

**2013 Squaw Creek Allotment
NMFS Monitoring Report**

Prepared by Salmon Challis National Forest Range and Fisheries staff

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1. Overview of proposed action and actual management (e.g., livestock numbers, on-off dates for each Unit, etc.).

Permitted Use

The proposed action is the SCNFs ongoing authorization of livestock grazing on the Allotment. The Allotment is currently permitted for 473 cow/calf pairs from June 16 to September 30, (1,544 head months) and an additional 202 cow/calf pairs from July 16 to September 30 (for a total of 2,055 head months grazed annually).

Permittee	No. and Class	Permit Type	Season of Use	Head Months
East Fork Ranches LLC	236 cow/calf	Term	6/16 – 9/30	830
Running T LLC	237 cow/calf	Term	6/16 – 9/30	834
	60 cow/calf		7/16 – 9/30	152
Cutler	142 cow/calf	Term	7/16 – 9/30	359

Authorized Use for 2013

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Pasture Rotation 2013

Unit	Number	On-Date	Off-Date
Lower Squaw Creek	473	6/16	7/15
Upper Squaw Creek ^A	675	7/16	8/15
Juliette	675	8/16	8/31
Happy Hollow	236	9/1	9/30
Kinnikinic Creek	473	9/1	9/15
Trealor Creek (Rest)	473	9/16	9/30
Riparian Pasture (Rest)	0	Rest	Rest

^A **Livestock will not graze in the Upper Squaw Creek Unit after August 15 during these rotations to protect spawning bull trout and their redds.**

Notices of non-compliance were issued for 2011 and 2012 for excess use and failure to follow pasture rotation schedule. A suspension letter for 25% for 2014-2015 seasons was issued on

August 23rd, 2013. Due to repeated non-compliance, excess use, and failure to follow AOI and the Term Grazing Permit, the Challis-Yankee fork District Ranger is issuing an additional 25% permit cancellation or 50% suspension for three years for East Fork Ranches and Running T LLC. Cutler was issued a notice of non-compliance for excess use and for failing to manage his herd by keeping them on the portion of the allotment allocated for his use.

Actual use for 2013 season displayed below.

Pasture	Number	Season of Use
Lower Squaw	473	6/18 – 10/18*
Upper Squaw	473	6/18-10/18*
Juliette	102	8/16-8/31
Happy Hollow	102	9/1-9/30
Kinnikinick	473	6/18-10/18*
Trealor (Rest)	?	Unauthorized Use
Riparian (Rest)	0	Rest

*Due to permittee noncompliance livestock were still on allotment far beyond the required off-date.

- 2. Results from all implementation and effectiveness monitoring identified as part of the proposed action and this Opinion (term and condition 1), including required annual use indicator monitoring (i.e., stubble height, riparian shrub utilization, streambank alteration), photo point monitoring, seral condition, bank stability, water temperature, sediment, and W:D.**

Implementation

2013 End of Season Monitoring Results

Unit – Creek	Monitoring Attribute	Standard for 2013	2013 End of Season Results
Lower Squaw Creek-Cache Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6”	3”
	Bank alteration	< 10%	23%
	Browse Use	30 ^A or 50 ^B	27%
Trealor Creek- Trealor Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6”	8”
	Bank alteration	< 20%	10%
	Browse Use	30 ^A or 50 ^B	10%
Trealor Creek- Squaw Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6”	6”

Unit – Creek	Monitoring Attribute	Standard for 2013	2013 End of Season Results
	Bank alteration	< 20%	4%
	Browse Use	30 ^A or 50 ^B	10%
Kinnikinic Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6"	4"
	Bank alteration	< 20%	10%
	Browse Use	30 ^A or 50 ^B	10%
Upper Squaw Creek-Martin Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 4"	3"
	Bank alteration	< 10%	11%
	Browse Use	30 ^A or 50 ^B	20%

^ASingle-stemmed species such as aspen ^BMulti-stemmed species such as willow and alder

Effectiveness

No long term data was collected on the allotment in 2013.

