



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-La Sal
National Forest

Moab/Monticello Ranger District
62 East 100 North
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File Code: 2210/2230

Date: April 16, 2015

Kenneth E. Bates
3021 Spanish Valley Drive or Box 165
Moab, Utah 84532

**CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN
RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Dear Mr. Bates:

This letter will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Beaver C&H Allotment for the 2015 grazing season. This AOI is made part of your Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, item 8(a). A failure to follow these instructions is a violation of your permit. The AOI complies with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan. **Please read your instructions thoroughly.**

AUTHORIZED USE FOR 2015

Allotment	Numbers	Kind	Class	Season	Permittee	Non-use	
						Resource protection	Personal convenience
Beaver	201	Cattle	Cow/Calf	05/01 to 07/28	Kenneth Bates	Partial non-use	
Beaver	65	Cattle	Cow	09/20 to 10/31	Kenneth Bates	Partial non-use	

GRAZING SYSTEM AND SCHEDULE

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Polar Mesa	0	Cattle	May use if rains and water in ponds
Rincon	201	Cattle	05/01 – 05/31
Head of the Mesa	201	Cattle	06/01– 06/30
Death Trap	201	Cattle	07/01 – 7/28
South Beaver Mesa (East and West)*	65	Cattle	9/20- 10/31

*The old fence dividing South Beaver will be attempted to be repaired and used to split the pasture. It was discussed that water would need to be hauled in to do this and the road into South Beaver fixed, this was not fixed in 2014.

Permitted pack and saddle stock authorized on the allotment for livestock management will not exceed four head.

Management Response to Drought Conditions

The drought in Utah is predicted to continue into this year. As of now, the La Sal Mountains are at 60% of normal for precipitation, with there being very little or none in the past 45 days (see attached graph and map). Though the timing of rainfall the past 3 years in the summer and fall have kept forage production up on most of the mid and high elevation pastures, several lower elevation pastures that were used first last year or in the two previous years were dry and unproductive during the times they were grazed. This usually resulted in moving off the unit earlier than planned or overuse, if livestock were not moved in time. In these areas, the stressed forage resource will still be trying to recover from last year's dry conditions.

The degree that drought affects future forage production will depend upon intensity, frequency and timing of grazing this year. Providing plants opportunity to grow and adequate recovery from grazing before, during and after drought conditions, will have a great influence on long term vegetative productivity and rangeland conditions. It is extremely important that the proper use criteria are followed and that the allotment is monitored closely, which may involve an increase in the amount of riding you or your herd manager does.

You are planning to take full numbers onto the Beaver allotment this year. This allotment has had a lower stocking rate for the past several years. You plan on hauling water to get proper dispersal and use in response to drought conditions. Management may need to be adjusted depending upon actual conditions on the ground. Livestock may need to be removed from the allotment earlier than planned if drought conditions worsen.

Your allotment should be inspected for range readiness to determine forage growth and fence and water improvement conditions. **The pasture move dates shown above are an estimate, and may change on the basis of actual range conditions.** Situations may develop during the grazing season which requires changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

PROPER GRAZING-USE INDICATORS

Utilization standards are one indicator used in achieving or moving towards desired rangeland conditions. Taking into account duration and timing of grazing are also just as important. Utilization standards are not the desired conditions or management objectives themselves, they are indicators. Desired conditions and objectives are discussed in the 1986 Forest Plan and/or the Beaver Allotment Management Plan.

The proper use criteria listed in the box below are within the ranges identified in the 1990 Forest Plan amendment. However, these more specific criteria have been established through the completion of the Beaver Allotment EA in 2011.

It is your responsibility as the permittee to recognize when proper use has been reached and promptly move all cattle as necessary. If you need some assistance, or methods and tools for determining proper use, please contact Tina Marian.

Proper Use Criteria for Beaver Allotment

Upland Vegetation

Management System	Percent Use of Key Species		
	May/June pastures	July/Aug pastures	Sept/Oct
Deferred Rotation	40	40-50	50

Browse Utilization on Key Woody Shrubs

Browsing hits on new leaders of key upland woody shrubs should not exceed 45%.

* Key upland herbaceous and browse species selected will depend upon the plant species in the present plant community, the present ecological status, and the potential natural communities for the specific sites monitored.

Soil Disturbance**

Slopes 0-25% - No more than 30% soil disturbance

Slopes 26-40% - No more than 20% soil disturbance

Slopes over 40% - No more than 10% soil disturbance

Slopes over 40% are generally not classified as capable of supporting long-term grazing by livestock.

