ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

BLUE FLY CATTLE ALLOTMENT

POWELL RANGER DISTRICT

DIXIE NATIONAL FOREST

Region Four

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Recommend Approval Walter W. Peterson Date 1/12/78
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I. INFORMATION SECTION

A. Description

The Blue Fly Cattle Allotment is located approximately 14 miles southeast of Panguitch, Utah on the Powell Ranger District, Dixie National Forest. It includes portions of the Left Fork Blue Fly Creek, Blue Fly Creek, Right Fork Blue Fly and Ahlstrom Hollow drainages. All are tributaries to the East Fork Sevier River drainage.

The topography of the Allotment varies from nearly flat, near Johnson Bench, to steep hillsides near Wilson Peak. Elevation varies from 7300 to 9100 feet. Annual precipitation averages from 14 to 25 inches.

The Allotment contains 19,472 acres of National Forest land. The Allotment is surrounded mostly by other National Forest land, but it is also bordered by some state and private lands.

At present, two permittees, J. Robert Ott and Sherrell or Karen Ott are permitted to graze 161 head of cattle from 6/11-10/10 for 644 animal months on the allotment.

B. Land Types

The Allotment consists mainly of 5 land types with their associated vegetation and soils. These are: 1. Bench and toeslopes: Dominate vegetative species are ponderosa pine, pinyon juniper, black sage, big sage, bitterbrush, rabbitbrush, manzanita, Indian ricegrass, mutton bluegrass, squirreltail and seeded smooth brome. Gravelly loam is the main soil class. 2. Fans & Flood plains: Dominate vegetative species are big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, sedges, western wheatgrass, blue grama, yarrow, blue grass, Indian ricegrass and black sagebrush. Dominate soil is silt loam. 3. Mesas and benches: Main vegetative species are ponderosa pine, pinyon juniper, bitterbrush, manzanita, creeping juniper and some Indian ricegrass. Gravelly loam is the main soil textural class. 4. Steep colluvial slopes below mesa tops. These areas are mostly unsuitable for livestock grazing. Dominate vegetation consists of a mixed timber type. Soil class is gravelly loam. 5. Rough broken land: Unsuitable for livestock grazing. This area contains highly dissected slopes with numerous rock outcrops. Ponderosa pine, manzanita, bristlecone pine and limber pine dominate the site. Soil class is a very gravelly silt loam.

C. Past Use

The grazing history of the Blue Fly Allotment area began shortly after the area was settled in 1866. It is believed that early use was generally restricted to sheep. Later common use between sheep and cattle was allowed. Boundary changes and an overlap with the East Fork Allotment make actual

use records of the Allotment difficult to determine. Acreage varied from 16,083 in 1927 to 23,629 in 1932, to the present 19,472.

Early records (about 1907) indicate that there were 879 permitted sheep on the Johnson Bench - Ahlstrom Hollow Unit. There was also undetermined number of sheep in the Blue Fly drainage. By 1915, approximately 1800 sheep were grazing the Johnson Bench-Ahlstrom Hollow area under two separate permits. An estimated 25 cattle and 25 horses used the area along with the sheep.

By 1923, a reduction in permitted animals had been made. That year a total of 980 sheep and 50 cattle grazed the allotment.

From 1943 through 1951, use was generally steady with 887 sheep and 130 cattle permitted on the allotment. During this time, there were drift privileges allowed for cattle on the East Fork Allotment. This amounted to 300 animal months use.

In 1952, common use was eliminated except for cattle drift from the East Fork Allotment. From 1952 to 1961, 887 permitted sheep grazed the allotment from June 11 to September 30. In 1962, the permittees agreed to take non-use on the sheep and grazed cattle under a temporary permit.

In 1962, a total of 135 cattle were permitted on the allotment. Additional temporary permits were issued from year to year depending on forage conditions. Season of use was from June 16 to September 30. In 1973 the 26 head of cattle that were on a temporary basis were included on the term permit. Thus 161 head of cattle were permitted from 6/11-9/30. In 1976 the grazing season was changed from 6/11-10/10 following five years of studies showing the capacity was there.