3. Discussion of any unauthorized use and/or any maintenance issues related to fences or water developments.

Many of the violations that occurred in 2013 were a result of a failure to properly maintain range improvements and manage livestock distribution. There were fences down and gates open during nearly every visit to the allotment in 2013. Lack of fence maintenance allowed cattle to access unauthorized allotments and pastures. Cattle were seen in rested pastures throughout the grazing season, which resulted in over-utilization of riparian areas. Permittees were instructed to remove all cattle from the allotment by August 21st due to repeated non-compliance issues. However, cattle were still in the allotment nearly 60 days past this date. Cattle were found on Squaw Creek past August 15th, which is the designated removal date to avoid damage to spawning areas.

4. Brief review of Allotment management and compliance successes and failures.

Failures: On multiple occasions during the 2013 season, cattle were observed in the Trealor pasture and the Riparian Pasture, rested units. Utilization standards were exceeded at multiple sites, including those in pastures scheduled for rest. Cattle were not moved according to pasture rotation schedule. In a meeting on August 14, 2013 the permittees were instructed to remove all of their cattle from the allotment (except the “Bayhorse subdivision”) by the 21st of August; standards had already been surpassed in pastures that were not scheduled for use until later in the season. Cattle were found still on the allotment

nearly 60 days after the date given for removal. A suspension letter for 25% for the 2014-2015 seasons was issued on August 23rd, 2013 for non-compliance issues observed up to August 23rd. Due to continued non-compliance after August 21st, excess use, failure to follow Forest Officer Instructions, the 2013 AOI and the Term Grazing Permit, the Challis-Yankee Fork District Ranger is issuing an additional 25% permit cancellation or 50% suspension for three years for East Fork Ranches and Running T LLC. Cutler was issued a notice of non-compliance for excess use and for failing to manage his herd by keeping them on the portion of the allotment allocated for his use (Bayhorse Subdivision).

Successes: There were few successes on the allotment this year. The allotment required a huge amount of supervision from FS employees due to repeated violations by the permittees. One success was that a log-worm fence separating the Squaw Creek and Garden Creek Allotments finally received some repair, which assisted somewhat in keeping cattle in their respective allotments.

5. Any relevant information that becomes available regarding Snake River Basin steelhead or spring/summer Chinook salmon habitat trends and/or spawning and rearing locations that would modify the assumptions made in this Opinion or result in effects not considered.

No additional information became available in 2013.

6. A clear description of compliance with the terms and conditions contained in this incidental take statement.

Terms and Conditions

1a. All conservation measures, monitoring, and adaptive management processes were implemented as described in the BA with the exceptions of item 3 above, and 1b and 1d below.

1b. Streambank alterations, woody browse and greenline stubble height were exceeded.

See implementation monitoring table above for results.

1c. Each unit with potential Snake River Basin steelhead contains at least one DMA in an area where the risk of cattle trampling of redds is highest.

Yes

1d. No streams with Snake River Basin steelhead incubation were used before July 7th.

Livestock grazed the Lower Squaw Creek unit before July 7th.

1e. Permittees, especially the rider, were trained to implement the move triggers.

The permittees hired a new rider this year; it is unlikely that he was made aware of the triggers.

- 1f. Annual meetings were conducted with the permittees to discuss actions necessary to protect vulnerable spawning areas.

Yes. An additional meeting was conducted in August to try to correct non-compliance, but the issues only worsened.

- 1g. Riding occurred at least five days a week.

The hired rider was very active and frequently observed on the allotment. However, it appeared that he was not given good management guidance by the permittees.

- 1h. Riders took all practicable measures to keep cattle on established ford crossings during trailing.

See above

- 1i. All maintenance of range improvements was completed.

No. Failure to maintain fences, gates and cattle guards (the FS recognized that the cattle guards were our responsibility) was a major contributor to compliance problems in 2013.

- 1j. Turnout dates, move triggers, and end-point indicators were outlined in the AOI.

Yes, but the permittees failed to follow the AOI.

- 2a. DMAs were monitored annually in units utilized by livestock.

Yes.

- 2b. The end of the year report has been made available to NMFS.

7. Any management recommendations for subsequent years.

The permittees will be under suspension or permit cancellation for the next three grazing seasons (except Cutler). Permittees must provide better training, guidance and instruction to their hired rider. A log-worm fence that serves as an allotment boundary needs to be replaced to prevent Squaw Creek cattle from straying onto the Garden Creek Allotment. Permittees must be much more proficient at keeping cattle out of rested pastures and removing cattle from pastures prior to utilization standards being exceeded. The FS would like to train the permittees in MIM monitoring so they know exactly what to look for.