

INTERIM
RANGE MANAGEMENT PLAN

BROWN SPRINGS GRAZING ALLOTMENT

Verde Ranger District
Prescott National Forest

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I. INTRODUCTION

This plan will provide a range development program for the Brown Springs Allotment. It will also provide for livestock, soil, and forage management to obtain sustained production from the range resource and compatibility with other resources, uses, and activities.

II. OBJECTIVES

A. Short Term

1. Maintain stocking at the current estimated capacity of 170 CYL until Production-Utilization data can be obtained.
2. Improve livestock distribution on the allotment.
3. Improve plant vigor, composition, and cover by providing growing season rest, on a rotating basis, for each unit.
4. Coordinate grazing with other resources, particularly wildlife and soils.

B. Long Term

1. Improve range condition while utilizing the forage resource properly.

III. HISTORY

The present Brown Springs Allotment evolved from a combination of the old Brown Springs and Gap Creek Allotments. In 1958 with a term preference of 228 CYL. In 1964, the preference was reduced to its present 170 CYL.

As with most of the allotments around Camp Verde, it has a history of over use; due to lack of management.

IV. CURRENT STATUS

Currently, the allotment is run as a cow-calf operation by Mr. William R. Fix, who acquired the permit in July, 1973. Past use has been,

basically, continuous grazing on the entire allotment. Mr. Fix has done considerable work to improve distribution. This includes building the Gap Creek-Rodeo Flat Division Fence and fencing off a holding pasture.

The last Range Analysis of this allotment, done in 1964, classed the entire suitable range as very poor and poor. Since that time, much of the allotment has recovered about one condition class. Browse has recovered well and appears vigorous, also.

Currently there are no areas of serious soil movement, although there are some small localized spots.

The allotment has adequate water in the Cold Water and Gap Creek Units, but the Verde River is the only dependable source in the Rodeo Flat Unit.

V. DISCUSSION

A management plan based on plant and animal needs is essential to continued livestock grazing on the Brown Springs Allotment. There is a need to provide for spring and summer growing season deferrment in all units but especially in the Rodeo Flat Unit, which is flatter and more beat out. Better distribution is the key to more even utilization of the available forage and can be accomplished by cross-fencing and water development. The following proposals will provide for these requirements:

- 1) Cross-fence and divide allotment into three units.
- 2) Develop water in Rodeo Flat Unit first, then, in other units as money is available.
- 3) Maintain all existing improvements.
- 4) Implement a deferred-rotation grazing system.

VI. RANGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The following improvement projects are listed in order of priority with scheduled completion dates and suggested financing:

- 1) Gap Creek-Cold Water Fence - Construct approximately 1½ miles of allotment division fence. Forest Service to provide materials. Permittee to provide labor. FY 76
- 2) Ridge Tank - Forest Service will pay ½ of construction cost up to \$600. Permittee will pay balance. FY 78

- 3) Powerline Tank - Forest Service will pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of construction cost up to \$600, permittee will pay balance. FY 78
- 4) Chasm Tank - Forest Service will pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of construction cost up to \$600, permittee will pay balance. FY 79
- 5) Brushy, Tule, Fence Tanks - Forest Service will pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of construction cost up to \$600, permittee will pay balance. To be built as funds are available.
- 6) Spring development - Undeveloped springs, such as Rovey Spring will be developed as funds become available.

Maintenance of Improvements

Normal maintenance of range improvements is the permittee's responsibility and he will be expected to maintain them in good condition. Most improvements on the allotment are in good shape but some boundary fences are in need of reconstruction. These will be considered cooperative repair as funds are available.

VII. OTHER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Distribution is the key to proper use on this allotment and the following practices will be used to improve it:

- 1) Salt and supplement will be placed at least $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from water on good feed.
- 2) Riding to distribute cattle should be done as often as practical.
- 3) Salt grounds and supplement feed boxes will be rotated to avoid "beating out" the area around them.

VIII. GRAZING SYSTEM

With the completion of the Gap Creek - Cold Water cross fence, the allotment will be divided into three units with three smaller holding pastures. The allotment is not adequately watered to permit rest-rotational grazing. The grazing system outlined on the attached 2200-18 will utilize the units in a deferred-rotation pattern to provide for the needs of the vegetation and the cattle. It provides:

- 1) Both spring and summer growing season rest on the deferred pasture.
- 2) Better distribution when cattle are concentrated in smaller units.
- 3) Rotation of use seasons will allow better utilization of all forage classes.

IX. ADMINISTRATION

This plan is designed to be flexible enough to provide for changes if unusual weather conditions or other problems arise. Minor adjustments can be agreed upon between the permittee and the District Ranger and documented in the files. Major changes will be accomplished by written amendment to this plan.

Production-utilization and trend studies will be used for monitoring range conditions. These studies will determine the need for any modifications in the stocking rate or grazing system.