

**LITTLE LOST RIVER SUB-BASIN
SAWMILL CANYON WATERSHED
2003 END OF SEASON REPORT
MILL CREEK ALLOTMENT – LOST RIVER RANGER DISTRICT, SALMON-
CHALLIS NF**

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.
554	7/1	9/30	1676	554	7/1	9/30	1676	554	7/1	9/30	1676

UNIT DATES AND UTILIZATION RESULTS:

ACTUAL GRAZING SCHEDULE			ALLOWABLE STDS	ACTUAL RESULTS
UNIT NAME	ON DATE	OFF DATE	RIPARIAN	RIPARIAN
Squaw Creek	7/1	7/20	50% (4 in.)	5 in
Cub Canyon	7/21	8/5	50% (4 in.)	³ N/A
Horse Lake	8/6	8/15	*50% (4 in.) & 35%	² 4/6 in
Smithie Fork	8/16	8/31	50% (4 in)	4 in
Timber Creek	9/01	9/15	50% (4 in.)	¹ 4/6 in
Mill Creek	9/16	9/30	50% (4 in.)	4 in

¹ In this unit, there are two key areas; spring above Red Rock Creek Road, end of season use 4 inches; and below camp ground on main road, end of season use 6 inches.

² In this unit there are two key areas; spring area above lake approximately 300 yards, end of season use 4 inches; and at crossing where trail goes to Horse Lake on main Mill Creek, end of season use 6 inches.

³No perennial stream flows into the Little Lost River, therefore no data was taken on this Unit in 2003(see summary notes below).

Allotment Inspections: Allotment inspections were conducted on the following dates: 6/26, 7/14, 8/04, 8/15, 8/29, 9/10, 10/1, 10/09, 10/16. 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.

Redd Study: The bull trout study was completed this summer. A paper will be out in approximately one year to describe the effects of cattle trampling on bull trout redds in detail. The preliminary findings were cattle had minimal effects to bull trout redds in stream channel types typical in Timber Creek and moderate effects to stream channel types typical in Smithie Fork Creek. Dependant on consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service, it is expected that cattle will be able to graze on streams with Bull Trout after spawning to some degree. In summary, small adjustments in grazing management to the Mill Creek C&H Allotment will be sufficient for protection of bull trout redds.

Summary: For the third consecutive year high temperatures and little or no precipitation typified the 2003-grazing season across the District. However, the forage conditions observed on this allotment were far better than anywhere else. Production seemed to be higher and plants stayed greener longer in Sawmill Canyon than in other areas of the District. The drought like conditions did result in a lack of water and lack of better forage in the drier units, particularly Horse Lake and Cub Canyon. As a result to these conditions, cattle congregated at unit boundary fence corners (gates) of Cub Canyon-Horse Lake and Horse Lake (Bull Creek).

Standards were met in every unit with minimal use in Squaw Creek Riparian for the second year. Riding continues to be the key factor in following the grazing management plan and meeting end of season stubble height standards. Cattle can be found in all units at any one time.

Recommendations:

1. Cattle movements between units need to be completed in a specified period. **This means permittees need to provide additional riders on move dates and assist with backriding.**
2. Riders need to move cattle that are congregating in riparian areas, boundary fence corners and other problem areas into uplands for optimal utilization of entire range.
3. Entire allotment needs to be cleaned by end of season to prevent overuse, reduce potential adverse effects to Bull trout spawning, and allow the unit to recover as much as possible.
4. Maintain fence and water developments prior to entering pastures, to eliminate drift.
5. Back ride to ensure cattle aren't drifting into previously used units.