



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-La Sal
National Forest

Moab/Monticello Ranger District
62 East 100 North
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Moab, UT 84532
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File Code: 2210/2230

Date: June 5, 2015

La Sal Livestock LTD.
c/o Lowery Redd
P.O. Box 368
La Sal, Utah 84530

**CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN
RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Dear Mr. Redd:

This letter will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Chicken Creek, Dorry and La Sal C&H Allotments 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
Dorry	200	Cattle	Cow/Calf& Bull (~10)	06/21 to 10/31	La Sal Livestock Ltd.	32 c/c pairs	
Chicken Creek	850	Cattle	Cow/Calf& Bull (~30)	07/05 – 07/20	La Sal Livestock Ltd.	150 c/c pairs	
State and Private Lands				07/21 – 09/15			
La Sal (Dark Canyon)*	50	Cattle	Cow/Calf	08/15 to 09/15	La Sal Livestock Ltd.		
La Sal	200-850	Cattle	Cow/Calf& Bull (~30)	06/10 – 06/22 and 09/16 to 10/15	La Sal Livestock Ltd.	150 c/c pairs	
La Sal (Horse Pasture)*	2	Horse	Mature	06/16 to 10/15	La Sal Livestock Ltd.		
La Sal (Pine Ridge)**	150	Cattle	Cow/Calf	10/26to 10/31	La Sal Livestock Ltd.		
La Sal (Lackey Fan)*	100	Cattle	Cow/Calf	11/01to 11/10	La Sal Livestock Ltd.		

*On-off portion of permit, livestock use the area in conjunction with non-FS lands.

**Trail through when driving cattle off allotment



GRAZING SYSTEM AND SCHEDULE

Dorry:

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Slaughter Flat (trail through)	200	Cattle	06/21 – 06/24
Amasa Back	200	Cattle	06/23 – 07/10
South Moores Unit*	200	Cattle	07/11 – 08/06
North Moores Unit*	200	Cattle	08/07 – 09/03
Upper Dorry (Upper Squaw)	200	Cattle	09/04 – 09/20
Lower Dorry (Lower Squaw)	200	Cattle	09/21 – 10/01
Pack Creek	200	Cattle	10/01 – 10/05
Slaughter Flat	170-180	Cattle	10/06 – 10/31

* Moores Units are separated by natural barriers; however there are no fences, so a few livestock may still be in other portions of the pasture than indicated here.

La Sal:

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Buck Hollow	200	Cattle	06/10 – 06/22
Coyote	-	-	REST
La Sal Creek	-	-	REST
La Sal Pass	850	Cattle	09/16 – 10/15

Chicken Creek:

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Chicken Creek	850	Cattle	07/05 – 07/20 & Trail through to exit Forest in Oct (1 day)

Permitted pack and saddle stock authorized on the allotment for livestock management will not exceed four head. This is separate from the 2 head that is on your permit and you are billed for.

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 about 80% of normal for precipitation (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 plan on resting two pastures on the La Sal allotment and also grazing with lower numbers. You are also grazing with lower numbers on the Dorry allotment. 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.

On Chicken Creek allotment it is especially important that cattle are completely cleaned out of the unit by the off date, or earlier if proper use is reached earlier. You must please carefully monitor use while cattle are grazing this allotment and be able to respond quickly if cattle need to be moved earlier than planned.

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 Allotment Management Plan.

Desired goals in the 1986 Forest Plan include:

- Bring livestock obligation in line with rangeland carrying capacity
- Maintain upward or stable trends in vegetation and soil condition.

Management Objectives in the 1979 La Sal Allotment Management Plan include:

- Increase desirable species composition, forage production and ground cover density to its estimated potential.
- Prevent resource damage to the watershed areas in the head of Pole Canyon, Lackey Basin and La Sal Pass.

