

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN
LOWER ROBINSON C&H ALLOTMENT

Powell Ranger District
Dixie National Forest
Region Four

Original plan was written by Don Young on 1/23/74. Plan was approved by Frank Jensen, Acting Forest Supervisor on 1/24/74.

Plan Updated By: Robert S. Anderson Date: 1-16-86
Range Conservationist

Recommend Approval: A. Glenn Salomon Date: 1/17/86
District Forest Ranger

Recommend Approval: Frank Jensen Date: 1/21/86
Chief, Branch of Range Mgt.

Plan Approved By: Frank Jensen Date: 1/21/86
acting Forest Supervisor

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Purpose

This management plan update provides for dividing the current Robinson Canyon C&H Allotment into two allotments - Lower Robinson and Upper Robinson-Lower Blubber.

The Paunsaugunt Plateau Rim provides a natural separation of the two allotments. It is believed this arrangement will be beneficial to the range resource and the permittees.

B. Description

The Lower Robinson C&H Allotment is located approximately three miles east of Alton, Utah.

The allotment is located on the south end of the Paunsaugunt Plateau. Included in the allotment boundaries are Rush Canyon, Water Canyon, Lower Robinson Canyon and Lower Swapp Canyon.

The allotment contains 4884 acres of National Forest land. There is no private land within the allotment. The allotment is surrounded by private, BLM, and other National Forest lands.

The allotment varies in elevation from 7000' to 9000'. The surface area varies from gently sloping in the canyon bottoms to the Paunsaugunt-Rim, a steep escarpment.

Soils are derived from sedimentary formations. They are heavy clay loams that are moderately shallow with some intermixed coarse materials. Erodibility index is high.

Vegetative types consist of scattered ponderosa pine stands below the rim, to sagebrush-grass and bitterbrush-browse in the Lower Robinson Canyon area. Native and reseeded grasses consist of bluegrass, muhly, sedges, smooth-brome, Russian wildrye and crested wheatgrass.

Annual precipitation varies from 15 to 25 inches depending on the elevation. About one-fourth of the precipitation occurs during July, August, and September as thunderstorms. The remainder coming in the early spring and winter months.

C. Past Use and Management

Prior to 1952 this area was divided into three separate allotments. In 1952 the Lower Swapp, Roundy and Rush Canyon Allotments were combined into one allotment known as the Rush Canyon-Swapp Allotment. Later the name was shortened to Rush-Swapp Allotment. The old allotment had sheep permits plus cattle and horses. Permittees were Cecil and Lavina Pugh and the Heaton Brothers.

For many years the entire allotment was overgrazed. Due mainly to the lack of suitable stock water there was little or no way to establish a workable management system, consequently vegetation and soil deteriorated to a point where something had to be done on the allotment to reverse poor range conditions. In 1960 the permittees entered into a cooperative agreement whereby water developments were constructed, term permit numbers were adjusted (1,353 sheep to 900 sheep) and a deferred-rotation grazing system was established. The new system improved range conditions, but there were still areas on the allotment that remained in poor condition. It was obvious that parts of the allotment needed total rest. In 1967 the allotment was set up on a rest-rotation grazing system. Four pastures were established with one to be rested each year. This system worked fairly well but problems developed in trailing from one unit to another, and not being able to allow sufficient rest.

Because of livestock market conditions the permittees decided to take sheep off the allotment after the 1971 grazing season. A temporary permit was issued for sixty head of cattle in 1972 and again in 1973. At this time the allotment was combined with the Robinson Canyon C&H Allotment. In 1974 150 acres were plowed and reseeded. In 1976 livestock numbers were adjusted to the carrying capacity of the range.

D. Current Status of Permits and Ranch Operations

The Heaton Brothers operate a purebred hereford cattle ranch. They are engaged primarily in a cow-calf operation with some yearlings. Most of the calves are sold at the end of their permitted season on the Forest.

The Heaton's are dependent on Federal rangelands to round out their year-long grazing operation. During the summer their cattle graze on the National Forest, in winter on BLM administered lands on the Arizona Strip, and in the spring and fall on their private land.

The Heaton's are solely dependent on the ranching business to sustain their livelihood.