**This is current year disturbance attributed to cattle use within the key area monitored. Soil Disturbance includes both subsurface and surface soil alteration which adversely impacts soil health, function and productivity.

Riparian proper use criteria are not given because there are not accessible riparian areas on the Beaver allotment. However, Forest Plan Proper Use Criteria apply if there is incidental use.

When proper use has been reached in the unit being grazed, your cattle are to be herded to the next scheduled unit. **When proper use is reached in the last unit grazed, all cattle are to be removed from the allotment, even if this date is prior to the end of your grazing season.** Cattle found on the Allotment before or after the permitted grazing season will be billed at the unauthorized use rate and permit non-compliance actions will be initiated.

You should be aware that Forest Service policy provides that “an authorized officer may require the permittee to monitor and report information on compliance with the grazing permit, allotment management plan and annual operation instructions as a term and condition of your permit.”

To facilitate livestock moves, gates may be opened a few days prior to the scheduled move date only when moving into an adjacent pasture. Gates must be closed and the grazed pasture entirely cleaned of livestock no later than five days following the scheduled move date. Grazed pastures must be kept clean of livestock following the pasture move.

Please use the Grazing Response Index enclosed in your folder to track duration of use, intensity of use and time of use for each grazing unit. This is a helpful tool in assessing grazing impacts to the range vegetative resources.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

Since 2006, a schedule to bring structural improvements up to Forest Service standards has been developed each year during the Annual Operating Meetings. The development of a schedule will continue in 2015.

In 2015, you agreed to complete heavy maintenance on the division fence between the Rincon and Death Trap and Head of Mesa pastures as shown on the map attached.

In 2014, several ponds were cleaned so there will be no water development agreements for this year. We do encourage you to line the bottoms of the newly cleaned ponds with bentonite so that they hold water more effectively.

When you complete your fence and spring/pond agreements you must fill out and sign the Improvement Agreement Form (pink) that is found in your folder. Please provide photographs of before and after conditions to assist in documenting compliance with maintenance requirements. Contact Tina when you complete your maintenance so she can schedule a timely inspection.

If you fail to bring the above agreed improvements up to standard and fail to have it inspected by Forest Service staff by **October 31, 2015** you will not be allowed to stock the allotment in 2016 until the agreement and inspection is completed.

Range improvements are essential in ensuring that livestock are well distributed and that Forest standards and guides are met.

- Improvements are to be maintained to standard prior to livestock entering the pasture and that failure to do so is a violation of their permit and action will be taken when violations are documented.
- If improvements have not been maintained, then develop a schedule to bring them up to standard.
- Until all improvements are functional it is not appropriate to authorize full numbers or season of use, unless assurances can be made that utilization standards will not be exceeded.

The maintenance of all structural improvements listed under part 3 of your Term Grazing Permit, Special Terms and Conditions: *Construction and Maintenance of Structural Improvements* is a requirement and should be completed prior to your entry onto the Forest. The allotment permittee or permittees are responsible for the maintenance of all structural range improvements on this allotment. For allotments managed by an Association or Herd Manager specific maintenance responsibilities may be assigned to individual permittees by the Association President or Herd Manager.

If you wish to use forest products (trees and oak brush) from the National Forest to maintain your fences/spring enclosures on your allotment, you must receive authorization from either the Moab or Monticello Office prior to cutting.

NEPA and PLANNED PROJECTS

An Environmental Assessment was completed for the Beaver Allotment in 2011. An Allotment Management Plan (AMP) is currently being developed to implement the decision that was made. The AMP shall become a part of Part 3 of the Term Grazing Permit. A monitoring plan is part of

the AMP and a map which shows current key areas on the Beaver Allotment that are to be monitored is enclosed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Refer to Special Terms and Conditions in Part 3 of Term Grazing Permit for specific instructions pertaining to maintenance standards for range stock water developments, range fences, corrals, and herding standards.

All permitted livestock must be branded with your registered brand as documented in your Term Permit before they enter the National Forest.

Place salt blocks away from water, roads, meadows and other open areas so as to draw livestock into areas that receive light utilization. When livestock leave a pasture move the salt out of the pasture as well.

You will furnish sufficient riders or herders to achieve proper distribution of livestock.

Certified Weed Free Hay must be used if you do any supplemental feeding of horses on the allotment while gathering or moving cattle.

