

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

Allotment Name: Bootjack C&H **Forest:** Caribou-Targhee NF **District:** Island Park **Date:** 09/15/2004

Reviewers: Carol Lyle (EM staff), Adrienne Keller (ranger) Bryan Aber (range/wildlife), John Lott (soils), Lee Mabey (aquatics), and Brad Higginson (hydrology)

Grazing System: Season Long

Unit(s) Reviewed: <u>Main Unit – majority of allotment</u>	On Date(s): <u>July 11</u>	Off Date(s) <u>August 21 or 22</u>
<u>Poison Knoll – small unit ran with state land.</u>	<u>August 20</u>	<u>September 4</u>

6TH Level HUB: <u>170402021002 (majority)</u>	Stream Name(s): <u>Bootjack Creek and North Sawtell Creek</u>
<u>170402021201</u>	<u>Hope Creek</u>
<u>170402020903</u>	<u>Sawtell Creek</u>
<u>170402021001 (minor sliver)</u>	

Ecological Units (EUI): 1149-PSME/CARU Edgway, 15-40% slopes; 1150-ABLA/CARU Rhylow – ABLA/CARU, CARU Fitwil association, 4-40% slopes; 1315-ALBLA/OSCH, PAMY Edgway – ABLA/VAGL, PAMY Koffgo – PSME/Artrv Povey association, 15-50% slopes; and others

Community Types: Mixed confers with grass/forb open parks

Notes: 375 cow /calf pairs run on the allotment. The allotment is not NEPA sufficient, but it is on the Forest's schedule for AMP update/NEPA compliance. The AOI is annually updated (Bryan Aber updated this year). The permittee has used a rider in the past for distribution. However, there has not been a rider the last couple of years. This has led to some distribution problems.

The unit was historically grazed hard, but current management has produced improvements. The permittee has stayed in the Poison Knoll unit too long in previous years. It was noted in this year's AOI that the possibility of fencing out the Forest portion from State may be examined.

The area experiences heavy recreation use due to it's proximity to Henry's Lake. Heavy dispersed camping occurs within the allotment and motorized recreation is also popular. The reviewers noted illegal motorized use of closed roads. Heavy recreational use (including illegal ATV use of closed roads) has led to distribution problems. The area also receive heavy snowmobile use in the winter.

The allotment received good precipitation in the spring and throughout the summer. This has led to good vegetation and growth conditions. Issues identified include the following:

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

- The range conservationist position on the district is vacant. This is a full-time position and Bryan is covering it as he also performs his wildlife duties.
- Poison Knoll is being overused this year. The unit is ran with the State land, which is open sage brush country. The cattle tend to hang of the Forest portion because of the timbered vegetation and shading it provides. This unit needs to be fenced off from the state land or combined with the main unit.
- An allotment of this size consisting of a season long grazing system needs a full time rider to insure proper distribution of livestock is occurring.
- Cows were still in both units during the review on 9/15. Cows should have been out of the main unit on 8/20 (recent weather probably pushed these animals down from higher elevations). Cows should be out of the Poison Knoll unit on 9/4. The permittee was previously warned of the conditions in the Poison Knoll unit and will receive another letter as a result of this review.

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

Use the Following Rating Guide and Definitions to Score Each Practice

Implemented	Score
Exceeds objective of practice	5
Meets objective of practice	4
Minor departure from practice	3
Major departure from practice	2
Gross neglect of practice	1

Effective	Score
Improved protection of soil and water over pre-project conditions	5
Adequate protection of soil and water	4
Minor and temporary impacts on soil and water	3
Major and temporary, or minor and prolonged impacts on soil and water	2
Major and prolonged impacts on soil and water	1

Term	Definition
Adequate	Small amount of material eroded; material does not reach ephemeral draws, intermittent and perennial streams, or wetlands
Minor	Erosion and delivery of material to ephemeral draws but not intermittent and perennial streams, or wetlands
Major	Erosion and subsequent delivery of sediment to ephemeral draws, intermittent and perennial streams, or wetlands
Temporary	Impacts expected to last one year or less or no more than one runoff season
Prolonged	Impacts expected to last more than one year or one runoff season