Present Permits

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>No. of Cattle</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Allotment</u>	<u>AM</u>
Heaton Brothers	39	6/16 - 9/30	Lower Robinson C&H	137

Other permits the permittees have on Forest and BLM ranges are as follows:

<u>Permittee</u>	<u>F.S. Term Permit</u>				<u>BLM License Arizona Strip</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Allotment</u>	<u>AM</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Season</u>
Heaton Brothers	147	6/11-10/10	East Fork	588	450	10/15-06/01
	15	6/01-07/30	Don Spr. Mtn.	30	75	06/01-07/15
	75	6/11-10/10	Robinson Canyon	300		

E. Range Condition and Trend

The Range Analysis was completed in 1961. That data is now partially outdated because there has been improvement with the implementation of the deferred-rotation system of grazing and the reseeding project.

The following tables show the acreages by suitability and estimated trend and condition classes on the allotment:

Lower Robinson C&H Allotment

<u>Condition Class</u>	<u>Trend</u>	<u>Suitable Range Acres</u>	<u>Unsuitable Range Acres</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Good	Static	127		127
Fair	Static	602		602
Poor	Up	241		241
Not Classified			3,914	3,914
Totals		970	3,914	4,884

F. Grazing Capacity

The allotment has been grazed under a deferred-rotation system of grazing since 1971. Records and observations indicate the presently permitted 39 head of cattle can have a full forage supply for the 137 permitted AM's and still meet the other multiple use requirements for the allotment. Therefore, the allotment is considered properly stocked.

II. MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The management goals for the allotment are:

1. Improve the forage resource in areas currently in poor condition and maintain those areas currently in fair to good condition, keeping the trend static or upward.
2. Maintain or improve existing watershed conditions.
3. Continue to work with Cecil Pugh of Kanab, Utah on his special use application which involves developing a spring located in Water Canyon in Section 16, T39S, R5W, and piping the water through the Lower Robinson Canyon area to his private land. Stipulations in the Special Use Permit require that water be made available for livestock and wildlife use in two locations along the line. This would aid the distribution and utilization patterns of both livestock and wildlife species.
4. Coordinate in the Annual Plan of Use and work with the permittees to attain proper livestock distribution through proper salting, herding and maintenance of range improvements.
5. Provide additional water in areas of the allotment that currently have little or no stock water available; particularly in Roundy Canyon, Lower Robinson and Swapp Canyons. Provide for wildlife water needs also.
6. Provide adequate forage and cover for the deer and elk that inhabit the allotment.
7. Maintain a permanent trend study within the allotment.
8. Work with Earl Sorenson and the Heatons to cooperatively work together and upgrade the south boundary fence in Lower Swapp Canyon.

III. ACTION PROGRAM FOR THE ALLOTMENT

A. Management Systems

A deferred-rotation system of grazing will continue on the allotment as follows:

Pastures

(Tentative Grazing Schedule)

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Cattle</u>	<u>Lower Swapp</u>	<u>Reseeding</u>	<u>Water Canyon</u>
88 1	39	6/16-7/15	7/16-8/30	9/01-9/30
89 2	39	9/01-9/30	6/16-7/31	8/01-8/30
91 3	39	7/16-8/14	8/15-9/30	6/16-7/15

(Repeat Cycle)

All seasonal dates are tentative. Livestock will be moved to the next unit when proper use is reached.

B. Phenology

The system allows varying degrees of deferment on the forage resources. Essentially, the three main treatments are:

1. Graze at range readiness.
2. Graze at key plant flowering.
3. Graze at seed ripe time.

Key species include:

Ag cr - Crested wheatgrass

Br in - Smoothbrome grass

Po pr - Poa pretensis

Carex spp -

Growth stage and development of plants will vary, however, the allotment will be managed under the following proper use criteria:

C. Proper Use Criteria

Although the allotment is managed under a deferred-rotation grazing system it is not planned to graze any unit "to the ground".

The R-4 Range Analysis Handbook (Section 60) points out that 50 percent utilization of the species being managed for is about all the use that should be made on most ranges. The exception is wet meadows in good condition and crested wheatgrass reseeding up to 60 percent utilization might be made. Therefore a proper use factor of 50 percent use of the palatable grasses showing on the suitable range areas will be used on the allotment.

D. Administrative Action to Implement Program

The District Ranger, Range Conservationist, or Range Technician will check the allotment periodically during the grazing season. They will make utilization and followup studies and note the progress of the cattle in the system. They will inform the permittee when the unit is nearing proper use and when the cattle are to move to the next unit.