If you find the need to use mechanical clearing (tractors, bulldozers etc.) of fence lines or to clean ponds or other water improvements, you must have proper archeological clearance and permission from the District Ranger.

Enclosed in your AOI folder you will find an Actual Use Record sheet. As your 2015 grazing season progresses, please fill out this form in detail and return it promptly at the end of the grazing season. There are also extra sheets included in the folder where you are encouraged to document management on your allotment.

PAYMENT OF FEES

The permittee will not allow owned or controlled livestock to be on Forest Service-administered lands unless the fees specified in the Bill for Collection are paid and confirmation of payment is received prior to livestock entering NFS lands.

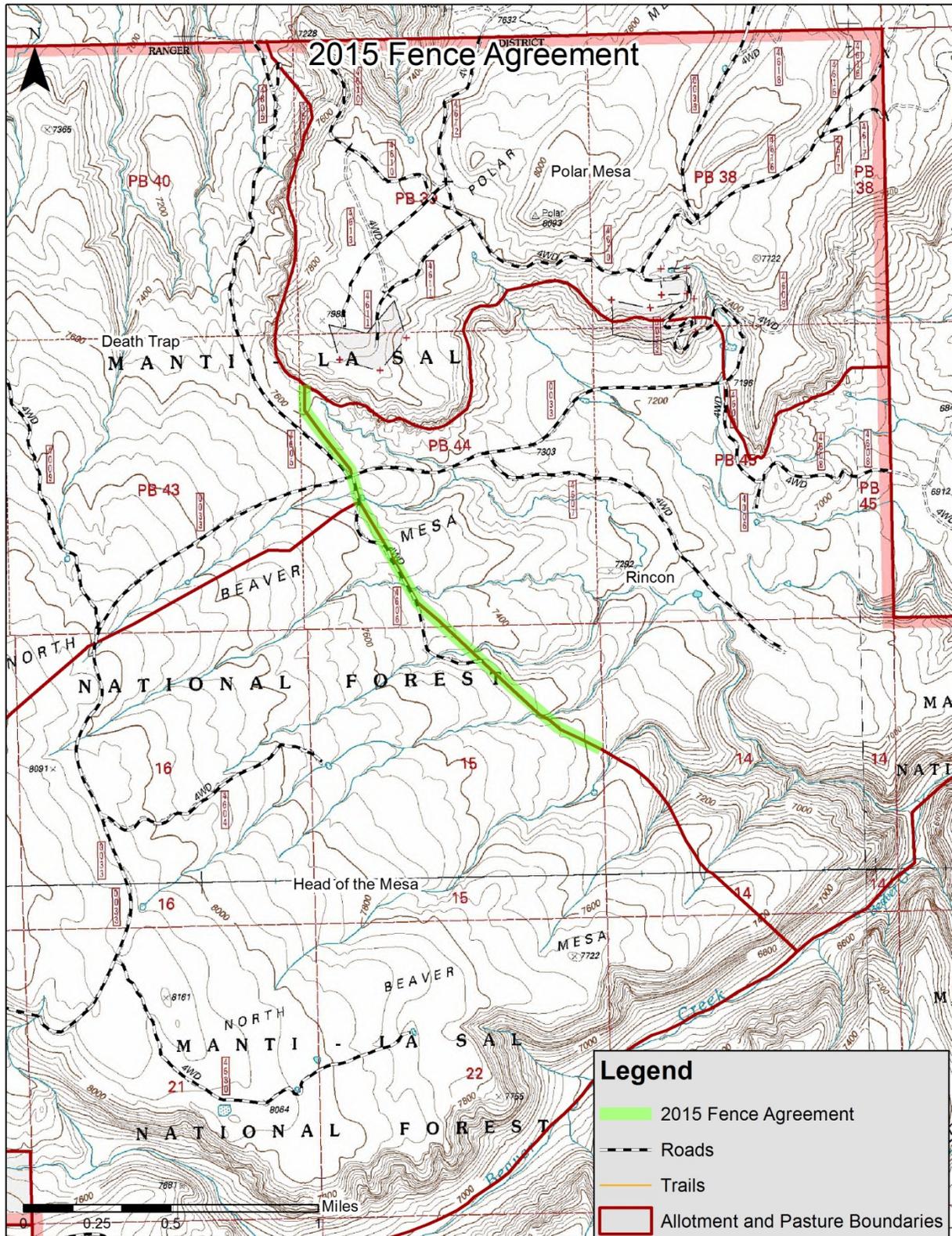
I am looking forward to working with you this summer. Please don't hesitate to call Tina Marian (435-636-3368) if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely

