

Allotment Management Plan

Bald Hill

USDA Forest Service
Verde Ranger District, Prescott National Forest
Yavapai County, Arizona

Introduction

The 15,711 acre Bald Hill Allotment is located approximately 6 miles south of Camp Verde and runs from Pinto Mesa south-east to Bald Hill. Elevations on the allotment range from 3800 ft. to 6200 ft.

Pinyon/juniper woodlands and juniper/chaparral dominate the vegetative communities present on the allotment.

This Allotment Management Plan implements the decision (supported by the Verde Rim Livestock Grazing Project Environmental Assessment) made by the Verde District Ranger on May 2, 2006.

Objectives

- Increase or maintain VGC and perennial grass composition and cover in pinyon/juniper woodlands, desert shrub/grassland, and chaparral communities to the extent attainable with the existing tree/shrub canopy.
- Improve soil function to enhance soil conditions.
- Allow riparian vegetation to reach or move towards potential.
- Allow channel profiles to return to appropriate dimensions for site morphology and channel functions.

Grazing Management

A. Permitted Numbers, Season of Use, and Head Months

Permittee	Permit Type	# of Livestock	Season of Use	Head Months
Yavapai Apache Nation	Term (10 years)	123 – 172 cattle	Year-long	1465 - 2064

		(cow / calf)	3/1 – 2/28	
--	--	--------------	------------	--

The period of grazing and the stocking numbers on NFS lands will be determined by monitoring, designated in the Annual Operating Instructions and authorized in the Bill for Collection.

B. Grazing Management and Allowable Use

Grazing Management

Apply deferred rotation in the four main pastures in conjunction with two small intermittently used pastures keeping the Arnold Pasture winter-use only due to the high proportion of chaparral vegetation.

Re-entry into a pasture will be allowed as part of the rotation following additional vegetation growth.

Annual Operating Instructions will be prepared each year in cooperation with the permittee to allow for consideration of current allotment conditions and management objectives. This AOI will detail the current season's grazing schedule, the stocking level, the improvement maintenance needs, needed improvements, and the allowable use levels on key forage and browse species.

Application of standard management practices such as salting, herding, and controlling access to water to achieve proper distribution or lessen the impact on areas which are sensitive or are natural concentration areas will be applied by the permittee.

Protein, salt, and other supplements will not be placed within ¼ mile of water or any identified sensitive plant population. New improvements (e.g. pipelines, troughs, tanks, or fences) will be designed to avoid adverse impacts to any such populations.

All new or reconstructed fencing will be built to accommodate wildlife passage using a 4-strand fence with a smooth bottom wire 18 inches off the ground and a total fence height of 42 inches or less.

All new or reconstructed water developments will include wildlife access and escape ramps.

Cooperation of the permittee will be sought to make stock water supplies available for wildlife needs during critical periods, if water is available at the sources (e.g. storage tank).

The permittee will ensure that structural range improvement maintenance is completed to standard; that livestock do not enter the allotment or a pasture prior to the approved entry date; that livestock are removed from pastures and the allotment as specified in the AOI; and that livestock do not enter or re-enter pastures that either have already been grazed, or that are planned for rest.

Allowable Use

Site	Use of Herbaceous Plants	Use of Shrubs
Upland sites	40% on key forage plants (except in the Bates and Bull pastures where it will be 30%) at the time livestock are moved from a pasture and 50% on key forage plants (30% in the Bates and Bull pastures) at the end of the growing season.	50% of current year's leaders

The herbaceous plant utilization levels above represent the percentage of last season's growth, if grazed during the dormant season, or the percentage of the current season's growth, to date, if grazed during a growing period (relative or seasonal utilization).

C. Rangeland Improvement Program

~~N^o~~--- Extend the existing enclosure at Reimer Springs downstream into the Bald Hill Pasture, while leaving access for cattle watering.

~~N^o~~---A decision was made 12/11/08 not to extend the existing riparian enclosure on Cienega Creek north to the Durfee/Bald Hill pasture division fence.

✓
--- Construct riparian enclosure adjacent to the private land on Cienega Creek to contain areas with the highest riparian potential. (completed 9/1/2010) A decision on 12/11/08 was made not to construct an enclosure along Arnold canyon. (*Areas that later exhibit riparian attributes (which may now be apparent because of drought conditions) will be fenced or protected from livestock grazing impacts through management actions controlling timing and intensity of livestock use.*)

✓
---Construct three quarter miles of rangeland fencing (to wildlife standards along the south-side of the old ranch headquarters private land tract 9now sub-divided) to form a small holding pasture. (completed 2008)

D. Maintenance Responsibility

Existing improvements are shown on the allotment map and range improvement inventory sheets of the permit.

All maintenance must be done annually whether the allotment is actually grazed or not.

Maintenance must occur throughout the season and cannot be a one time action.

Damage resulting from big game, wind, other acts of nature, or human caused actions, must be repaired in a timely manner so as to ensure the integrity of the structures.

All maintenance of exterior fences must be completed prior to turn on each year. (*It is the responsibility of the permittee to ensure that the necessary coordination occurs between adjacent allotments to ensure maintenance is completed in a timely manner*).

E. Drought Management

Perennial grasses and major browse species need deferment/rest in order to provide time to recover from drought induced stress.

Move cattle when utilization in pastures is met. If removal of livestock is necessary, they may be authorized to return to the allotment once conditions improve; meaning sufficient recovery from the effects of drought stress has occurred and there has been enough herbaceous production to support livestock numbers. Potential return of livestock will be evaluated no earlier than the summer growing season.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A. Implementation (Compliance) Monitoring

--- Periodic field checks will be conducted by the Forest Officer and/or the grazing permittee to measure forage use to determine if allowable use levels are being reached and determine any needed pasture movements.

(Monitoring of allowable use on key forage species in key areas is the joint responsibility of the Forest Service and the permittee. Although the Forest Service will make every effort to assist the permittee in ensuring compliance with standards, the permittee has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the allowable use standards are met).

--- Periodic field checks will be conducted by the Forest Officer to assess vegetation health and trends as well as soil function to identify needed adjustments in season of use and/or livestock numbers.

Field Checks will include informal inspections, formal inspections, and permittee compliance monitoring.

Monitor Cienega creek (unfenced portion near the Durfee/Bald Hill pasture division fence for riparian enhancement. Monitor Arnold Canyon for livestock impacts on riparian areas.

Informal Inspections

Informal inspections conducted by the Forest Officer will be made as the opportunity arises, such as when the Forest Officer is working in the area or is passing through the allotment.

The permittee will be notified by telephone of any significant observations needing immediate attention. Significant observations will be documented in writing by the Forest Officer and a copy of the inspection notes will be sent to the permittee in a timely manner.

