

SIX LAKES SHEEP ALLOTMENT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
CEDAR CITY RANGER DISTRICT
DIXIE NATIONAL FOREST

Plan Prepared by Range Conservationist Jerry Green - 2/29/68
Plan Updated by Range Conservationist Dale B. Harris - 4/10/78

UPDATED BY: Dale B. Harris DATE 4/10/84
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APPROVAL
RECOMMENDED BY: Robert H. Brunson DATE 4/11/84
District Ranger

APPROVED: Frank Jensen DATE 4/18/84
acting Forest Supervisor

I. INFORMATION SECTION

A. HISTORY

The Six Lakes Allotment was established in 1961 by combining the Six Lakes - Long Valley and the Lakes - Mammoth Allotments.

The area has been grazed since southern Utah was settled in 1851. The area was included in the Dixie National Forest in 1906.

Prior to 1946, the number of sheep grazing the allotment is hard to determine. Some range was added and some deleted. Co-op bands used the range and transfers and trading of allotments occurred frequently.

Cattle grazed the original Six Lakes Allotment and the Navajo Ridge Allotment up to 1949. In 1949, the cattle were eliminated from Navajo Ridge through an exchange of use. This left a 17 head cattle permit on the Six Lakes unit.

In 1981, an exchange was worked out with the permittees whereby the Six Lakes cattle were transferred to the Bowery Cattle Allotment. At the same time, Charles F. Burton partnership was issued an additional 35 head of sheep and John Dalton an additional 12 head of sheep on the Six Lakes allotment (refer to Memorandum of Agreement in 2230 permit folders).

In 1983, Charles F. Burton and Sons Partnership purchased Ashdown's sheep on the small Sugarloaf Allotment and was issued an additional 274 head permit. The Sugarloaf Allotment was added to the Six Lakes Allotment.

B. Permittees

Ranch Operations - David & Norma Burton have a ewe-lamb operation consisting of 1,200 ewes. Ewes are lambed on the ranch and feeder lambs fattened prior to selling. All land owned and leased is closely integrated in this operation. The permittee also owns and leases lands along the west boundary of the Forest Allotment. These lands are used both spring and fall prior to and after grazing on the Forest. In addition they have a license on the Cedar City District, Bureau of Land Management for 1,000 sheep, 10/16 to 3/31. The permittee also has 255 acres of cultivated farm land which produces supplemental feed to round out the yearly operation.

John S. Dalton Jr. owns a small farm flock of about 100 head of ewes. The permitted sheep are pastured on the farm when not grazing on the Forest with Burton's sheep.

Following is a list of the current permittees and permitted numbers:

TABLE I

<u>Permittees</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Animal Months</u>
David & Norma Burton (David F. Burton Manager)	1200	6/21 - 10/10	4400
<u>John S. Dalton, Jr.</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>6/21 - 9/25</u>	<u>95</u>
TOTAL	1230		4495

C. Range Condition and Trend

The Range analysis was completed on the allotment in 1968 and is now partially outdated. Field inspections indicated range conditions have improved since analysis was done. Current estimated conditions on the allotment are summarized in Table II.

TABLE II

Acres by Suitability, Conditions and Vegetal Types

Range Condition

<u>Type</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Not Classified</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Suitable</u>				
Grass	120*			120
Dry Meadow	1151	134		1285
Sagebrush		55		55
Mountain Brush	133	443		576
Conifer	180	1796		1976
Aspen	819	1761		2580
SUBTOTAL	2371	3734		6592
<u>Unsuitable</u>				
Conifer			1075	1075
Aspen			177	177
Heavy Timber			4915	4915
Barren			835	835
SUBTOTAL			7002	7002

TOTAL	2371	3734	7002	13594

* Includes 32 acres of terraced land that is now open to grazing.

The approximate date of range readiness on the lower units is June 15, flowering on upper units is July 1, and seed ripe is August 15.

The grazing schedule is outlined in the following table:

TABLE III

Year	Stud Flat/Six Lakes	Sugarloaf/Navajo Ridge	Long Valley	Mammoth
1	A	D	B	C
2	D	A	C	B

(Repeat Cycle)

A = Graze 6/21 until proper use is reached.

B = Graze second until proper use is reached.

C = Graze third until proper use is reached.

D = Graze until proper use is reached or 10/10 when the sheep leave the allotment.

B. Proper Use Criteria

The R-4 Range Analysis Handbook (Section 60) points out that 50 percent utilization of the species being managed is about all the use that should be made on most ranges. The exception is wet meadows in good condition when up to 60 percent utilization might be made. Therefore, in keeping with Regional direction, a proper use factor of 50 percent of the palatable grasses growing on the suitable range will be used.