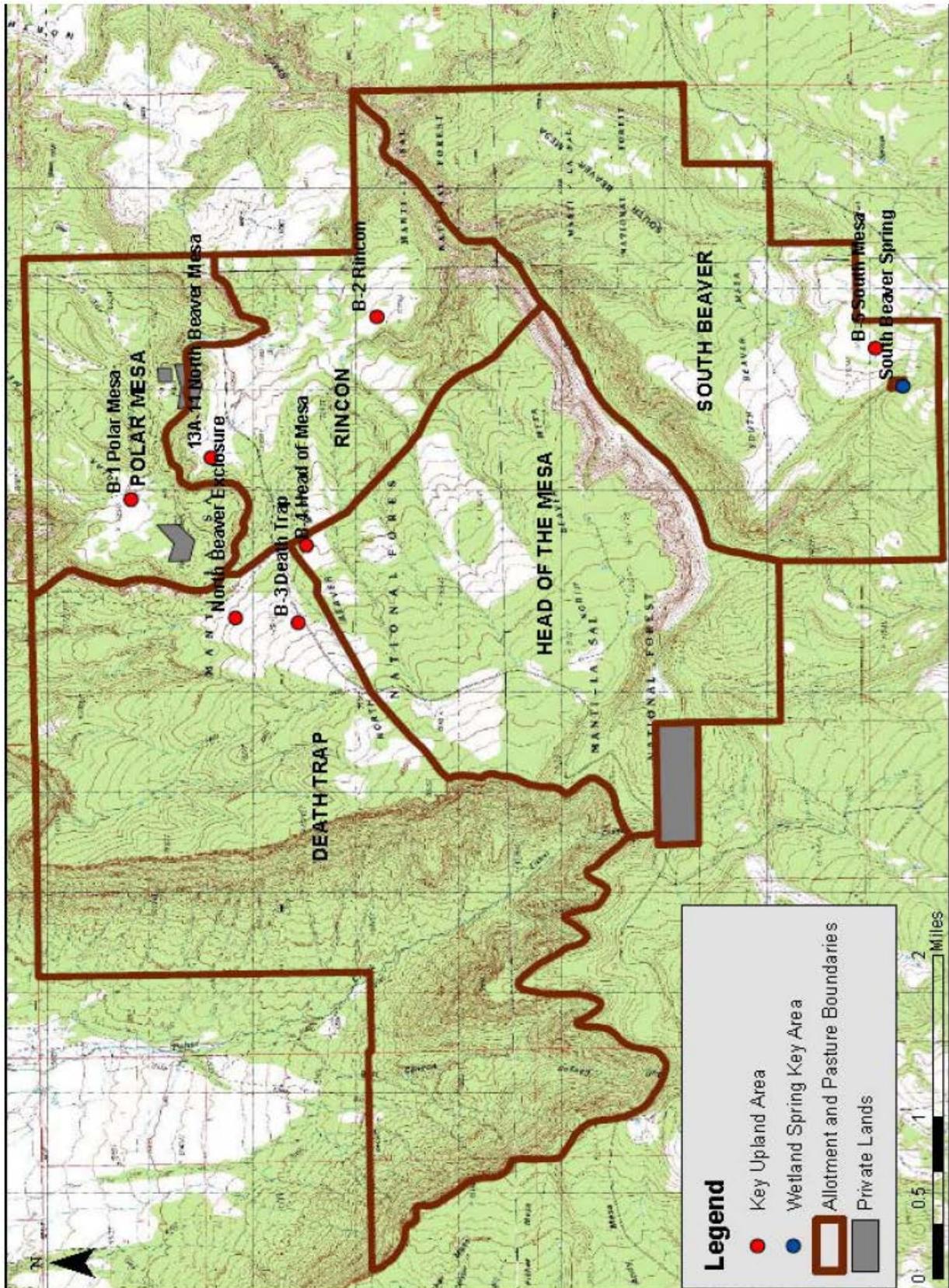


for MICHAEL DIEM
District Ranger

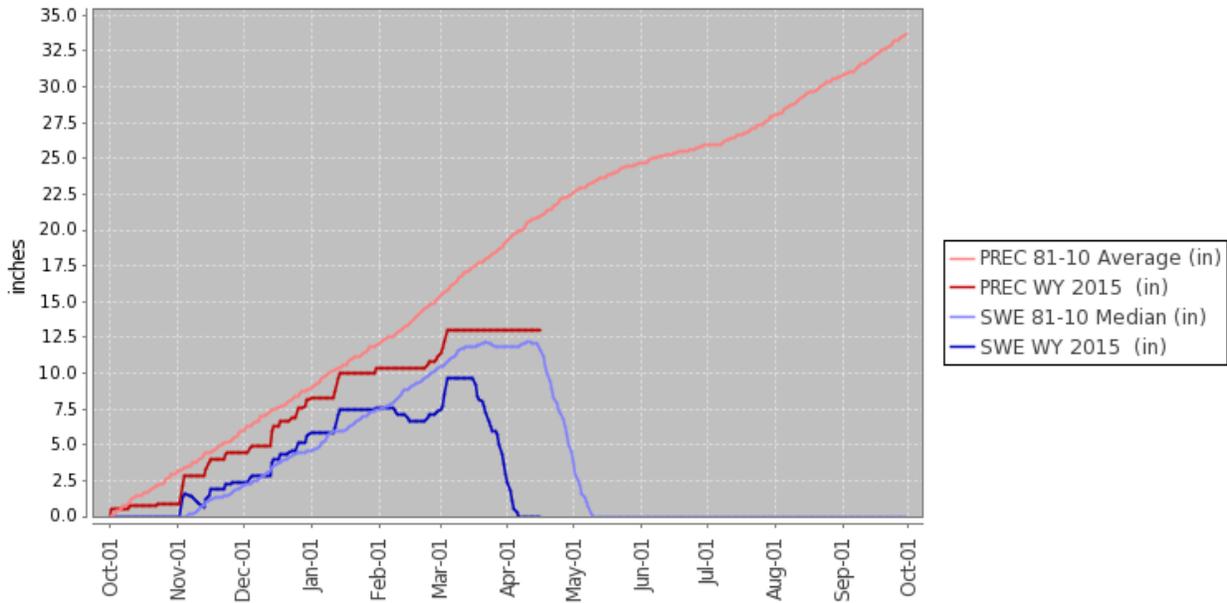
2015 Fence Improvement to be worked on and inspected this year.



Key Areas for Monitoring



Station (572) WATERYEAR=2015 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision
 Thu Apr 16 09:41:53 PDT 2015



La Sal Mountains Snotel site shows we are at 60% of average precipitation for the year and have had a dry spell since about March 1st. Below map shows SE Utah in a moderate drought.

U.S. Drought Monitor Utah

April 14, 2015

(Released Thursday, Apr. 16, 2015)

Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

