

EXISTING CONDITION	DESIRED CONDITION
<p><b>Fisheries:</b> Brook trout biomass was 38, 35 and 43 kg/ha in 2005, 2006 and 2007, respectively. This ranks in the lower 15<sup>th</sup> percentile of all streams sampled across the San Isabel National Forest, both within and outside of grazing allotments. Measured water quality parameters (D.O., pH, water temp) were within the appropriate range and macroinvertebrates were abundant. Creek is small and lacks large substrate particle size (cobble, boulder) to provide habitat complexity at the level necessary to support more biomass. Contributing to the small substrate particle size is the close proximity of Ophir Creek to FSR 360. Small particle size sediment from the road undoubtedly enters the stream during snow melt and rain events. Moreover, the proximity of the road to the stream causes increased dispersed recreation (campsites) in the riparian buffer of the stream, degrading the buffer and minimizing its buffering effect at those locations. Where Ophir Creek is not adjacent to the road, the stream is much narrower and riparian vegetation appears lush and vigorous. No impacts from livestock grazing were observed.</p>	<p><b>Fisheries:</b> Ophir Creek is likely at desired future condition from a fisheries standpoint: the deficiencies noted in fish biomass (in the lower 15<sup>th</sup> percentile) and substrate particle size (lacking habitat complexity) cannot be improved by changes in grazing management. These impacts are likely the result of dispersed recreation and proximity of FSR 360.</p>
<p><b>Range Management:</b> Allotment is run with adjacent private lands. Burris Pasture is typically used from June 1 through June 30 in a rotation with government Trap and Deer Peak Pastures in a rest/rotation grazing system. Ophir Pasture is currently used as a swing pasture once every five years.</p>	<p><b>Range:</b> Continued use of current management strategy to manage allotments together with adjacent private lands in order to achieve resource objectives.</p>
<p><b>Recreation:</b> There are numerous Forest Service roads inside the allotment boundary. Dispersed camping, hunting and OHV use are heavy in the area. There are no developed trails or trailheads in the allotment. The Ophir Creek snowmobile area covers the allotment. Illegal motorized use occurs in a number of areas, originating from private property.</p>	<p><b>Recreation:</b> Maintain accessibility of forest roads. Minimize additional impacts to heavily used dispersed recreation sites. Avoid creating avenues for illegal motorized use. Do not impede snowmobile routes and winter activities that are present. Preserve groomed snowmobile trail width to allow snow cat grooming operations.</p>

