BABOCOMARI ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Bureau of Land Management
Safford District

December 1990
Revised

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Location and Acreage

This allotment is located in Cochise County, just west of the San Pedro River, about 5 miles east of Huachuca City. State Highway 82 makes up the North Allotment boundary, and the Babocomari River runs through the southern third of the allotment. (See Base Map; Label as Appendix 1)

Table 1 indicates allotment acreages by ownership as shown on the base map.

Table 1
Allotment Acreage

Land Status	Acres	Sections	% of Area
BLM	1816	2.8	31
State	2821	4.4	49
Private	30	.0	0
Uncontrolled	1115	1.8	20
Total	5782	9.0	100

B. Land Use Constraints

1. Management Framework Plan

a. Devise grazing management so that pastures may be periodically deferred from livestock grazing if plant vigor or range conditions warrant.

b. Permanent waters on public land will be available to wildlife yearlong.

c. New fences will be built to wildlife specifications.

C. Resource Data

1. Topography and Elevation

The majority of the lease is relatively flat with the exception of the southeast corner which is hilly and has well-defined drainages running toward the Babocomari River.

Elevation extremes range from a low of 3900 feet where the Babocomari River leaves the lease to a high of 4200 feet on the western border.

Two major vegetation types make up the majority of the plant composition. See Table 2, following.

Table 2
Vegetation Types

Land Status	Acres	Sections	% of Area
Chihuahuan Desert Shrub	5672	8.8	98.3
Riparian	100	.2	1.7
Total	5772	9.0	100

D. Livestock Management Information

1. Livestock Operation

This lease is owned and operated by Mike Hayhurst. He runs a cow/calf operation yearlong. He leases and owns additional acreage north of Highway 82, but the land south of Highway 82 will be operated with a different herd of cattle and addressed in this plan. The current livestock operation and licensing information are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3
Base Property Qualifications

Permittee	Numbers	Season of Use	AUMs Fed.	Total Qual.
Hayhurst	45	Yearlong	180	

2. Carrying Capacity Determination

Mr. Hayhurst purchased this lease from Mr. Keeline in 1988. In 1988, after Mr. Hayhurst purchased the lease, the BLM acquired about two and one-half sections of federal land from an exchange with the State of Arizona. BLM agreed with the State all conditions in the State lease including the carrying capacity that the State offered prior to the exchange. The State of Arizona has allocated 5½ cattle per section yearlong on all State lands on this lease. The carrying capacity will be increased proportionally if the operator gains control of the uncontrolled land.

The tentative carrying capacity is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Allotment Carrying Capacity

Land Status	Present AUMS	Cattle Yearlong
BLM	192	16
Private	24	2
State	324	27
Total	540	45

3. Grazing Management Concerns

The highest priority will be given to the riparian corridor that runs about 3 miles through the lease. Great effort will be exerted to provide rest sufficient to maintain a mixed age class of Ash, Cottonwood trees. This rest will be accomplished by building an exclosure fence excluding the riparian area from grazing.

Water quality is also very important. Several years ago, and again in the summer of 1990, all fish in the creek were poisoned from a contamination source upstream. The source is upstream from all of the Hayhursts' operations. The BLM will take action to identify and monitor the source.

4. Existing Water Rights

The BLM acknowledges the Hayhursts recorded premptive existing water rights to the Babocomari River and agrees to drop any challenges to said rights.

5. [redacted]

II. OBJECTIVES

A. Riparian

The riparian area that runs through the lease appears to be improving and in fair condition. A riparian monitoring transect will be set up to determine trend. Good condition or better will be the goal.

B. Water Quality

Insure that water quality be kept at a standard so that desired fish populations are kept healthy.

C. Livestock Forage

Utilize the key forage species to be determined by the BLM and the operator with the assistance of an independent, outside expert, on the allotment by an average of 50 percent.