The original grazing permits were issued to A. J. Riggs and Annie C. Riggs and J. E. Heywood. In 1907, this permit was exchanged with S. O. Henrie for grazing privileges in Podunk Creek. In 1922 it was transferred to H. L. Henrie. In 1930 Stanley D. Tebbs acquired the grazing permit. Since then, the permit has been transferred to the Johnson Bench Sheep Coop, then to Earl Jolley, Wallace Ott, John and Vivian Nieman and then to Sidney Whitmore-Craig Goodman, and Wallace Ott, and now is held by Robert Ott and Sherrell Ott.

The following table shows use on the allotment since it was made an exclusive cattle allotment in 1965:

Year	No. of Cattle	AUM's Grazed
1965	148	518
1966	161	563
1867	161	617
1968	161	563
1969	138	449
1970	161	563
1971	161	570
1972	161	596
1973	161	627
1974	161	563
1975	161	563
1976	161	644
1977	161	644

D. Past Management

Management on the Allotment was not intensive prior to the 1960's, Common use occurred on the allotment because of cattle drift from the East Fork and Pines Allotment.

About 1930 a deterred-rotation system of grazing was set up on the allotment. The area was broken into 5 units. These units were all used during each grazing season, with varying time limits set for each unit based on suitable range within the unit. At the same time, there was a marked reduction in the number of livestock. Under this system the vegetation continued to deteriorate.

In 1952 and 1953 non-use was taken on the allotment and the primary suitable range was revegetated. This improved the forage situation considerably. The deferred-rotation system continued until 1962 at which time a change from sheep to cattle was made. The five pasture deferred rotation system was changed to a 2 pasture rest-rotation system of grazing for cattle. This change in livestock resulted in less damage from bedding and trailing to water. Additional water was also developed resulting in better utilization throughout the allotment.

In 1964 it was recognized that more use could be made of the range by cattle and a temporary 10 percent increase in numbers was allowed. By 1966 a 20 percent increase in animal numbers was granted, finally arriving at the estimated grazing capacity. This use has continued through 1977 with range conditions on the allotment remaining generally satisfactory and in some areas improving.

E. Current Status of Permits and Ranch Operations

Both permittees run crossbred cattle. However, the herford breed comprises

most of the cows. Both permittees are engaged primarily in a cow & calf operation. Most of the calves, except replacement heifers, are contracted and sold at the end of their permitted use of the Forest. The permittees are dependent upon National Forest land to round out their year long operation.

A combination of BLM permits, privately owned and leased pasture, state land and commensurate ranch property are used during the time cattle are off the forest.

The permits on the Blue Fly Allotment are as follows:

Permittee	No. of Cattle	Season	AUM's
J. Robert Ott	135	6/11-10/10	540
Sherrell or Karen Ott	26	6/11-10/10	104
	161		644

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

	F. S. Term Permit				State Land		BLM Licenses	
	Number	Season	Allotment	AUM's	Number	Season	Number	Season
J. Robert Ott	70	6/11-10/10	Kanab Cr.	280	50	10/1-6/11	22	5/1-9/30
	21	6/11-10/10	East Fk.	84			253	11/1-4/1
							238	5/1-6/10
Sherrel or Karan Ott	15	6/11-10/10	East Fk.	60			37	11/1-6/15
	37	6/1 -10/10	Widtsoe	160			149	11/1-6/15

F. Range Condition and Trend

The Range Environmental Analysis was completed in 1961 and a later review was made in 1963 to substantiate earlier findings and recommendations. That analysis is now partially outdated because condition and trend of both soil and vegetation have improved with the initiation of the rest-rotation system of grazing.

The following table shows the present acreages by suitability and condition classes on the Allotment:

Condition Class	Suitable Range (Acres)	Unsuitable Range (Acres)	Total
Good	4,777		4,777
Fair	197		197
Not Classified	____	14,498	14,498
	4,974	14,498	19,472

Vegetation is continuing in an upward trend, except for small areas near water sources in lower Blue Fly Creek and near the windmill in Coyote Hollow. In these isolated spots, rabbitbrush is invading.