Management Objectives in the 1984 Chicken Creek Allotment Management Plan include:

- Relieve grazing pressure on riparian vegetation.
- Increase ground cover density and range condition class

The 1990 Forest Plan Amendment for Range Proper-Use Criteria states proper use as ranging from 40-65% use of upland key species depending on the grazing system applied and from 30-60% use of riparian key species depending season of use. This amendment kept the existing provision that proper use criteria are to be established on an allotment by allotment basis and as given in the AMP and AOIs.

For the La Sal and Dorry allotments proper use criteria in 2015 is:

<u>Upland Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Spring/Summer	40-45%
Fall	50-55%
<u>Riparian Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Spring (Early and rapid growth)	50-60%
Summer (Moderate growth)	45-50%
Fall (Slow growth)	30-40% or 4-5 inches stubble or regrowth

For the Chicken Creek allotment proper use criteria in 2015 is:

<u>Upland Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Spring/Summer	40-45%
Fall	50-55%
<u>Riparian Areas:</u>	<u>Use of Key Species</u>
Maximum 45 percent use, or retain a minimum 3-inch stubble height of Most palatable forage species, or retain a minimum 4-inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.	

There is a difference between where percentage utilized is applied and where stubble height is applied to determine proper use in riparian areas. Percent utilized is used for plant species that are within the larger riparian area (the area that is influenced by the stream and the water table) but not along the greenline. The greenline is the first perennial vegetation on or near the stream's edge that is at least one foot wide. Stubble height measurements are used to determine proper use along the greenline. The plant species considered are typically water loving species (hydric species) such as sedges.

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.

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.** This is important to plant recovery after being grazed, especially in areas cattle are drawn to.

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.

IMPROVEMENTS

Since 2006, the Forest Service has entered into structural improvement agreements with each permittee which will continue for this season. The purpose of these agreements and the following inspections is to document how and if range structural improvements are being maintained.

Thank you for completing the Lackey Spring Enclosure, the Dorry spring and the Upper/Lower Dorry fence as well as the La Sal Pass/Dorry boundary fence last year. You did not complete the Chicken Creek spring because it was decided that this improvement no longer made sense with a large number of cattle in the allotment for only 2 weeks and because it no longer produced much water.

2015 FENCE AGREEMENTS: For Dorry, you agreed to heavy maintenance or reconstruction of the fence that keeps cattle from going into Pack Creek from Lower Dorry unit as shown on the map attached.

For La Sal you agreed to heavy maintenance or reconstruction of the fence across the mouth of Lackey drainage as shown on the map attached.

In addition, the entire Chicken Creek fence will be inspected the week before you enter the allotment July 5th. The South Paradox permittee was also made aware that their portion of this fence will be inspected.

2015 SPRING AGREEMENTS: For Dorry, you agreed to bring to permit standards the Hells Hole trough as shown on the map attached. You have also agreed to inventory all those troughs that are not accessible by vehicle that may need to be replaced. This is so a helicopter could be hired to bring new troughs in to inaccessible places on the allotment and to be more economical by doing several at one time.

For La Sal, you agreed to clean the 4 way pond in Buck Hollow if it is not too full of water as shown on the map attached.

For Chicken Creek you asked permission to form an exclosure around a spring that feeds into Beaver Creek. The Forest Service will set up a time to meet with you to assess the proposed protection measures for the spring.

When you complete your fence and spring agreements you must fill out and sign the Improvement Agreement Form (pink) that is found in your folder. I suggest that you provide photographs of before and after conditions to assist in documenting compliance with maintenance requirements. I also encourage you to 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 by **Oct 15th, 2015** you will not be allowed to stock the allotment in 2016 until the agreement is fulfilled.

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 into each pasture. 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.

There are many troughs on the Forest that do not have wildlife escape ramps and are thus not meeting improvement maintenance standards. All troughs on the allotment need to be equipped with a wildlife escape ramp. You can obtain them from the Forest Service office. We understand that this will not all be completed in one year and will be emphasizing getting wildlife escape ramps installed in all troughs over the next few years.