The permittees will need to properly move and distribute the cattle. The permittees will also need to place salt in proper locations and perform needed maintenance of fences and water developments prior to entering the unit or the allotment.

E. Existing Improvements and Maintenance Responsibilities

The following range facilities will be maintained by the assigned permittee, (as provided for in Part 2-8-i) of the term grazing permit, to a condition adequate to perpetuate the life of the facility and to serve the purpose intended.

Fences:

The following Forest Service boundary drift fences: Rush Canyon - 1/4 mile; Lower Robinson - .5 mile; Right Hand Canyon - .5 mile; Lower Swapp Hollow - .5 mile; and Lower Swapp Hollow let-down fence - 1 mile - all Heaton Brothers.

Unit division fence separating Lower Robinson and Water Canyon units. .2 mile - Heaton Brothers.

Water Developments

Rush Canyon Pipeline System - Heaton Brothers
Swapp Hollow Pipeline System - Heaton Brothers
Right Hand Canyon Pipeline System - Heaton Brothers

F. Proposed Improvements

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type Construction</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Size</u>
1. Lower Kanab-Robinson	Drift Fence Separating allotments. Barbed wire steel post	Sec. 2, T39S, R5W	1/4 mile
2. Water Canyon Lower Swapp Trail	Relocate	Sec. 22, T39S, R5W	2 miles
3. Roundy Canyon Seep	Construct pond out of seep	Sec. 9, T39S, R5W	75'
4. Drift fence between Lower Swapp & Water Canyon units	Barbed wire, steel post	Sec. 15, T39S, R5W	1/4 mile

IV. CORRELATION WITH OTHER USESA. Wildlife

The allotment is used by a variety of wildlife including mule deer, elk and wild turkey. These birds and animals will receive consideration in project planning. Deer herds are presently down in numbers and do not compete extensively for forage. Elk are increasing slightly in the general area, but so far have inhabited the allotment very little. The allotment is located in the Paunsaugunt Deer Herd Unit.

There is a very small turkey population in the Lower Robinson and Swapp Canyon drainages. The open drainage bottoms serve as "edge areas" needed by wild turkeys.

There are no perennial streams on the allotment, thus very little riparian habitat exists.

No rare or endangered species of wildlife are known to exist on the allotment.

No conflicts with wildlife are anticipated at this time.

B. Watershed

The allotment is generally in a fair watershed condition. Suitable areas that were overgrazed in the past are starting to show signs of recovery. The grazing system as set up in this plan should maintain and improve conditions on the allotment.

C. Recreation

Presently, there are no developed or planned N.F.R.S. sites on the allotment. So far there has not been any conflict with recreation and livestock grazing.

D. Timber

Very little commercial timber is present on the allotment. There was one small timber sale located in Lower Swapp Canyon in 1974. No further timber activity is planned or anticipated on the allotment.

V. EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP SECTION

Studies and inspections will continue to be made on the allotment to further evaluate (1) range condition and trend, (2) accomplishment of management goals, (3) effectiveness of the grazing system and (4) adequacy of the stocking rate.

A. Benchmarks

A Site Analysis Transect with a permanent photo point has been established on a key area associated with the reseeding project.

B. Parker 3 Step Trend Studies

There is one Parker 3 Step Trend Study established on the allotment. This study will be maintained.

C. Unit Inspection Records

Unit examination records "R4-2200-15" will be kept and use intensity mapping will be conducted on a yearly basis if time permits.

D. Utilization Standards

The management system is designed so that the physiological needs of the grasses are met. It is not planned to "grub" any unit to the ground. The cattle will be moved to the next unit when proper use has been reached.

E. Check on Livestock Numbers

The cattle will be periodically counted onto the allotment or when they change units. It is not contemplated that excess numbers will be placed on the allotment. Should problems occur, dye branding or tagging can be reinstated.

F. Presently there are no wildlife studies established on the allotment.

VI. CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION WITH OTHERS

The team members during this evaluation process have been:

Bob Gardner, Range Conservationist

Jeff Bott, Forester

Skip Griep, Wildlife Biologist

Those who have contributed knowledge and expertise:

Norman McKee, Conservation Officer, Division of Wildlife Resources

Don Young, Forester

Present permittees:

The Heaton Brothers are in full agreement with this management plan.