G. Grazing Capacity

The allotment has been grazed under a rest-rotation system of grazing since 1964. Records and observations indicate that the presently permitted 161 head of cattle can have a full forage supply for the 644 permitted A.U.M.'s and still meet the other multiple use requirements for the allotment. Therefore, the allotment is considered properly stocked.

II. MANAGEMENT GOALS

The management goals for the Allotment are:

1. Maintain the forage resource in a healthy condition, keeping the trend static or upward.

2. Provide a full forage supply for the permitted 161 head of cattle and their calves from 6/11 - 10/10 for 644 A.U.M.'s.

3. Provide for adequate forage and cover for the deer and elk that inhabit the allotment. In future years antelope might also inhabit the allotment.

4. Maintain a permanent trend study on a key area within each unit of the allotment.

5. Work with the permittees so they properly maintain the structural range improvements, place salt in proper locations and ride periodically to keep cattle better distributed thus making better utilization of the range.

6. Provide additional water in areas of the allotment that currently have little or no stock water available. Provide for wildlife water needs also.

7. Maintain the present 2-unit rest-rotation grazing system.

III. ACTION SECTION

A. System to be used.

The present two pasture rest-rotation system of grazing will be continued on the allotment.

The following table shows the grazing sequence on the allotment:

Year	Pasture North	Pasture South
1	Rest	A
2	A	Rest

(Repeat Cycle)

A - 6/11-10/10 Graze at range readiness - until proper use is reached or 10/10.

R - Season long rest or when necessary graze the last part of grazing until proper use is reached or 10/10.

B. Proper Use Criteria

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

Regional Forester Hamre's memorandum (2200) of May 12, 1972, to the Forest on the subject states:

> "If our objective was to manage land for the sole purpose of maximizing domestic livestock grazing, the extremely heavy use observed on some pastures in our rest-rotation system of management might have some validity. This is not our objective on multiple use National Forest lands. Extremely heavy grazing use is neither esthetically pleasing, nor does it convey the impression that we have fully considered the habitat for big game, small animals, and birds. When I see the evidence of very heavy uniform grazing use, I also question that all of the needed coordination requirements, including protection of watershed values, have been fully considered and evaluated."

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 where up to 60% utilization might be made. Therefore a proper use factor of 50% will be used on the allotment.

C. Administrative Action to Implement Program

The District Ranger or Range Conservationist 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 permittees when the unit is nearing proper use and when the cattle are to move to the next unit.

The permittee will need to have a rider available to properly move and distribute the cattle. The permittee will also need to place salt in proper locations and perform needed maintenance of fences and water developments.

D. Proposed Improvements

The basic developments on the allotment have been completed. However, like all allotments, there are always additional opportunities to make improvements. Some additional work is planned as funds become available and priority work is completed on other allotments. The projects are as follows:

Type of Improvement	Size	Location
1. Clean & enlarge 6 existing ponds		3 Johnson Bench-Ahlstrom Hollow, 3 Left Fork of Blue Fly.
2. Upgrade existing boundary fence bordering state land.	3 miles	Sections 4 & 9, T36S, R4W
3. Upgrade existing Blue Fly Spring	Headbox & Troughs	Section 31, T36S, R4W