D. Watershed

Since Mr. Hayhurst purchased the lease, the BLM uplands have improved to a good condition. This condition should be maintained.

III. GRAZING MANAGEMENT

A. Key Species and Phenology

Management of the allotment will be based on the key species chosen by the BLM, the operator and an independent, outside expert. Both sideoats gramma and black gramma may be considered.

Table 5
Plant Phenology

Key Species	Start Growth	Flowering	Seed Ripe	Proper Use
Sideoats Gramma	03/01	07/15	8/10	50% of plant ma
Black Gramma	07/01	07/30	8/15	50% of plant ma

Key areas will be determined for monitoring range trends by the BLM, the operator, and an independent, outside expert.

B. Grazing System

1. Grazing Formula

The grazing season will be yearlong from March 1 to February 28. Upon full implementation of this plan, the lease will be divided into three pastures. A best-pasture deferred rotation grazing system will be used. Best pasture will be determined by operator. Such variables as percentage, rainfall pattern, and pasture rediness will influence where the cattle will be at any given time. The Babocomari River and associated riparia zone will be fenced out from all grazing pressure for an indefi nite time. One pasture will be deferred each year from grazing during the growing season (07/01-10/30).

2. Grazing Schedule

A general rule for determining when cattle will be removed fror a pasture is when the key species have been utilized 50%. (Refer to studies and evaluation next page.)

3. Grazing Authorization

The number and class of livestock and season of use, as outlined in Table 6 will be considered the authorized cattle use for this lease.

Table 6
Authorized Use

License	No. of Cattle	Available Active AUMs Federal	Other	Total AUMs
Mike Hayhurst	45	192	288	540

4. Changes in Authorized Use

Changes in use requested by the livestock operator, which are outside the limits of authorized use specified in the Plan, must be applied for and approved in advance of the grazing period

5. Billing Procedures

The operator will be billed annually through the Safford District Office. All bills will be due and payable prior to the beginning of the grazing season, March 1.

6. Implementation Procedures

The BLM will survey and construct the fence lines as close as possible to the existing flags. Points A,B,C,D, E, and F on revised map will be staked by the BLM. Operator will construct fence from Point A to E. Operator will approve the specifications of the riparian fence and the quality of construction before accepting the fence for maintenance. Three corridors for livestock water purposes will be provided. All locations where the riparian fence crosses the river-floating, automatic closing water gaps will be constructed.

7. Access to Riparian Area and Fence

A locked chain barricade will be placed across the abandoned railroad bed to prevent private vehicular traffic on the railroad bed. Both the operator and the BLM will be allowed to use the railroad bed for vehicular traffic.

An adequate number of livestock-proof walk-throughs will be placed in the riparian fence to minimize the chances of an open gate.

8. Fuel Wood for Personal Use of Operator

The operator agrees not to cut fuel wood inside the fenced riparian area unless a special agreement is made with the BLM,

but will retain the right to cut fuel wood for personal on all other areas of the allotment.

IV. PROPOSED RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Table 7
Range Improvements

Improvement No. on Figure #1	Name	Priority	Location	Quantity
1	Babocomari Riparian Fence	1	Both sides of lower Babocomari Riparian, sec. 8,9,17	3 mi
2	Pasture Fence	1	Extension of the exclosure fence to make a pasture fence, sec. 18	1 mi
3	Vegetation Manipulation	2	Sec. 8,9, T. 20S, R. 21E	200 a
4	Pasture Fence	1	State line pasture fence, sec. 12,13	1 1/2

V. STUDIES AND EVALUATION

Range utilization monitoring will be performed twice a ye (May-June and Nov.-Dec.) in each key area. Precipitation records will be used from the Fairbank Office - 1½ miles to the east of the lease.

The BLM and operator will agree on the method of monitori the range and watershed conditions.

Color infra-red photography will be utilized to monitor cottonwood, willow, and ash in the riparian area. Perman photo points will also be established as time permits.