



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  
Phone # (435) 259-7155  
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File Code: 2210/2230

Date: June 11, 2015

Wagon Rod Ranch  
c/o Charley Tracy  
P.O. Box 1254  
Monticello, Utah 84535

**CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN  
RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Dear Mr. Tracy:

This letter will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the Lakes/South Peak 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
Lakes/South Peak	270 -360	Cattle	Cow/Calf	06/20-10/15	Wagon Rod Ranch		

**GRAZING SYSTEM AND SCHEDULE**

Pasture	Number	Kind	Approximate Dates
Lakes	270*	Cattle	06/20-09/28
Bulldog	90	Cattle	07/01-07/31
South Peak	90	Cattle	08/01-10/15

\*At the AOI meeting you indicated that in general livestock stay up higher in this unit until about mid-August, when they start using the lower elevations. Therefore, though this unit is season-long grazing, they are not in the same place on the unit the entire season.

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. However, the Abajo Mountains are at about 95% 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 are not planning on lowering your stocking rate. You do plan to haul water as this had worked well the past two years and conjunction with riding to keep livestock spread out. 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 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 1998 Lakes/South Peak AMP include:

- Maintain upwards or stable trend in vegetation and soil condition for both uplands and riparian areas.
- Maintain or improve conditions regarding soil compaction, site disturbance, vegetative cover and stream bank stability.

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. (see Forest Plan Amendment attached). 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.

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 green line. The green line 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 green line. The plant species considered are typically water loving species (hydric species) such as sedges.

<b>For the Lakes/South Peak allotment proper use criteria in 2015 are:</b>	
<b><u>Upland Areas:</u></b>	<b><u>Use of Key Species</u></b>
Spring/Summer	40-45%
Fall	50-55%
<b><u>Riparian Areas:</u></b>	<b><u>Use of Key Species</u></b>
Spring (Early and rapid growth)	50-60%
Summer (Moderate growth)	45-50%
Fall (Slow growth)	30-40% or 4-5 inches stubble or regrowth

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.

**IMPROVEMENTS**

Thank you for the work you completed last year.

**FENCE AGREEMENT - For 2015, the fence agreement will be the east portion of the Lakes/SP division fence as shown on the map attached.**

**POND AGREEMENT- For 2015, you would like to clean out 4 ponds in the SE part of the Lakes unit as shown on the map attached.**

When you complete your fence and spring/pond agreements, you will please 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 by **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 enclosures on your allotment, you must receive authorization from either the Moab or Monticello Office prior to cutting.

**NEPA and PLANNED PROJECTS**

There is a plan to do some fuel treatments in the Shingle Mill area as well as some watershed treatments to help with the large gullies in the area.

## **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 through the "lock box" process is received prior to livestock entering NFS lands.

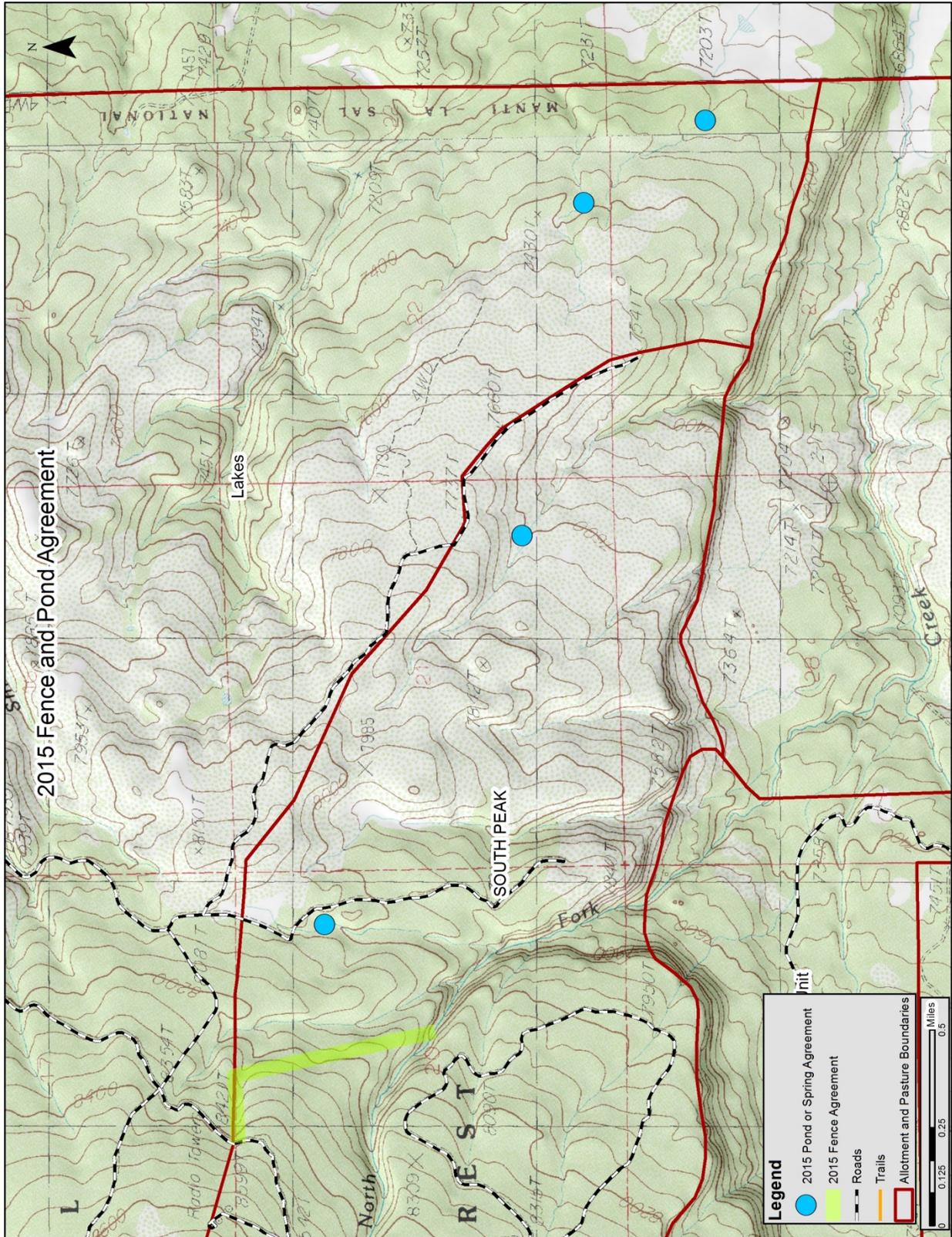
I am looking forward to working with you this summer. Please call Tina Marian (435-636-3368) if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