On this allotment, the bluegrasses (*Poa* spp.), Mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), Junegrass (*Koeleria cristata*) and sedges (*Carex* spp.) are very palatable to the sheep.

C. Administrative Action to Implement Program

District personnel will check the allotment periodically during the grazing season. They will make utilization and followup studies and note the progress of the sheep in the system. They will inform the permittee when the unit is nearing proper use and when the sheep are to move to the next unit and be removed from the allotment.

The above acreage does not include private land within the allotment.

D. Grazing Capacity

Based on range analysis and followup observations on the allotment, there is sufficient capacity to support the permitted sheep months and to meet wildlife requirements. However, with the addition of the Sugarloaf unit and more sheep it will be necessary to continue to firm up allotment capacity.

Considering the large band size, it is imperative that proper management practices such as herding, trailing, salting and bedding are practiced. If this effort is not made, then it will be necessary to take the sheep off the allotment prior to September 25. Followup studies will be conducted to evaluate condition and trend.

II. MANAGEMENT GOALS

Specific objectives for the allotment are as follows:

- ✓ A. Keep the range in a static or upward trend.
- ✓ B. Improve livestock distribution by proper salting and herding.
- C. Continue range improvement work to improve distribution and reduce sheep trailing.
- ✓ D. Employ a grazing system that will maintain plant vigor and increase ground cover.
- ✓ E. Continue to upgrade allotment boundary fences.
- ✓ F. Regulate grazing to protect existing watershed work.
- ✓ G. Protect aesthetics along Navajo Ridge Road.
- ✓ H. Provide for wildlife requirements.

III. ANALYSIS SECTION

A. Private Land

There are private land coordination problems with this allotment. The most serious is with the Sugarloaf unit. The Vermont Ashdown family still owns 320 acres in the center of the unit. Since it is not fenced, it would be impossible to graze the unit without access to this land. At present, the Burtons are allowed to use it. Should they lose this privilege, it will be necessary to reduce permitted use on the allotment. (This

matter was spelled out in a letter to Burtons on 7/6/83; copy enclosed).

Also in the past, on some years, Burtons leased private land in the Mammoth unit of the allotment. They were usually issued a private land permit for it and allowed to graze additional sheep.

Since the sheep herd is now at 1230 head, the Forest Service will not issue a private land permit for any additional numbers. Also, it is not planned to issue a private land permit for additional time. It is felt that the present obligation is sufficient use for the allotment.

In addition to the above, Burton's have private land adjacent to the Stud Flat unit. They use this land in conjunction with the forest permit both before and after the grazing season. This use works satisfactorily with the allotment.

B. Land Exchange

The Forest land in the Sugarloaf unit is surrounded by private land and, therefore, has been identified for possible land exchange. The permittee was informed of this possibility in a letter to him on 7/6/83. In the letter it was explained that if the land in the Sugarloaf were to be exchanged, in whole or in part, his grazing permit would be reduced accordingly.

C. Trailing

The sheep are trailed from the lower units to the upper units by way of the Navajo Ridge Road. The trail comes out at Bear Flat and continues along the Brian Head-Panguitch Lake Highway to the north side of Cedar Breaks National Monument. It continues around the north and east side of the Monument to the allotment boundary. The distance between the lower and upper units is approximately five miles and involves less than a day of trailing. Although the sheep trail crosses portions of the Navajo Ridge and Dandelion Knoll sheep allotments, there are no apparent conflicts.

IV. ACTION SECTION

A. Management System

The allotment will be grazed under a deferred-rotation grazing system. It is divided into ~~five~~⁴ units. Three units: Sugarloaf, Stud Flat and Six Lakes are located at approximately 8,000 foot elevation. Two units, Mammoth and Long Valley are located at about 10,000 feet. Two of the lower three units, Stud Flat and Sugarloaf, will be grazed alternately first and last in the grazing sequence. The upper units will be used alternately when the sheep graze the high range.

D. Range Development and Improvements

1. Existing Improvements

Project Name	Type Of Improvement	Size	Location	Year Const.	Main-tained By
Long Valley	Enclosure	9 acres	NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 12, T37S, R9W	1960	F.S.
High Mountain Unit	Coal Creek Watershed	104 acres 2 miles fence	Sec. 18, T36S, R9W	1962	F.S.
Rattlesnake Unit	Coal Creek Watershed	195 acres	Sec. 20, T36S, R9W	1963 & 1964	F.S.
Reeds Res.	Water Development	40' x 70'	Sec. 18, T36S, R9W	1963	Permittee
Dry Lake Reservoir	Water Development	40' x 70'	Sec. 19, T36S, R9W	1963	Permittee
Burton Pipeline & Reservoirs (S.U. permit)	Water Development	1.0 miles 2 reservoirs	Sec. 19, T36S, R9W	1978	Permittee

2. Proposed Improvements

There are a few potential ponds that can be developed on the Stud Flat and Six Lakes units. These will be programmed in the future. Maintenance of existing improvements is an on-going task and will be done as needed. There are approximately 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Cedar Breaks National Monument boundary fence that adjoins the allotment. There have been frequent problems of sheep grazing in the Monument. Recent reconstruction of the fence by the Park Service has eliminated much of the problem.