Existing Improvements

Name	Type of Improvement	Size	Location	Maint. By
Johnson Bench F. Bdry.	4-strand barbed wire	3½ miles	East side sections 5 & 8, T36S, R4W	F.S.
Johnson Bench Unit	4-strand barbed wire	3 miles	Fence running from SW corner of Sec. 9, T36S, R4W, to Wilson Peak	Permittee
Ahlstrom Hollow	3 Earth Fill Reservoirs		Sec. 17, T36S, R4W	Permittee
Johnson Bench	3 Earth Fill Reservoirs		Sec. 7,8,19, T36S, R4W	Permittee
South Wilson Peak	Earth Fill Reservoir		Sec. 12, T36S, R4½W	Permittee
Lower Blue Fly	Earth Fill Reservoir		Northern edge of Sec. 36, T36S, R4½W	Permittee
Upper Blue Fly	Earth Fill Reservoir		NW corner, Sec. 35, T36S, R4½W	Permittee
Johnson Bench Guzzler #1	Earth Fill Reservoir		NW corner, Sec. 13, T36S, R4½W	Permittee
Johnson Bench Guzzler #2	Earth Fill Reservoir		NW corner Sec. 12, T36S, R4½W	Permittee
Blue Fly Guzzler & Trough	Asphalt pad 10,000 gal. open tank		NW corner, Sec. 13, T36S, R4½W	F.S.
Ahlstrom Spring Pipeline	Headbox - storage tank	3 miles	SW corner, Sec. 18, T36S, R4W	F.S.
Blue Fly Spring	1200 gal. tank 2 sections of metal sheep troughs		NW Corner, Sec. 31,	F.S.
Highway U-12	4-strand barbed wire	3 miles	Fence paralleling S.H. 12 from Red Canyon to Pines	F.S.
Coyote Hollow Windmill & Tank	1 large storage tank		SE cor. Sec. 32 T35S, R4W	F.S. & Permittee
Coyote Hollow Windmill trough	3 small troughs	1 mile within unit	SE cor. Sec. 32, T35S, R4W	F.S. & Permittee
Blue Fly-East Fork-East Cr. Unit Fence	4-strand barbed wire	1 mile	Sections 2 & 3 T37S, R4½W	F.S.
East Fork private	Barbed wire	2½ miles	Along west side of river	Permittees

IV. CORRELATION WITH OTHER USES

Wildlife

Mule deer is the principal wildlife species using the allotment. The grasses on the suitable range used by cattle is lightly used by deer in the spring and early summer. After this most of the deer use is restricted to the higher mahogany slopes in the Wilson Peak area. These areas are unsuitable for cattle. The deer herd is presently low in numbers and there is no significant competition for forage.

Elk are also starting to inhabit the allotment. They are part of the Mt. Dutton Elk Herd. Competition for forage is not significant at the present time.

Antelope could inhabit the allotment in future years as a result of the recent transplant in Johns' Valley.

The present and proposed water developments, ponds etc., will aid all species of wildlife in the area. Also, the various wildlife species will have exclusive use of the rested unit.

There is a small Utah prairie dog population just off the Wilson Peak Road in Coyote Hollow. The Utah prairie dog is an endangered species and will be protected in this area.

Watershed

The allotment is generally in fair to good watershed condition. There are some deep gullies in the Blue Fly and Ahlstrom Hollow drainages. These gullies are a result of past overgrazing. The timbered areas are almost devoid of ground cover, allowing overland water flows to converge in the drainage bottoms. This condition continues to contribute to active gullying. Newly constructed water developments and gully plugs will reduce soil erosion and improve watershed conditions. Improved forage conditions in the bottoms will serve to slow down and spread overland flow and thereby reduce the erosion hazard.

Recreation

In the past, recreation use of the area was limited to deer hunters during a short period in the fall. At present, the area is receiving heavy use from wood cutters. Because of the increase costs of gas, electricity and heating oil etc., the demand for fireplace wood has tripled in the last few years. The Blue Fly drainage is easily accessible; therefore it is one of the most popular areas for wood cutters.

Cattle grazing will not conflict with present and anticipated recreational use.

Timber

Approximately 14,300 acres of sparse to medium stocked timberland is within the allotment boundary. Eight hundred and nine (809) acres of this is considered suitable rangeland. There have been several timber sales in the allotment in past years. Some reforestation has been associated with these sales. Up to this time, there has been no apparent damage to plantations from livestock grazing. It is not anticipated that there will be a conflict between timber growth, harvest and grazing.

V. ALLOTMENT INSPECTION, CONTROLS AND FOLLOW-UP

Studies and inspections will continue to be made on the allotment to evaluate (1) proper utilization, (2) range condition and trend, (3) accomplishment of management goals, (4) effectiveness of the grazing system and (5) adequacy of the stocking rate.

A. Bench Marks

A bench mark and trend study will be maintained in each of the two pastures. These studies will be reread as needed on the rested pasture.

B. Unit Inspection Records

Form R-4 2200-15 will be completed on each grazed unit each year.

C. 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.