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

NEPA and PLANNED PROJECTS

The La Sal and Chicken Creek allotments are scheduled to have an environmental analysis completed in 2016/2017 to meet the requirements of Public Law 104-19, Section 504(a): Establish and adhere to a schedule for the completion of National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) analysis and decisions on all allotments within the National Forest System unit for which NEPA is needed (PL 104-19 section, General Provision 1995).

The La Sal Sustainability Collaboration (LSSC) was formed which will meet for the purposes of sharing information about the management and resources of the allotments and by consensus form recommendations to be considered with the planning of the management of the allotments.

The Lackey Basin Aspen Restoration Project may continue to be implemented this year. It is not currently expected to impact livestock rotations.

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. **Because of the size of your operation, it is necessary to have a full-time rider to ensure cattle are being distributed properly and in the right pastures at the planned for times.**

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

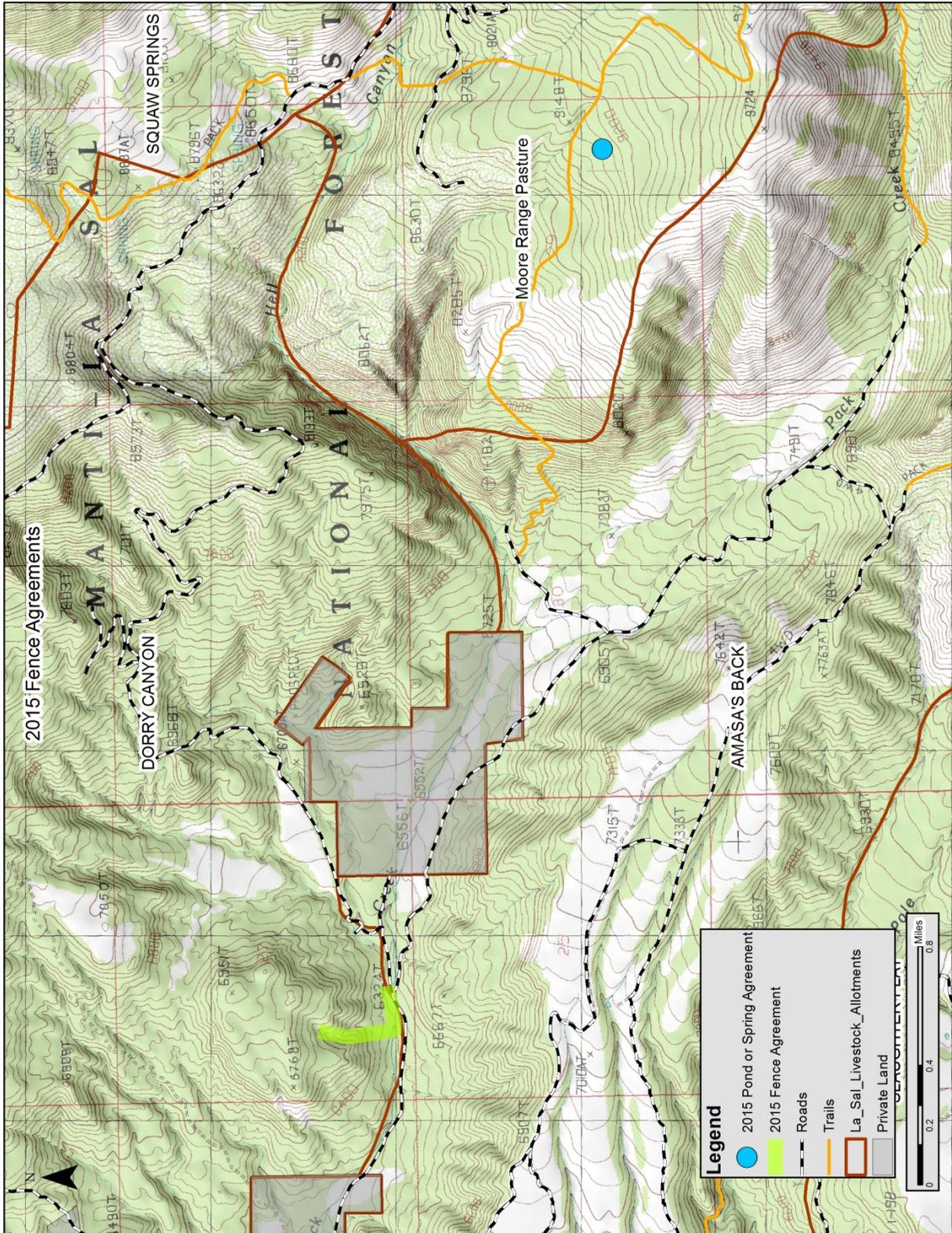
The permittee will not allow owned or controlled livestock to be on Forest Service-administered lands unless the fees specified in the Bill for Collection are paid and confirmation of payment through the “lock box” process is received prior to livestock entering NFS lands.