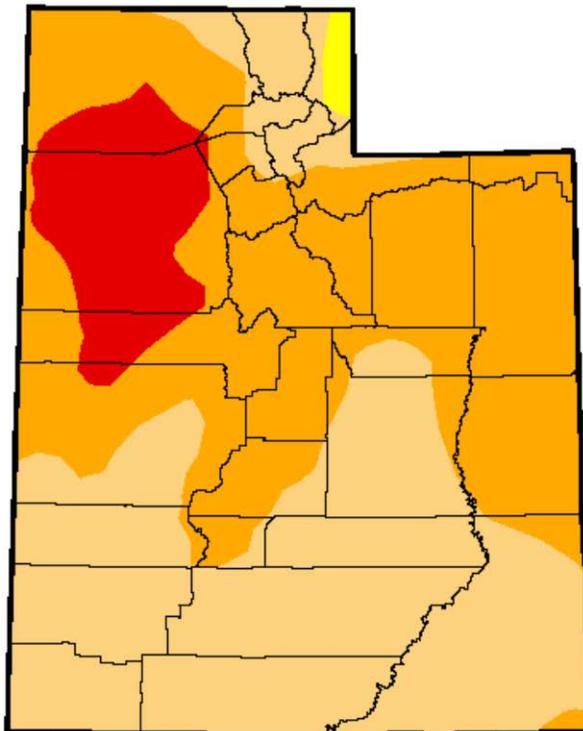
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	99.19	53.22	9.32	0.00
Last Week 4/7/2015	0.00	100.00	99.05	53.22	9.32	0.00
3 Months Ago 1/13/2015	18.90	81.10	58.99	12.48	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12/30/2014	18.93	81.07	58.99	12.98	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 9/30/2014	18.89	81.11	59.30	12.98	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 4/16/2014	5.57	94.43	69.80	17.94	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
 Michael Brewer
 NCDG/NOAA



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>