure (approx. 2-5 acres) to protect willows, construct spring box, pipe water outside the exclosure, setup drinkers and install float box to drinkers.
   d. In Dipping Vat Pasture – Improve existing spring, relocate the trough.
   e. In Dipping Vat Pasture – Improve existing spring, replace pipeline and the trough.
   f. In Miller (7 Springs) Pasture of Rudd Knoll Allotment – Develop Seven Spring and construct a collection box and setup a trough.
   g. In Pool Knoll Pasture - Develop Spence Spring; install pipeline, setup float box and a trough.

4. Trailing of Livestock

The trailing through the three allotments by other permittees on the District will be accomplished up to two days, in the spring and fall, on a route identified on the map by the District.

1. The trailing to the Reservation and Hayground Allotments will include an overnight stop in the spring and fall at the corral in East Mexican Hay Pasture and the southeast end of the Dipping Vat Pasture of the Cross Bar Allotment.
2. The trailing to the Railroad Pasture of the Big Lake Allotment will include livestock traveling through Seven Springs and Dipping Vat Pastures.
3. The trailing through Pool Corral Allotment from the Burro Creek Allotment has been eliminated due to the Burro Creek Allotment reconfiguration completed in 2005.
4. The trailing to the Rudd Creek Allotment will include livestock traveling up on the Forest Road 285 and onto the Rudd Creek Allotment.

5. Mitigation Measure

As an alternative solution to the recovery of the Little Colorado River drainage in Skullduggery Pasture, approximately ten acres of ephemeral riparian may be fenced off from livestock grazing. This may occur if the result of riparian surveys utilizing Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) methodology indicates a downward trend. Surveys are scheduled for 2006.

Permittee Review

"I have reviewed the provisions of the term grazing permit, the standards and guidelines, and management required by the Forest Management Plan applicable to the Water Canyon and Murray Basin Allotments and the Allotment Management Plan with the grazing Permittee."

Rangeland Management Specialist — Date: 5/07/21

26 Bar Allotment
Grazing Permit Map

Legend

- Spring
- Cabin
- Corral
- Trick Tank
- Tank
- Water Storage Tank
- Trough
- Well
- Dam
- Gap Fence
- Pipeline

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests
Springerville Ranger District
Range Improvement Map

26 Bar Allotment

N
W E
S

0 1 2 4 Miles

Maintenance Responsibility

- 26 Bar Permittee
- Greer Permittee
- USFS
- Benton Creek Permittee
- Burk Permittee
- Udall Permittee
- St. Mary's Permittee
- Reservation Permittee (Udall)
- Water Canyon Permittee
- Voigt Permittee
- Az Game and Fish
- Town of Eagar
- Natural Boundary

This map is part of Grazing Permit No. _____
issued to _____
on_____by_____
and shows the 26 Bar Allotment.

Author: sweaver Date: 2/25/2021 Document Path: T:\FS\NFS\ApacheSitgreaves\Program\2200Range\GIS\SPR\26Bar\Permit\MXD\26BarAllotPermit_FY2021.mxd