R1/R4 FSH 2509.22, Chapter10 - Soil and Water Conservation Practices

Practice	Objective and Implementation	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes
17.01 – Range Analysis, Allotment Management Plan, Grazing Permit System, and Permittee Operating Plan	<p>To maintain and protect soil and water resources through sustained forage production and managed multiple use of range forage.</p> <p><u>Implementation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotment is NEPA sufficient (if yes, give date) and AMP is sufficient (if yes, give date) • Preparation and approval of AMP • Revise AMP as needed • AOI prepared or revised (as needed) annually to adjust for current allotment conditions and trends and to incorporate special instructions • Permittee carries out the plan • Corrective action is taken if permittee does not comply with permit conditions designed to protect soil and water resources. 	Y	4	4	<p>Not NEPA sufficient, but it is on the schedule. Current AOI is in place and annually updated.</p> <p>The permittee will receive a letter as a result of this inspection.</p>

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

R1/R4 FSH 2509.22, Chapter10 - Soil and Water Conservation Practices

Practice	Objective and Implementation	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes
17.02 – Controlling Livestock Numbers and Season of Use	<p>To maintain and protect soil and water resources through management of livestock numbers and season of use.</p> <p><u>Implementation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper stocking rates and season of use specified in the grazing permit. • Annual field checks are made to identify needed adjustments: range readiness evaluations, livestock counts, forage & browse utilization, and periodic assessments of rangelands (soil and veg. trends) • Permit is modified, cancelled, or suspended if needed. 	Y	4	4	<p>Allotment inspections occurred on 7/21 and 8/24/2004. The July inspection July indicated “satisfactory” conditions and good distribution. The August inspection indicated that the following needed attention: compliance with the AOI, fence maintenance, and previously grazed unit clean of livestock (cows were still in main unit on 8/24). Several cows were still in the unit on 9/15 (probably pushed down by recent weather).</p>
17.03 – Controlling Livestock Distribution	<p>To maintain and protect soil and water resources, including riparian areas though controlling livestock distribution.</p> <p><u>Implementation:</u></p> <p>Proper techniques are used to reduce the impact on sensitive or naturally overused areas. Techniques may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence construction and use of seasonal or pasture system management • Water developments in areas that receive little use and closures of water developments when proper use is achieved. • Other Range improvements. • Riding & herding to shift livestock locations • Placing salt or supplements away from water in forage areas with light grazing use to attract livestock • Moving livestock when prescribed utilization levels are reached. • Goats and sheep – open herding, limited trailing, and use of new bed grounds nightly. <p>Direction is incorporated into the AMP and AOI. The AOI reflects current allotment conditions and vegetative trends.</p>	Y	4	4	<p>There are localized areas of disturbance (bank trampling) along Bootjack Creek. The stream is incised in many of the areas we visited and not accessible by cattle. Bank trampling is occurring where the stream is accessible, but accessible areas are not common.</p> <p>Permittee had good salt placement on the ridge top above Bootjack Creek. A drift fence near Sawtell Creek was not put up this summer, but it did not appear to be needed.</p> <p>The permittee may need a rider to aid in distribution. It may have not been a problem this year due to good precipitation.</p> <p>Recreational activity is disrupting livestock distribution.</p>