<p><b>Wildlife:</b> TES habitat exists for: boreal toad, northern leopard frog, northern goshawk, boreal owl, olive-sided flycatcher, flammulated owl, American three-toed woodpecker, Mexican spotted owl, wolverine, Canada lynx, American martin, fringed myotis, and Townsend’s big-eared bat;</p> <p><i>Burris Pasture (OCBM-P4):</i> remnant beaver activity/dams present; fish bearing stream;</p> <p><i>Deer Pk. - Mountain Meadow Pasture (OCDP-P2):</i> current vegetative condition (low grass vigor, low litter cover, low forage production, and low species diversity) likely does not support optimum wildlife species diversity; hi forb content with noxious weed species present;</p> <p><i>Deer Pk. - Rushmore Canyon riparian area:</i> large amount of hoof shearing and trailing across stream, in-channel erosion, hi sediment loads, and widened stream channel likely does not support optimal wildlife species diversity</p> <p><i>Government Trap Pasture (Snyder Draw OCSD-P1):</i> “mushrooming” willows, exotic grasses present, riparian area healthy, side slopes recovering/headcuts stabilizing, native sedges present; wildlife species requiring shrubby component likely not at optimal levels</p> <p><i>Rushmore Upland area (OCDP-T3):</i> good grass/forb species composition, snowshoe hare habitat probably not at optimal levels</p>	<p><b>Wildlife: All Areas:</b> supportive of active beaver colony(ies)/densities within the Historical Range of Variability (HRV) in applicable potential habitat types/areas; willow carrs and riparian vegetation in lynx habitat at mid-seral or higher condition; and grasses/forbs species composition, densities are within HRV levels.</p> <p><i>Burris Pasture:</i> habitat is suitable to support re-colonization of beaver in area. Desired condition is maintained.</p> <p><i>Deer Pk. - Mountain Meadow Pasture:</i> Improved vigor of grasses, species composition to include native grasses such as: slender wheatgrass, Thurber’s fescue, Arizona fescue, mountain brome, Columbia needle grass to increase likelihood of optimum species biodiversity.</p> <p><i>Deer Pk. - Rushmore Canyon riparian area:</i> Rx burn in meadow implemented; Increased number of native grasses, forbs; undesirable forbs reduced/eliminated would increase likelihood of optimal wildlife species diversity</p> <p><i>Government Trap Pasture (Snyder Draw):</i> Native species composition increased to within HRV (i.e., mountain brome, slender wheatgrass); aspen/willow successfully regenerating; headcuts healed/disturbed areas recovered; stream functioning at stable level providing for optimal wildlife species biodiversity</p> <p><i>Rushmore Upland area:</i> maintain good grass/forb species composition; aspen successfully regenerating within HRV;</p>
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<p>due to absence of early seral aspen</p>	<p>increased shrubby plants/willow component present as in HRV; forage production maintained at 2,500 to 3,000 lbs./ac.; upward trend of pasture maintained</p>
<p><b>Vegetation:</b> Overall good range condition in upland parks with good cover of native grasses and plant diversity. Overall excellent cover of basal vegetation litter in upland areas. Apparent trend of uplands on allotment is upward. <b><u>Rushmore Upland area</u></b> has good native grass composition (Arizona Fescue, Parry's oatgrass, Thurber's Fescue, Mountain Brome, Slender Wheatgrass). Good forb composition. Good representation of the upper montane meadow area. Apparent trend in area is stable to upward. Decadent grasses are present in area but not a problem. There is no early seral aspen present. <b><u>Mountain Meadow Upland Area</u></b> - Parry's oat grass is the dominant species with little bare ground in this area. Current litter cover and forage production not at potential. (1200 lbs. dry wt. versus 2500 lbs dry wt. acre). Vigor and species composition needs improvement. In the <b><u>Upper Little Froze Creek</u></b> riparian vegetation conditions have improved since 1949. Willows are being established in the lower end of the meadow. In the <b><u>Middle Creek and Rushmore areas</u></b> willows recovering from historical heavy browsing. Better willow regeneration needed. In the <b><u>Ophir Creek (Burris Pasture)</u></b> alders are coming back. Several age classes of willows are present with regeneration occurring. Apparent trend of vegetation is upward. In the <b><u>Rushmore Canyon riparian area</u></b>, a good tree component is present. More native species and less undesirable forbs (dandelion) are needed. In the <b><u>Government Trap riparian area</u></b>, the mushrooming effect of willows is evident. Overall the riparian area is healthy. Exotic grasses, smooth brome and bluegrass species are present in the area. Native sedges are present. Noxious weeds (Canada and</p>	<p><b>Vegetation:</b> Continue upward trend of uplands on allotment. Improve vigor, litter, and cover of native grasses in uplands while reducing bare ground in the Mountain Meadow uplands area.</p> <p>Continue improvement of riparian vegetation in the Upper Little Froze Creek, Elmer Canyon, and Government Trap areas. Improve native grass species and reduce the cover of non native species in the Government Trap areas (smooth brome and bluegrass). Establish proper willow regeneration in the Middle Creek and Rushmore areas. Establish more native species and less undesirable forbs (dandelion) in the Rushmore riparian area. Maintain upward trend in the Ophir Creek (Burris Pasture). Continue aggressive control of noxious weeds on allotment area.</p>

<p>Musk Thistle, and Yellow Toadflax are present in the allotment area.</p>	
<p><b>Hydrology:</b>                  The Ophir C&amp;H allotment is comprised of 4 pastures totaling approximately 8,800 acres (13.8 square miles).</p> <p>Approximately nine percent (820 acres) of the allotment are open parks, and just over six percent (550 acres) of the allotment is accessible to livestock. These open parks are the primary areas grazed by livestock. In round figures, 49% of this area is riparian, and 51% is grassland.</p> <p>Appendix A of the hydrology report contains maps which show the open parks area for each pasture. Each map displays the wetter and drier portions of the pasture by climatic zones, improvements, and roads/trails. Known soil disturbances are also indicated on the existing condition maps by the small, red circles. Appendix B of the hydrology report contains a spreadsheet of the field observations made by the hydrologist; descriptions of the soil disturbances can be found there.</p> <p>Of the accessible acreage on the Ophir allotment, 33% occurs in the subalpine, and 67% occurs in the montane climatic zone.</p> <p>The accessible open park within the subalpine zone is mostly underlain by soil map units 100F and 701M. Parent material of 100F is comprised of alluvium and slope wash; this soil map unit is wet and it supports riparian communities. Parent material of 701M is comprised of colluvium and residuum; this soil unit is drier and supports the subalpine fir and Englemann spruce</p>	<p><b>Hydrology:</b>                  The main objective is to maintain the uplands and the riparian and stream corridors at desired condition. The following bullets summarize some of the related guidance discussed in the Forest Land &amp; Resource Management Plan, the Watershed Conservation Practices (WCPs), and other key, hydrologic concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain all riparian ecosystems in at least an upper mid-seral stage based upon the R2 Riparian Ecosystem Rating System ( PSICC LRMP, III-50). Provide healthy, self-perpetuating plant communities, meet water quality standards, provide habitats for viable populations of wildlife and fish, and provide stable stream channels and still water-body shorelines (PSICC LRMP, III-203).</li> <li>• Achieve desired condition of riparian areas by following the standards set forth in the Watershed Conservation Practices (WCP) Handbook, FSH 2509.25. Section 12 deals specifically with Riparian Areas. Management measure (3) of this section states, “In the water influence zone (WIZ) next to perennial and intermittent streams, lakes, and wetlands, allow only those actions that maintain or improve long-term stream health and riparian ecosystem condition.” Adherence to the design criteria within this standard will help to sustain riparian areas at or move them toward their desired conditions.</li> <li>• To provide healthy uplands and riparian communities and stable stream systems in order to sustain the flow of high quality water to the forest boundary under current climatic conditions.</li> </ul>

