



## 2014 Squaw Creek Allotment NMFS Monitoring Report

**Prepared by Salmon Challis National Forest Range and Fisheries staff**

Barry Dopp (Range Management Specialist), Angela Morton (Range Technician) & Bart  
Gamett (Fish Biologist)

Date: February 24, 2015

Contact Information:

Range Specialist Barry Dopp 208-879-4161 [bdopp@fs.fed.us](mailto:bdopp@fs.fed.us) or

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

#### Permitted Use

Notices of non-compliance were issued for 2011-2014 for excess use and failure to follow pasture rotation schedule. A suspension letter instructed a reduction of 20% of livestock numbers for the 2014 and 2015 grazing seasons.

The proposed action is the SCNF's on-going authorization of livestock grazing on the allotment. The allotment is currently permitted for 189 cow/calf pairs from June 16 to September 30 (665 head months) and an additional 100 cow/calf pairs from July 16 to September 30 (for a total of 918 head months grazed annually). Running T LLC took non-use during the 2014 grazing season.

**Table 1. Permitted Use**

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

**Table 2. Authorized Use for 2014**

Permittees	No. and Class	Permit Type	Season of Use	Head Months
East Fork Ranches LLC	189 cow/calf	Term	6/16 – 9/30	665
Running T LLC	Non-Use	Term	Non-Use	Non-Use
	Non-use		Non-Use	Non-Use
Cutler	100 cow/calf	Term	7/16 – 9/30	253

**Table 3. Pasture Rotation 2014**

Unit	Number	On-Date	Off-Date
Lower Squaw Creek <sup>B</sup>	189	6/16	7/15
Treolor Creek <sup>B</sup>	189	7/16	8/9



Unit	Number	On-Date	Off-Date
Upper Squaw Creek <sup>A, B</sup>	189	8/10	8/20
Kinnikinic Creek <sup>B</sup>	189	8/21	9/30
Happy Hollow	100	7/16	8/22
Juliette	100	8/23	9/30
Riparian Pasture (No Grazing)	0	No-Grazing	No-Grazing

<sup>A</sup> Livestock will not graze on the west side in the Upper Squaw Creek Unit after August 15 during these rotations to protect spawning bull trout and their redds. Similarly, consultation direction is that livestock may cross Martin Creek only before August 15.

<sup>B</sup> East Fork Ranches' 189 cow/calf pairs will be grazing in the Squaw Creek units and Kinnikinic unit. Cutler's 100 cow/calf pairs will be grazing only in the Happy Hollow and Juliette Units.

**Table 4. Actual use for 2014 season**

Pasture	Number	On-Date	Off-Date
Lower Squaw	189 <sup>1</sup>	6/16	7/15
Treolor	189 <sup>1</sup>	7/16	8/9
Upper Squaw	189 <sup>1</sup>	8/10	8/20
Kinnikinic	189 <sup>1</sup>	8/21	9/30
Happy Hollow	84 <sup>2</sup>	7/16	8/22
Juliette	84 <sup>2</sup>	7/23	9/22
Riparian (Rest)	0	Rest	Rest.

<sup>1</sup>Baker, Wayne Permittee Actual Use; <sup>2</sup> Cutler, Howard Permittee Actual Use

- 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

**Table 5. 2014 End of Season Monitoring Results**

Unit- Creek	Monitoring Attribute	Standard for 2014	2014 End of Season Results
Lower Squaw Creek-Cache Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6"	<b>3"</b>
	Bank alteration	< 10%	<b>23%</b>
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	27%
Trealor Creek- Trealor Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6"	8"
	Bank alteration	< 20%	10%
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	10%
Trealor Creek- Squaw Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 6"	6"
	Bank alteration	< 20%	4%
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	10%
Kinnikinic Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 4"	<b>4"</b>
	Bank alteration	< 20%	10%
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	10%
Upper Squaw Creek-Martin Creek	Greenline stubble	≥ 4"	<b>3"</b>
	Bank alteration	< 10%	<b>11%</b>
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	20%
Juliette Creek	Greenline stubble	≥6"	3.2"
	Bank alteration	≤20%	<b>40%</b>
	Browse Use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	10

<sup>A</sup>Single-stemmed species such as aspen    <sup>B</sup>Multi-stemmed species such as willow and alder

Effectiveness

In 2014, there were 9 Multiple Indicator Monitoring locations for effectiveness monitoring completed.

**Table 6. 2014 Effectiveness Monitoring Results**

DMA	Year	Greenline Ecological Rating	Site Wetland Rating	Winward Stability Rating	Shade Index	Streambank Cover %
Upper Squaw – Squaw Creek	2014	90	75	7.35	.16	76
	2010	98	76	6.74	.24	100
Lower Squaw Creek – Squaw Creek	2014	83	71	7.14	.06	70
	2009	60	75	6.54		97
Trealor – Squaw Creek	2014 (SQCR3)	99	83	8.23	.10	79
Trealor – Squaw Creek (SQCR2)	2014	88	80	7.30	.1	64
	2009	53	79	6.84		95
Trealor – Trealor Creek	2014	73	62	6.27	.59	88
	2013		73	6.11		
Riparian – Squaw Creek	2014	59	69	5.85	.02	65
	2009	54	72	6.75		100
Kinnikinic	2014	57	68	4.88	.25	80
Juliette – Juliette	2014 (New Site)	87	76	6.99	.06	69
Upper Squaw Creek – Martin Creek	2014 (New Site)	98	76	6.74	.24	100



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

There were very few violations during the 2014 grazing season. These violations occurred mainly due to lack of fence maintenance/repair prior to 2014 turnout and the incompleteness of the Log Worm Allotment Boundary Fence under reconstruction. Unauthorized use of cattle on NFS land occurred six weeks prior to on-date for one permittee who was repeatedly informed to remove livestock from the NFS land. The unit boundary between Juliette and Happy Hollow was not maintained by a permittee who was in nonuse. The unmaintained unit boundary fence contributed to the other permittee not following the rotation system. This caused the unauthorized use in these two different units. The use standards were exceeded, but excess occurred due to lack of distribution by the riders and effective management by the permittees. The permittees should have been more proactive and notified the range specialist that the fence was not functional and did not hold livestock. The range specialist would have contacted the permittee who was responsible for the maintenance of the fence and told them that it is their obligation to maintain range improvements even when they are in non-use. They should have repaired the fence to avoid exceeding the use standards.