I am looking forward to working with you this summer. Please call Tina Marian (435-636-3368) if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

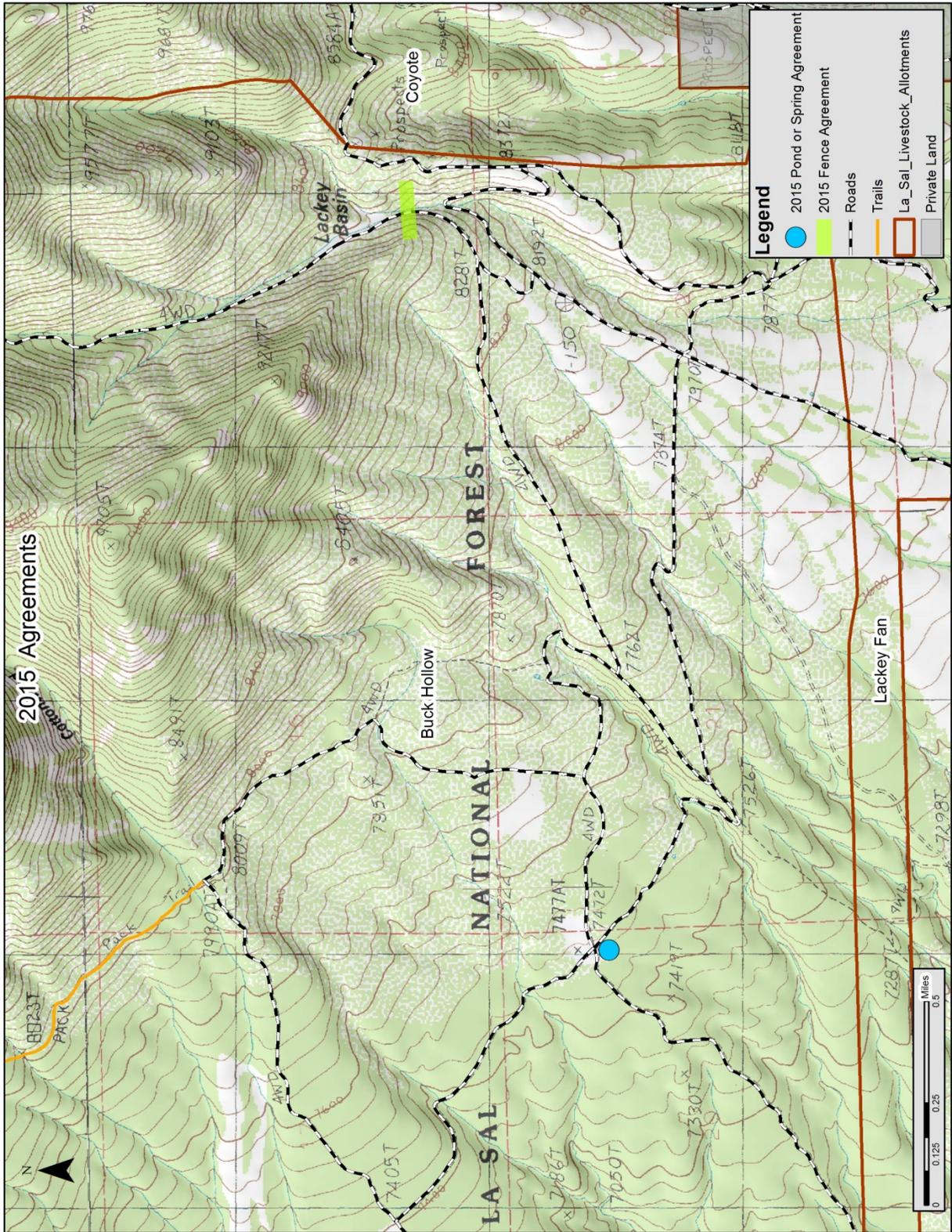
Sincerely,



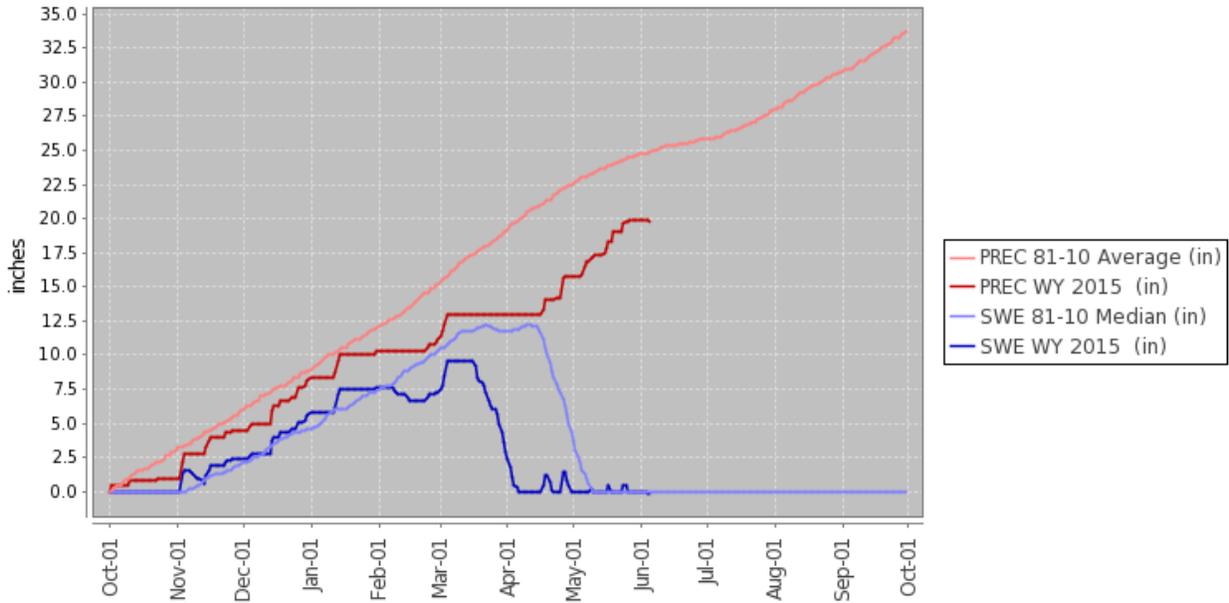
for MICHAEL DIEM
District Ranger



La Sal Fence and Pond Agreement



Station (572) WATERYEAR=2015 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision Fri Jun 05 11:11:15 PDT 2015



Total Precipitation below average, no precip in March and first part of April, the last storms have done much to increase total precip for this area. SE Utah still considered to be in a moderate drought.

U.S. Drought Monitor Utah

June 2, 2015

(Released Thursday, Jun. 4, 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	90.63	34.38	9.32	0.00
Last Week 5/26/2015	0.00	100.00	90.63	34.38	9.32	0.00
3 Months Ago 3/3/2015	0.00	100.00	95.07	13.02	1.88	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 6/3/2014	9.08	90.92	72.34	21.87	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:
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NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



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