

United States
Department
Agriculture

Tonto
National
Forest

FS
DFS
R&W

Payson
Ranger
District

1009 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541

Reply To: 2210/1950

Subject: Deadman Mesa Allotment (AMP Categorical Exclusion)

To: Forest Supervisor

REC'D 20 SEP 1987

Date: September 14 1987

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On May 15, 1987 an Integrated Resource Management Team met at the Payson Ranger District to scope the relevant issues pertaining to an Allotment Management Plan for the Deadman Mesa Allotment. A copy of the issues and concerns developed during the meeting is attached.

Since that meeting the district has completed intensive reconnaissance of the management needs on the allotment and generated alternatives and selected the preferred alternative.

At this time the preferred alternative is a winter rotation system through eight pastures. This alternative is consistent with the Tonto National Forest Land Management Plan. Two other alternatives were evaluated. One was "No Action" and the other was "Eight Pasture Rotation with Wilderness Improvements". These alternatives were eliminated from consideration because they did not meet the intent of the Tonto National Forest Plan.

Vegetation on the allotment is primarily Pinyon - Juniper woodlands on the mesa tops with brush and riparian types within the canyons.

Planned costs to develop the allotment management plan will be minimal. Existing pasture division fences and stock tanks will be reconstructed or repaired into working condition. Several short drift fences and one new saddle stock tank will be required to utilize existing natural barriers to make three new pastures. This basic plan is similar to others that have been proposed on the district.

It has been determined that these activities will have no significant effect on the quality of the environment.

No T&E species will be affected by the implementation of this management plan. (Refer to Biological Evaluation attached)

Based on the above information and the requirements listed below, I recommend that this Allotment Management Plan be categorically excluded from any further N.E.P.A. Analysis.

1. All new range projects will be analyzed through the N.E.P.A. process.

2. All necessary archeological clearances and visual quality objectives will be met prior to any project implementation.

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STEPHEN L. GUNZEE
District Ranger

I agree with the recommendation that the allotment management plan for the Deadman Mesa Allotment be excluded from further N.E.P.A. Analysis.

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JAMES L. KIMBALL Forest Supervisor

Date

10-28-87

United States
Department
Agriculture

Tonto
National
Forest

Payson
Ranger
District

1009 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541

Reply To: 2210/1950

Date: July 2, 1987

Subject: Scoping Meeting (Deadman Mesa AMP)

To: List of Attendees

The following issues and concerns were developed during the scoping meeting held at the Payson Ranger District on May 15, 1987 for the Deadman Mesa Allotment Management Plan.

1. T&E Species (Cowania subintegra, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Agave arizonica)
2. Hardscrabble Lake management.
3. Marijuana cultivation/Law Enforcement.
4. Fossil Creek road improvement/conflict with livestock.
5. Trails
6. Juniper age class distribution (re-wildlife habitat)
7. Cultivated pasture on forest (possible heavy use by livestock)
8. Winter use only (Compromising Mgt. Alternatives)
9. Time of use on plants.
10. Heavy residential building west side of Strawberry.
11. Poor condition of range improvements.
12. Livestock distribution/control.
13. Livestock use in wilderness/rough terrain.
14. Inadequate water on mesa.
15. Wild cattle in Hardscrabble Canyon (Potential for more)
16. Utilization of annual species.
17. Conflicts with wildlife and cattle for forage.
18. Waterfowl use (Lakes, creeks, nesting season)
19. Fire in wilderness (monitor, least suppression costs)

The following six concerns were developed as criteria to base the development of an allotment management plan.

1. Protection and enhancement of riparian areas.
2. Lack of forage on the mesa tops. (Need to improve ground cover and increase production of perennial forage.)
3. Impacts of livestock and range developments on wilderness and other recreation trails.
4. Improve diversity of plant species (primarily cool season species in light of winter grazing season)
5. Need to use livestock and grazing as tools to improve range and wildlife conditions.
6. Need to provide management with a positive cost benefit ratio.

The scoping team discussed possible alternatives for management on the allotment. Two alternatives were discussed but did not fully address the issues and concerns discussed. They were the no-action alternative and a short duration winter rotation through eight

pastures with wilderness range improvements. The preferred alternative is similar to the short duration winter rotation although it has seven pastures with no wilderness range improvements. Under this alternative there would be two wilderness pastures that would be used every other year with 25 or 30 cattle for a period of 3 or 4 months out of the permitted seven months with the remainder of the herd rotated through the other five pastures

The group reached consensus that improved management on the allotment was necessary and that the management discussed would be positive and have no significant impact on the environment. It was agreed to pursue the necessary steps needed to develop the preferred alternative.

Interested parties invited to attend were:

Rod Byers
Steve Gunzel
Keith Menasco
Rob Ingram
Janette Kaiser

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Bobbie Holliday
John Kelsey
Rich Martin
Lee Redding
Sue Morganson
Henry Apfel
Rob Smith
Tom Wright

Payson R.D. Tonto N.F.
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Deadman Mesa Permittee Rep.
Deadman Mesa Permittee Rep.
Sierra Club
Tonto N.F.
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Tonto N.F.
Arizona Dept. of Game and Fish
Arizona Dept. of Game and Fish
Sierra Club
Sierra Club

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Stephen L. Gunzel
District Ranger

EVAN MECHAM, Governor

Commissioners
TEDDY BAKER, Elgin, Chairman
LARRY D. ADAMS, Bullhead City
FRANCE W. WEINER, Tucson
THOMAS WOODS, JR., Phoenix
PAUL L. ASHCROFT, Eagar

Director
TEMPLE A. REYNOLDS

Assistant Director
DUANE L. SHROUFE



ARIZONA GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT

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REGION VI
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June 2, 1987

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JUN 6 - 1987

Stephen L. Gunzel, District Ranger
Payson Ranger District
Tonto National Forest
1009 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541

RE: Deadman Mesa HMP

Dear Mr. Gunzel:

Thank you for inviting us to the preliminary scoping meeting for the Deadman Mesa Allotment. Henry Apfel, the Wildlife Manager for that area, attended the meeting and he expressed to me the following issues and concerns.

It is our perception that the majority of the range is in poor condition. Consequently, we would like to see "improving range condition" and "improving wildlife habitat" as major objectives of the AMP.

It appears that cattle use on Deadman Mesa is much heavier than on Fossil Creek and Hardscrabble. We would support measures to more evenly distribute cattle, such as a four pasture rotation system.

Lastly, we believe that current AUM's may be excessive given present range condition, and urge the Forest Service to carefully re-evaluate cattle numbers.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Deadman Mesa Allotment Management planning effort.

Sincerely,

Temple Reynolds, Director

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Sue Morgensen, Habitat Specialist

SAM:nfs

cc: Robert K. Weaver, Habitat Evaluation Coord.
Donald M. Turner, Region VI Supervisor
Henry Apfel, Wildlife Manager