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

**Failures:** On multiple occasions during the 2014 season, cattle were observed on NFS land prior to the on-date. Many of the fence maintenance requirements were not addressed prior to turnout leading to unauthorized use throughout the season. The fence separating Garden Creek Allotment and the Squaw Creek Allotment was the highest priority fence maintenance issue this grazing season. The reconstruction of the fence was started by the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and the permittee rebuilt a portion where livestock would move through the fence most often. The reconstruction of the fence was not completed but was able to control livestock and prevent them from utilizing the Willow Patch unit. This unit was heavily used the previous two years and the grazing standards were exceeded.

After being contacted by the NFS concerning unauthorized use, the permittees responded in a timely manner, but there was repeated unauthorized use throughout the grazing season due to poor maintenance of the unit boundary fence between the Happy Hollow and Juliette units.

**Successes:** The permittee who was in nonuse reduced the livestock numbers by half which helped to reduce the grazing intensity on the allotment. The permittee that was authorized to use Squaw Creek was aware when annual use indicators were close to the limit and moved livestock to avoid exceeding utilization standards in some of the units on the allotment. This permittee also reconstructed the boundary fence between the Treavor and Upper Squaw Creek units which helped to control livestock.



Permittees complied with restricted movement dates and non-use areas designed to reduce impacts to protected fish spawning habitat in Martin Creek and the riparian pasture. During previous grazing seasons, Lower Squaw Creek compliance indicators for bank alteration were found to be less than 10 percent due to bank stability less than the 90% RMO. The result was only 1 percent in 2014. Range improvements in Marafio Spring were completed prior to turnout. The NFS responded to any and all request made by the permittees in relation to grazing unit compliance issues.

**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 2014.

**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 1b.

1b. Streambank alterations, woody browse and greenline stubble height were not exceeded.

Indicators in three of the eight monitored sites 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.

No. The proposed action acknowledges a deferred and rest-rotation grazing system and that livestock will be present in the Lower Squaw Creek Unit during spawning and incubation up to three weeks for two years out of three.

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



Yes

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

Yes. Multiple meetings occurred prior to the grazing season to discuss grazing management practices, conflict solutions, and resource protection.

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

Riders were seen when allotment compliance was checked throughout the grazing season.

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

1i. No although riders were seen on the allotment, they were not effective at controlling livestock movements. All maintenance of range improvements was completed.

No. Some range improvements were completed, but the targeted fence issues and projects identified were not completed or addressed in 2014.

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

Yes, but the permittees failed to follow rotation schedules.

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

Yes.

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

Yes

## **7. Any management recommendations for subsequent years.**

The permittees will be under suspension for the 2015 grazing season. Howard Cutler's term grazing permit for the Bayhorse portion of the Squaw Creek allotment will be suspended for the 2015 and 2016 grazing seasons. The reason for the suspension was due to having livestock in the wrong grazing units at the wrong time and excess use. A log-worm fence that serves as an allotment boundary needs to be replaced. The permittee and the Forest Service SCA crew were able to replace portions of the Garden and Squaw Creek allotment boundary fence that were critical to preventing livestock from straying into the Garden Creek allotment. There was no evidence of use in the Willow Patch unit on the Garden Creek allotment where the problems from previous years were occurring. The Garden Creek permittee voluntarily decided not to use the Willow Patch unit in 2014 and the straying cattle coming from Squaw Creek allotment in previous years was

successful providing much needed rest. The replacement of the log worm fence will be continued in the 2015 grazing season.

## 8. Photographic Documentation of Monitoring 2014



*Squaw Creek in Treavor Unit (ID: SQCR3) -2014 Effectiveness Monitoring-Start of DMA view upstream*



*Squaw Creek in Treator Unit (ID: SQCR2) - 2014 Implementation Monitoring – End of DMA  
view downstream*



*Squaw Creek in Lower Squaw Creek Unit (ID: SQCR4) – 2014 Implementation Monitoring -End  
of DMA view downstream*



*Treolor Creek in Treolor Creek Unit (ID: SQCRTR2) – 2014 Implementation Monitoring - Start of DMA view upstream*



*Cash Creek in Lower Squaw Creek Unit – 2014 Implementation Monitoring – End of DMA view downstream*



*Juliette Tributary in Juliette Unit – 2014 Implementation Monitoring – End of DMA view downstream*



*Kinnikinic in Kinnikinic- 2014 Implementation Monitoring – End of DMA view downstream*



*Martin Creek in Upper Squaw Unit-2014 Implementation Monitoring- End of DMA view  
downstream*



*Squaw Creek in Riparian Pasture (SQCR5) - 2014 Effectiveness Monitoring- End of DMA view  
downstream*



*Squaw Creek in Upper Squaw Unit- 2014 Effectiveness Monitoring- Start of DMA view upstream*