<p>ecological unit.</p> <p>Approximately 63 acres of riparian vegetation underlain by 100F occurs in the Ophir pasture. Fifty-three percent of this vegetation is comprised of mesic meadow and riparian shrub complex. The Ophir-Gardner road occupies much of this riparian corridor.</p> <p>The accessible open park within the montane zone is mostly underlain by soil map units 101F, 702M and 703M. Parent material of the 101F is comprised of alluvium; as expected this soil map unit is also wet and it supports riparian communities. Parent material of 702M is comprised of colluvium and residuum; this soil unit is drier and supports the Thurber fescue and Parry oatgrass ecological unit. Parent material of 703M is same as 702 but includes some slope wash; this soil unit is also drier and it supports the aspen and subalpine fir ecological unit.</p> <p>Riparian vegetation (197 acres) underlain by 101F is present in each pasture; the majority occurs in the Deer Peak pasture. Thirty-five percent of this acreage is mountain grassland, 45% is mesic meadow, riparian shrub complex and upland grasses associated with riparian, and 20% is aspen and evergreen stringers. With the high water table associated with soil map unit 101F, soil disturbance was observed at the following range photo points: OCDP-P2, OCDP-P3, and OCDP-P5; a small headcut on the side drainage and a road-stream crossing disturbance in Mountain Meadow (overall 5 of 35 acres within meadow negatively impacted) were also observed within this soil unit. Per notes from range file, Little Froze Creek (flows through Mountain Meadow) is in much better condition when compared to historic photos. Young willows are beginning to establish on the lower</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that grazing does not negatively alter the hydrologic processes in the uplands and along the riparian corridors, and to maintain the pattern, profile and dimensions of the stream network.</li> <li>• To protect the hydrologic integrity and functionality of all riparian communities, particularly the subalpine, mesic vegetative community types by reducing livestock use in these areas, and by improving distribution onto and increasing the utilization of the mountain grasslands.</li> <li>• To ensure that current water sources are adequately watering the livestock in a manner that is protecting those sources and the watershed. Where this is not occurring use tools available under current management or adaptive management to provide sufficient water in a manner that protects these resources. Develop springs in a manner that provides for their long-term sustainability.</li> </ul>
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<p>end of the meadow. Mountain Meadow was identified as a special area of concern by the IDT. A stream/riparian survey was conducted on Little Froze Creek by the hydrologist.</p>	
<p><b>Soils:</b></p> <p><b>Pastures:</b></p> <p>Burris pasture has 116 acres of capable grazing, 42% of total pasture area; Deer Peak-Rushmer pasture has 2914 acres of capable grazing, 68% of total pasture area; Government Trap pasture has 153 acres of capable grazing, 30% of total pasture area; Ophir pasture has 2070 acres of capable grazing, 60% of total pasture area;</p> <p>No capable grazing areas are found on slopes greater than 40% or in areas of highly erodable soils;</p> <p>Total pasture size: Burris, 277 acres, Deer Peak-Rushmer, 4289 acres, Government Trap, 508 acres, Ophir, 3721 acres;</p> <p>Government Trap Pasture: good ground cover – stable soils, mild hummocking of soils but appears to be stable, good stream, veg cover of willows and alder; &gt; 30% slopes in area of new photo point;</p> <p>Rushmer: portion of Deer Peak/Rushmer Pasture: Good cover on side slopes and summit, no evidence of soil creep, no bare ground;</p> <p>Deer Peak portion of deer Peak/Rushmer Pasture: marshy, wet area, shows evidence of hummocking which is stabilizing and healing, stable soils;</p> <p>Burris Pasture: Stable soils, no remarkable areas of bare ground, some trampling evident in and near creek bottom;</p> <p>All pastures: limited areas for cattle to graze, steep-walled</p>	<p><b>Soils:</b></p> <p><b>Pastures:</b></p> <p>Government Trap Pasture: Maintain good ground cover – stable soils, continue to stabilize and decrease areas where mild hummocking of soils occur; maintain good stream, veg cover of willows and alder;</p> <p>Rushmer portion of Deer Peak/Rushmer Pasture: Maintain good cover on side slopes and summit, prevent soil creep, maintain ground cover;</p> <p>Deer Peak portion of deer Peak/Rushmer Pasture: marshy, wet area, continued healing of hummocky areas, maintain soil stability;</p> <p>Burris Pasture: Maintain stable soils, improve cover on areas of bare ground, decrease evident trampling in and near creek bottom;</p>

drainages with slopes > 40% and few available parks	
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