Maintenance of most of the allotment structural improvements is the responsibility of the permittee. The list of these improvements is attached to the grazing permit.

E. Correlation With Other Uses

Management of the allotment will correlate grazing with other uses as outlined in the Markagunt Plateau Land Use Plan. Specific coordination items are as follows:

Recreation. There are no improved recreation areas on the allotment. The allotment is used by deer hunters in the fall but there is no conflict between grazing and hunting.

The Six Lakes unit is partly within the designated Ashdown Gorge roadless area and proposed wilderness area. Only a small portion in lower Rattlesnake Creek is actually grazed by the sheep in the proposed wilderness area. Even with the potential for increased recreation use in the area, conflicts between grazing and recreation are not anticipated.

The existing Brian Head ski development and the proposed Crystal Mountain ski development have and will increase recreation use on the surrounding National Forest lands. Since the Six Lakes Allotment boundary is within 1½ miles of these developments and because the sheep trail from the lower range to the higher range passes within ½ mile of Brian Head, there is potential for conflict between grazing and recreation. However, to date there has been no serious problems, and none are foreseen if grazing is done according to the allotment management plan.

Portions of the Long Valley and Mammoth grazing units are located within the Dixie National Forest ORV area. The permittee is authorized to use two roads to his campsites. They are the turnoff in Cedar Breaks that goes into the Mammoth unit, sections 25 and 26, T36S, R9W and the timber sale road into Long Valley from U-14.

Timber. There are some areas of timber that may be harvested in the future most of the timber is on areas unsuitable for livestock grazing. Smaller areas of suitable range contain commercial aspen and spruce. These areas will be evaluated at the time of harvest to determine the need for grazing correlation.

Watershed. A watershed restoration project was completed on the Six Lakes unit in 1963. The area was contour trenched, seeded and a portion of the area fenced. The area has been grazed with permitted sheep the last few years. A continuing evaluation of the area will be necessary to determine if grazing has had a detrimental affect and if it should be allowed to continue.

Wildlife. The deer herd on this allotment is managed and controlled by hunting pressure as part of the Parowan Deer Herd Unit (#57). The competition between sheep grazing and wildlife is not considered to be in conflict on this allotment. The allotment is probably a significant area for fawning.

Riparian Areas. There are some riparian areas located on each of the management units. The management system and proper use criteria specified in IV B of the plan will minimize conflicts between grazing and riparian areas.

V. FOLLOWUP SECTION

A. Inspection

This allotment will be managed under a deferred rotation grazing system that will allow the forage plants to complete their growth cycle every other year. Also, inspections will be made to ensure the range is not utilized beyond 50 percent of important grasses and forbs growing on the suitable range.

Inspections will be made, when possible, prior to the opening date of June 21 to determine the date of range readiness. Periodic inspections will be made later to firm up the dates of flowering and seed maturity on each unit and to check compliance with the annual plan of use.

As part of the allotment management and inspection schedule Form R4 2200-15 (Unit Examination Record) will be completed for each unit each year, as needed.

B. Trend Studies

A Parker Three Step was established in 1954 on the Long Valley Unit. This transect will be reread as necessary to determine vegetation and soil trend on that area.

A permanent trend transect will be established on one of the lower units to determine long term trends on that area.

C. Livestock Counts

The sheep will be counted as necessary and as time permits, before they enter the allotment.

P. O. Box 627
Cedar City, Utah 84720

2230
July 6, 1983

Charles F. Burton & Sons, Part.
c/o David Burton
Parowan, Ut. 84761

Dear Dave:

In regards to the proposed grazing transfer of the Vermont Ashdown permit, certain conditions need to be mentioned.

The National Forest land on the Sugarloaf Allotment has been identified for possible exchange. If the land in the Sugarloaf Allotment were to be exchanged in whole or in part, your grazing permit would be reduced accordingly.

Secondly, for the most part, the allotment cannot be grazed without using Ashdown's private land in conjunction with the permit. You should consider the future land status of the Ashdown property. (i.e. Ashdown's selling or leasing their property, fencing the boundary, etc.)

Finally, we believe issuing you a permit for a 1200 head band on the allotment is all that can be authorized which will prohibit issuance of a private land permit for any animals above 1200 head. (There is also 30 head of John Dalton's.)

I recommend you consider these possibilities before making the transaction. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

ROLLO H. BRUNSON
District Ranger

DBHarris:pg