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

R1/R4 FSH 2509.22, Chapter10 - Soil and Water Conservation Practices

Practice	Objective and Implementation	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes
17.04 – Rangeland Improvements	<p>To maintain and protect soil and water resources the use of rangeland improvements.</p> <p><u>Implementation:</u> Improvements are recognized in the allotment planning process. Improvements are used to improve management and restore or improve forage quality, quantity, or availability. Improvements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest and/or deferment through rotation grazing, fencing, or lighter grazing use by changing the grazing season, kind, class, or permitted number of livestock. • Stream stabilization projects • Reseeding, fertilization, and/or other non-structural improvements • Water developments • ID teams provide consultation on improvements and they are constructed in manner that protects surface and ground water quality 	y			<p>There currently are not many improvements in this allotment. Noted improvements include refencing of the Poison Knoll unit to exclude cattle from coming up from the State land.</p> <p>The fisheries program is planning a stream improvement and fencing project in the allotment.</p>

R4 Soil Management Handbook, FSH 2509.18 – Chapter 2 – Soil Quality Monitoring

Practice	Objective and Implementation	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes
Detrimental Soil Disturbance ¹	No more than 15% of an activity area should have detrimentally disturbed soil after the completion of all management activities. In other words, at least 85% of an activity area should be in a non-detrimentally disturbed condition.	Y	4	4	No nested frequency locations in unit, but there are old Parker surveys. Dispersed recreation use and ATV use is increasing.
Effective Ground Cover	The minimum effective ground cover, following the cessation of disturbance in an activity area, should be sufficient to prevent detrimental erosion. Detrimental erosion includes erosion rates that cause long-term productivity losses from an activity area or soil losses that are beyond those acceptable for the activity area. Minimum amounts of ground cover necessary to protect a soil from erosion are a function of soil properties, slope gradient and length, and erosivity (precipitation factor).	Y	4	4	

¹ Discuss the proper scale of the activity area (e.g. allotment, pasture, riparian areas). Activity Area is define in the handbooks as “an area impacted by a land management activity, excluding specified transportation facilities, dedicated trails, and mining excavations and dumps. Activity areas include such areas as: harvest units within timber sale areas and prescribed burn areas. Riparian and other environmentally sensitive areas may be monitored and evaluated as individual activity areas within larger management areas. It is recommended to describe the Activity Area for soil resources within planning and project implementation documents.”

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

Targhee National Forest – Forest Wide Standards and Guidelines

Element	Standards and Guidelines	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes																			
Fisheries & Other Aquatic Resources	<p>1. New special use permits (SUPs) or new FS projects involving instream facilities (exclusive of facilities retrofitted to existing dams) must maintain minimum instream flows as specified by Forest or State and, on fish-bearing streams provide for fish passage and include screening devices to prevent accidental loss of fish. (S)</p> <p>2. When reauthorizing existing SUPs or existing FS projects involving instream facilities (exclusive of facilities retrofitted to existing dams), where feasible, provide for minimum instream flows as specified by Forest or State and, on fish-bearing streams, where feasible, provide for fish passage and include screening devices to prevent accidental loss of fish. (S)</p>	Y	4	4	The fisheries program is planning a stream improvement and fencing project in the allotment. The project will restore a diversion flow back into the natural channel.																			
Range – Upland Forage Utilization	<p>Apply upland forage utilization levels to all allotments and/or management areas as shown below, unless determined otherwise through the IDT process. These guidelines apply to native and desirable non-native vegetation as recorded at the end of the growing season. (G)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Season-Long Grazing</th> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Rotation Grazing</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Unsatisfact. Range</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Satisfact. Range</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Unsatisfact. Range</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Satisfact. Range</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Grass Herb</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Shrubs</td> <td style="text-align: center;">25%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Season-Long Grazing		Rotation Grazing		Unsatisfact. Range	Satisfact. Range	Unsatisfact. Range	Satisfact. Range	Grass Herb	35%	45%	45%	55%	Shrubs	25%	35%	35%	35%	Y	5	4	Ocular use estimate of 25-35%.
	Season-Long Grazing		Rotation Grazing																					
	Unsatisfact. Range	Satisfact. Range	Unsatisfact. Range	Satisfact. Range																				
Grass Herb	35%	45%	45%	55%																				
Shrubs	25%	35%	35%	35%																				
Range - Riparian Forage Utilization - Woody Plant Utilization	Not more than 30% use on riparian woody plant species (current year's growth) is allowed. 30% is the maximum allowed use as recorded at the end of the grazing period. (S)	Y	5	4																				
Range - Riparian Forage Utilization – Riparian Vegetation Stubble Height Standard (these apply to all grazing systems)	<p>1. At the hydric green-line (HGL), there will be at least 4 inches of stubble height remaining on key species at the end of the grazing period, unless determined otherwise through the IDT process. This standard applies to key species of native and desirable non-native hydric vegetation. (S)</p> <p>2. Away from the HGL, at least 3 inches of stubble height will be left on the remainder of the key riparian species at the end of the grazing period, unless determined otherwise through the IDT process. (S)</p>				<p>This standard is in the AOI.</p> <p>The areas along Bootjack Creek that we visited had an inaccessible greenline due to the channel being incised.</p>																			
Range – Allotment Management Planning (AMP)	Salt should be placed greater than a ¼ mile from water, or as far from water as practicable. Salting should be designed to avoid conflicts with aspen regeneration, conifer plantations, and system trails. (G)	Y	4	4	Not a ¼ mile away from Bootjack Creek, but as far practicable - good salt placement on the ridge top above Bootjack Creek.																			