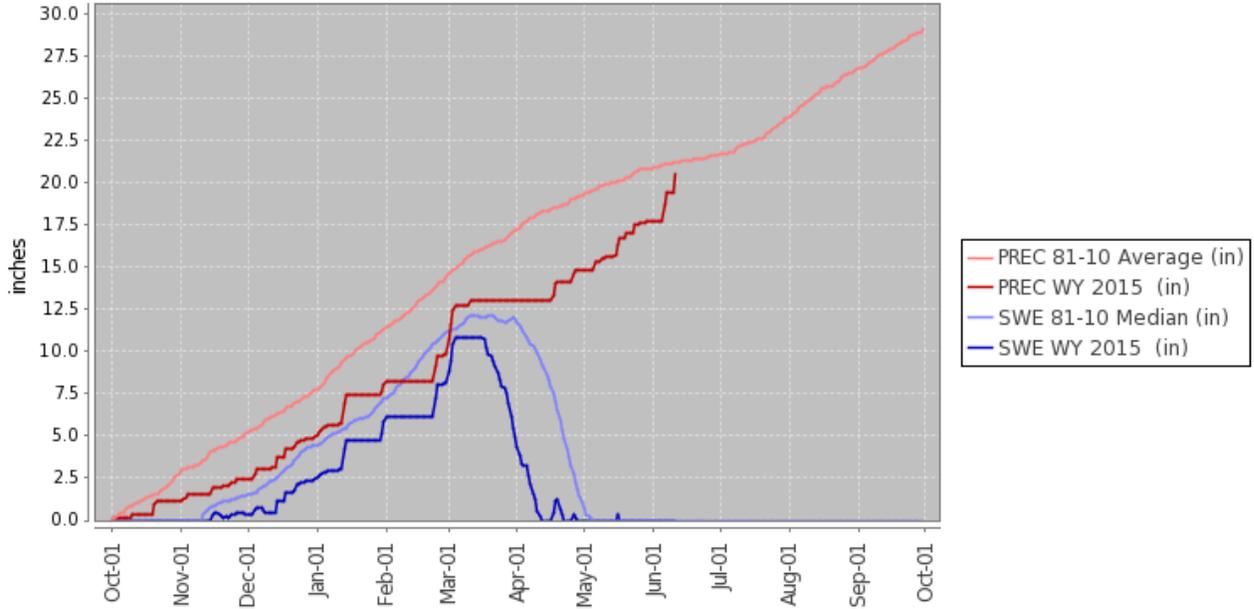


*for* MICHAEL DIEM  
District Ranger

2015 Fence and Pond Agreements.

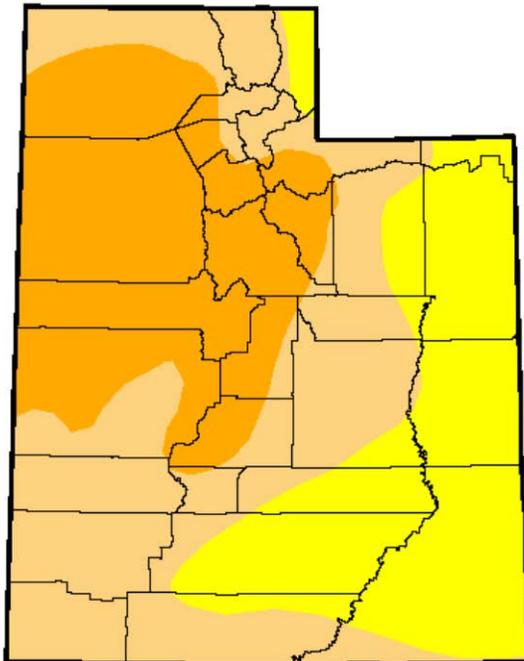


Station (383) WATERYEAR=2015 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision  
Thu Jun 11 12:55:57 PDT 2015



Total Precipitation almost to average, no precip in March and first part of April, the last few storms have done much to increase total precip for this area. SE Utah still considered to be abnormally dry.

## U.S. Drought Monitor Utah



**June 9, 2015**

(Released Thursday, Jun. 11, 2015)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	0.00	100.00	69.53	31.23	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> 6/2/2015	0.00	100.00	90.63	34.38	9.32	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> 3/10/2015	0.00	100.00	95.11	14.03	1.88	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> 12/30/2014	18.93	81.07	58.99	12.98	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> 9/30/2014	18.89	81.11	59.30	12.98	0.00	0.00
<b>One Year Ago</b> 6/10/2014	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/>