

**Salmon-Challis National Forest, Lost River Ranger District  
2013 End of Season Report  
Leadbelt C&H Allotment**

TERM GRAZING PERMIT				AUTHORIZED USE				ACTUAL USE			
NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.
860	7/7	9/21	2177	828	7/7	9/26	2232	743	7/7	9/26	2003
								85	7/22	9/26	187
860			2177	828			2232	828			2190

**UNIT DATES AND UTILIZATION RESULTS:**

RIPARIAN UTILIZATION DATA							
ACTUAL GRAZING SCHEDULE				ALLOWABLE USE		ACTUAL USE	
PASTURE NAME	KEY AREA	ON DATE	OFF DATE	RIPARIAN	BROWSE	RIPARIAN	BROWSE
Lower Camp Creek	Camp Spring	7/7	7/9	4 inches	50%	<b>Data</b>	<b>Below</b>
	Pine Creek						
Upper Camp Creek	Boneyard Tributary	7/10	7/22	4 inches	50%	5 inches	8%
Leadbelt	Upper Leadbelt (Old Dam Site)	7/23	8/25	4 inches	50%	5 inches	26%
Horsethief/ Deer Creek	Horsethief Creek	8/26	9/25	4 inches	50%	4 inches	19%
Lower Camp Creek	Camp Spring	9/26	9/26	4 inches	50%	4 inches	None Apparent
	Pine Creek			4 inches	50%	4 inches	None Apparent

**Allotment Inspections:** Allotment inspections were conducted on the following dates: 4/29, 7/8, 7/24, 8/7, 8/14, 9/4, 9/12, 9/17 and 11/1. Allotment inspections include assessment of range readiness, long term assessment for vegetation trend, range improvement maintenance and construction checks, cattle location checks and utilization monitoring.

**Information:** The precipitation for this area on the District was 90% of average for the 2013 Water Year (Oct 1- Sept. 30). Although the water year information looks very good the active growing season precipitation (April-September) shows 78% of normal precipitation when compared to the average with half of that coming in the month of September. This resulted in low forage production across the allotment with plants losing their nutritional value early. The totals for 2013, shown below, are compared to the average total precipitation for the water year by month for the Bear Canyon SNOTEL site in Copper Basin from the NRCS National Water and Climate Center website for 1982-2013.

Month	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Total
2013 Precip. (in inches)	1.4	4.2	7.6	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.4	1.5	1.4	0.6	0.4	4.4	25.1
2013 % of Average	70%	156%	211%	50%	35%	27%	17%	54%	64%	46%	40%	314%	90%
Average Precip. 1982-2012	2.0	2.7	3.6	2.8	2.6	3.3	2.4	2.8	2.2	1.3	1.0	1.4	27.9

Leadbelt received an extension to their regular grazing season in 2013. It did shift the dates in the grazing schedule outlined in the annual operating instructions and added one to six days to use in each pasture.

Wolf activity on the allotment started early and lasted the entire grazing season. Please continue to provide current information on predation issues that may affect livestock management across the allotment so that management decisions and possible changes can be made in a timely manner.

**Utilization:** As a whole, livestock use levels for 2013 on the Leadbelt Allotment were within acceptable levels. All monitoring sites on the allotment met the utilization indicators for greenline stubble height.

A browse standard of 50% is included in your permit and should be watched carefully. Browse on willows, aspen, and riparian shrubs is an important consideration especially in hot, dry years. In general, cattle begin to shift to woody browse species as the four inch stubble height on grasses and sedges is met which can be used as an indicator for riders/ permittees to move cattle. Using this tool to adjust movement dates could avoid overuse or missing end of season indicators for herbaceous and woody species use in these riparian areas during years of low precipitation.

The browse use is measured within 3 feet of the greenline on both sides of the creek with only those plants stems at 5 feet tall or less being considered available to cattle. All of the monitoring sites met the allowable use levels for browse use in 2013 and were in the slight to light use categories across the allotment.

### **Compliance with Unit Schedule and Project Maintenance:**

Issues with the reliability of a full time rider did occur in 2013 due to illness however this issue was remedied through additional riding by permittees. Riding by permittees was at an acceptable level to complete all of the necessary back-riding and cleaning of units that had already been used.

There were no reports of cattle on private property within the Fish Creek drainage this season.

Leadbelt permittees plan reconstruction and maintenance schedules for the allotment on an annual basis to ensure that compliance with terms and conditions for maintenance in their permits are being adequately met. No maintenance issues were reported in the inspection notes for 2013.

Construction of the Horsethief pond to trough spring fence was started but could not be finished due to lack of materials at the site. More materials were flown to the site in the fall of 2013.

The Leadbelt allotment has been using corrals and a pasture to sort livestock at the end of the season which is not adequately described in your permits. The use of this pasture will need to be better defined and placed in your permits in the future for monitoring, maintenance and long term management purposes.

**Recommendations:**

When entering the allotment be sure to push livestock beyond Camp Springs. This is important in reducing impacts to the lower corner of the allotment.

Finish the Horsethief pond to trough spring fence in 2014.

If extensions in the grazing season are of interest in the future, please keep in mind that a field assessment will be necessary to approve the extension. This assessment will need to occur at least 10 days prior to your scheduled off date in order to process the necessary paperwork and billing necessary for an extension.

Maintain flexibility with respect to grazing rotations to avoid wolf/livestock interactions wherever possible.

Dry meadows on benches along creeks should be left with patchy use patterns to avoid overuse of these areas.

Please stay diligent in checking that livestock stay in the permitted allotment and communicate with those permittees on adjacent allotments to make sure livestock are not drifting out of your area. Options are being considered and recommendations from permittees are encouraged to reduce this conflict. Any new improvements require written analysis and clearance prior to implementation and there is not a timeline for completion of such documentation.

Prepare for another hot and dry season. The 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.

The Forest Service is in the process of completing an environmental analysis on your allotment and others in Antelope Valley. As we near making a decision on this analysis, a meeting will need to occur between permittees and range management personnel to develop a new Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Leadbelt allotment. This needs to be a collaborative process as the AMP will outline the desired livestock management for the next ten years and how livestock use and change in resource conditions will be monitored and used to make adjustments to management as necessary. Improvement maintenance schedules, construction specifications and a list of any potential future projects will also be outlined. If you have any questions or comments on the process or information we are collecting to complete this analysis, please contact your range specialist or the district ranger.