Clean Water Act Compliance Field Review - Grazing Activities – Targhee NF

Targhee National Forest – Forest Wide Standards and Guidelines

Element	Standards and Guidelines	Applicable	Implemented	Effective	Notes
Range – (AMP)	Allow no livestock grazing before seed set of the second growing season after prescribe or natural fires and rangeland planting or seeding. (G)	N/A			
Range – (AMP)	FS administrative site livestock pastures will comply with the Forest wide standards and guidelines for forage utilization and riparian management. (S)	N/A			
Range – (AMP)	Permittees are allowed motorized access to maintain facilities. AMPs and AOIs will include direction that motorized access must be less than 2 vehicles per week (This permitted access is not included in the OROMTRD). (S)	Y	4	4	
Range – (AMP) and Fisheries & Other Aquatic Resources	<p>Within subwatersheds occupied by native cutthroat trout or designated as vital to meeting recovery goals, identify areas where livestock grazing is causing fisheries habitat conditions to fall below or retard the rate of recovery toward the values described in the “Expected values for healthy fish habitat conditions” (listed below). Include specific remedial actions in the AMP or AOI. Progress toward meeting these expected values should be monitored and grazing systems adjusted, as necessary. (G)</p> <p>Expected Values for Healthy Fish Habitat Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pool frequency – at least 1 pool per length of stream equal to 5-7 times the channel width. • Water Temp. – 13° C or less with a max daily average no greater than 9 in spawning habitats or 16° C with a max daily average no greater than 12 in adult holding habitats. • LWD – Greater than 20 pieces/mile. • Bank stability – Greater than 80% <p>Lower bank angle (non-forested systems) – Greater than 75% of banks with less than 90° angle. Width/depth ratio – suitable for Rosgen stream type.</p>	N			<p>Bootjack Creek does not contain fish. North Sawtell Creek is not impeded by livestock and does not presently contain native fish.</p> <p>Fisheries project planned to improve stream channel, diversion, and pond.</p>
Aquatic Influence Zone (AIZ) – Range	Incorporate into AMPs, objectives for attainment of desired vegetation conditions for riparian plant community seral stage development and stream channel condition. (G)	Y	3	4	AMP update needed and this allotment is on the schedule. Currently the AOI is all that is being used. Desired conditions will be defined during AMP revision.
Aquatic Influence Zone (AIZ) – Range	<p>Proposed livestock watering facilities, corrals, and holding pastures within these lands are allowed only if appropriate mitigation measures are implemented to reduce negative effects. (S)</p> <p>Existing livestock watering facilities, corrals, and holding pastures within these lands are allowed at permit issuance only if mitigation measures are implemented to reduce negative effects. (G)</p>	N/A			