2013 END OF SEASON REPORT
ALDER CREEK ALLOTMENT

TERM GRAZING PERMIT				AUTHORIZED USE				ACTUAL USE			
NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	HM.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	HM.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	HM.
604	6/16	10/6	2244	598	6/16	10/6	2222	398 30 116	6/16 6/16 6/16	9/21 10/01 9/23	1283 107 382
								544			1772

Actual use was 544 head, 90% of permitted use and head months were 79% of permitted use.

UNIT DATES AND UTILIZATION RESULTS:

ACTUAL GRAZING SCHEDULE			ALLOWABLE STDS	ACTUAL RESULTS
UNIT NAME	ON DATE	OFF DATE	RIPARIAN/ UPLAND/WOODY	RIPARIAN/ UPLAND/WOODY
Big & Little Blind Canyons/ Bedy	6/15	7/13	4”/50%/50%	Bedy - 3” Stubble/ 52% Browse
South Fork Alder	7/14	8/2	4”/50%/50%	35% Upland
Trail Creek/ Sawmill/ Upper-Lower Brown	8/3	8/26	4”/50%/50%	No Data
Tuscarora/Mammoth/ Stewart	8/27	9/11	4”/50%/50%	No Data
FS Willow Creek	9/12	9/21	35-45% (5”) / 50% / 50%	31-40% Upland utilization in Cape Horn Rx Burn and light utilization outside of burn

Allotment Inspections: Allotment inspections were conducted on the following dates: 6/17, 6/28, 7/8, 8/20, 8/21, 8/22, 8/27, 9/5, 9/24, and 10/22. Allotment inspections included cattle location checks, range improvement inspections, and utilization monitoring.

Information: Precipitation and temperature data summarized below are an average of the Bear Canyon and Hilts Creek data. The precipitation for the two Snotel sites was below average at 89% for the precipitation year of October 2012 through September 2013. The growing season precipitation for the months of April through September was well below average at 82% of the 32 year average for the site. The precipitation information for the average of the Bear Canyon and Hilts Creek Snotel sites is

included in the table below. The totals for 2013 are compared to the average total precipitation by month for the sites from 1982-2013.

Month	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Year Total	Apr-Sept Total
2013 Precip. (inches)	1.5	3.4	6.3	1.4	0.7	0.9	0.6	1.7	1.0	1.1	1.0	3.4	22.8	8.8
Average Precip. 1982-2013	1.9	2.4	3.0	2.4	2.2	3.0	2.2	2.4	2.2	1.3	1.2	1.4	25.7	10.7

The temperature for the growing season as averaged between the Bear Canyon and Hilts Creek Snotel sites shows a much warmer growing season than average at 2.3 degrees F warmer than the 25-30 year average as indicated in the table below. The 6 month growing season temperature is the 3rd warmest out of the 30 year record for the Bear Canyon Snotel site and 4th warmest out of the 25 year record for the Hiltz Creek Snotel Site. The warm temperature and limited moisture during the growing season greatly limited vegetation growth on the District.

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Apr-Sept Total
2013 Temperature (^{o}F)	32.9	41.9	50.9	61.7	60.8	49.1	49.6
Average Temp. 1982-2013	32.0	40.1	48.9	58.2	56.9	47.9	47.3

Utilization: Upland forage utilization of bunchgrasses was light to moderate. Riparian sedge utilization was moderate to heavy in the few areas accessible by livestock. There were very few areas monitored for use along riparian areas this year. The Bedy Unit was monitored as there is a potential monitoring location along the middle fork of South Fork Alder within the western edge of the Bedy Unit. The riparian area was measured at a 3 inch stubble height and had 52% willow browse.

The Cape Horn Draw prescribed burn area was grazed again this year. The rider checked the burn area at least once daily while cattle were in the Willow Creek Unit and removed livestock as they were found in the burn area. There was 31-40% utilization measured on bluebunch wheatgrass within the burn area. The two transects monitored showed that 87-95% of the bluebunch wheatgrass plants had been grazed to some degree. Utilization was measured just outside of the burn area which found less than 1% utilization. This indicates that there was a not large amount of livestock grazing within the area, and that when livestock were in the area they chose to graze within the burn area that is not obstructed by sagebrush.

A browse standard of 50% is included in your permit and should be watched carefully in the future. While this standard has not been focused on by range specialists in the past because minimal use of woody browse by livestock was observed, browse on willows, aspen, and riparian shrubs is an important consideration especially in dry years. Generally speaking, cattle began to shift to woody browse species as the four inch stubble height on grasses and sedges was met which could be used as an indicator for riders/ permittees to move cattle in the future. Using this tool to adjust movement

dates could avoid overuse or missing end of season standards for herbaceous and woody species in riparian areas during years of low precipitation.

Compliance with Unit Schedule and Project Maintenance: The allotment units were used in sequence in accordance with the annual operating instructions. The Cape Horn Draw prescribed burn was grazed by livestock. The burn area was rode at least once daily while cattle were in the Willow Creek Unit to limit grazing of the burn area. Livestock were found in units ahead of schedule such as the Willow Creek Unit. Livestock were promptly moved back to the correct units.

The Forest Service met with a permittee and the range rider to inspect water troughs on the Forest and identified some troughs that should be reconstructed to improve livestock distribution. The troughs that were evaluated have met and exceeded their expected life expectancy and are due for replacement.

Recommendations:

1. Forest Service will monitor the Cape Horn Rx burn area in the spring to determine potential use by livestock for 2014 season and beyond.
2. Livestock drift between the Alder Creek and Cherry Creek Allotments in the vicinity of Sheep Mountain and Flat Top was light this year. A proposed drift fence located at the boundary from Sheep Mountain to the existing fence near Flat Top to solve the drift problems has been delayed indefinitely. Until this is resolved it is your responsibility to ride and keep the drift down to a minimum.
3. Meet end of season standards and continue to improve on overall allotment management (i.e. keep the cattle in designated units, make timely moves).
4. Continue to focus on rebuilding existing water developments.
5. Avoid having Copper Basin cattle in Mine Hill Unit at the same time that Alder Creek cattle are in Willow Creek Unit to avoid intermixing at shared water source along the fence line. Notify Forest Service immediately when Copper Basin cattle are on the Alder Creek allotment.
6. Prepare for another hot and dry season. The limited precipitation from this winter will prove insignificant to forage production if we do not get any moisture during the spring and active growing season. In preparing, thoughts of running fewer cattle, less time in each unit and lighter use will reduce the chances of long lasting impacts to the forage species on the allotment.