

**2003 END OF SEASON REPORT
ALDER CREEK ALLOTMENT**

TERM GRAZING PERMIT				AUTHORIZED USE				ACTUAL USE			
NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.
604	6/16	10/6	2244	561	6/16	10/6	1512	561	6/16	9/05	1512

UNIT DATES AND UTILIZATION RESULTS:

ACTUAL GRAZING SCHEDULE			ALLOWABLE STDS	ACTUAL RESULTS
UNIT NAME	ON DATE	OFF DATE	RIPARIAN	RIPARIAN
Big and Little Blind Canyon / Bedy	6/16	7/10	50% (4 in)	*50%
South Fork of Alder	7/11	8/9	50% (4 in)	65% uplands
Trail Creek/Sawmill	8/10^	8/20^	50% (4 in)	4 inches
Stewart/Mammoth	8/21^	9/3^	50% (4 in)	5 inches
Tuscarora Gulch	7/16	9/1	50% (4 in)	No data
Willow Creek	9/2^	9/5	50% (4 in)	**30%

^The unit on-off dates are estimated. Exact dates are unknown.

*This is an ocular estimation of upland use.

**Due to drought conditions, ungrazed plants were only 4" on average in total growth. This unit was virtually unused due to late season use and no water.

Allotment Inspections: Allotment inspections were conducted on the following dates: 5/20, 5/21, 6/18, 6/23, 8/5, 8/26, 7/16, 9/17, 10/7, 10/8. Allotment inspections included cattle location checks, contact with rider and permittees, and utilization monitoring. Contacts were made to inform riders and permittees of continuing drought conditions, recommend units be used conservatively, manage moves between units in a timely manner, and remove cattle from back-units.

Information: The District experienced below average annual precipitation for the fourth consecutive year. The early part of the growing season was cool. Some isolated rain events in early July resulted in some grazable forage, however very dry conditions in August and September provided little opportunity for re-growth. Generally, annual

vegetation production was below average and upland water sources were lacking which created difficult circumstances for optimal cattle distribution. Due to drought conditions this season, permittees voluntarily moved cattle through the units earlier than the estimated on-off dates described above and came off the forest 31 days early. Drift back into grazed units and keeping cattle in the uplands was a continuous problem.

Allowable use standards were met in all riparian key areas that were measured. The Willow Creek Unit, which received heavy utilization in 2000 and 2002, was virtually unused due to late season use and no water. Due to drought conditions, ungrazed plants were only 4" on average in total growth.

A number of the same problems that occurred in 2001 and 2002 season also reoccurred in 2003. These problems on the allotment include, cows remaining in back units over the 7-day period after the main herd had moved and heavy use in Lower Alder Cr. and South Fork Alder Cr. units. Tuscarora Gulch also continues to get used hard as it is the travel route for back cleaning Willow Creek and cattle linger in the gulch near the spring/willow complex.

This was the second year for the rider (Eric) on the allotment. Again Eric made a good effort to manage cattle movement; however it is clear that he needs help in moving from unit to unit so he can concentrate on getting cattle spread out and back ride. The Tuscarora Gulch trough and pipeline will need ongoing maintenance in 2004.

The meeting on the ground with Steve Cote, Carmela Romerio and Lance Rosenkrance was beneficial and gave us a starting point to set up some improvements for spring. Steve was also helpful in helping Lance to understand some upland vegetation utilization and what we are trying to manage for.

Recommendations:

- 1) Meet end of season standards and continue to improve on overall allotment management (i.e. keep the cattle in designated units, make timely moves).
- 2) Establish a range improvement schedule that focuses on rebuilding existing water developments as well as identifies areas where additional off channel water sources may be developed, particularly in the Willow Cr. unit and from the Trail Creek drainage downstream to the allotment boundary.
- 3) Provide additional help to rider when units need cleaned and/or moving from unit to unit.
- 4) Feed certified weed free hay to rider's stock instead of picketing around camp to decrease concentrated grazing.
- 5) Address grazing capacity (Head Months) issue, to achieve proper use across the entire allotment. (Permittees have been voluntarily coming off early to compensate for the capacity issue)
- 6) Set up "triggers" (i.e. Stubble heights) in key areas to determine when to move cattle to achieve proper utilization.
- 7) Establish long-term monitoring sites and determine ecological status of streams.