

Garden Creek Allotment Annual Report 2012

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1. Overview of proposed action and actual management (e.g., livestock numbers, on-off dates for each Unit, etc.).

Grazing on the allotment will involve grazing up to 260 cow/calf pairs under a rotation grazing system with grazing occurring anytime between June 27 and October 10, not to exceed 846 head months. The proposed action involves grazing the following seven units: Daugherty Gulch, Keefer, Big Hill, West Creek, Buster/Spruce Gulch, Keystone, and Willow Patch units. Although trailing will occur in the Mill Creek Unit, this unit will not be actively grazed and no trailing will occur in this unit after August 15.

Livestock grazing will begin each year with two separate herds (Table 1). Herd 1, which comprises approximately 120 cow/calf pairs, will begin grazing on the Daugherty Gulch, Keefer, and Big Hill units and will then move to the West Creek Unit. Following grazing in the West Creek Unit they will move to the Willow Patch Unit where they will be joined by Herd 2. Some of these pasture movements will involve trailing through the Mill Creek Unit. Herd 2, which comprises approximately 140 cow/calf pairs, will begin grazing on the Buster/Spruce and Keystone Units. They will then move to the Willow Patch Unit where they will be joined by Herd 1. Some adjustments may be made to this rotation as conditions arise but livestock must be out of the West Creek, Buster/Spruce, and Keystone Units by approximately September 15 and off of Mill Creek after August 15.

Pasture Rotation 2012

Pasture	Number	Season
Keefer/Daughtry/Big Hill	120	7/4 – 7/31
West Creek	120	8/1 – 8/15
Buster/Spruce/Keystone	260	7/4 – 9/10
Willow Patch	unknown	Over-utilized by Squaw Creek cattle in July and August.
Mill Creek	0	Trail only

2. Results from all implementation and effectiveness monitoring identified as part of the proposed action and this Opinion (term and condition 1), including required annual use indicator monitoring (i.e., stubble height, riparian shrub utilization, streambank alteration), photo point monitoring, seral condition, bank stability, water temperature, sediment, and W:D.

Implementation

Pasture	Indicator	Standard	2011 Results	Standard Met?	Date Monitored
Buster/Spruce	Greenline	>4"	4"	Yes	10/31/012
	Bank Alteration	<20%	18%	Yes	
	Woody Browse	<30%	18%	Yes	
Mill Creek	Greenline	>4"	4.1"	Yes	10/16/2012
	Bank Alteration	<20%	34%	No	
	Woody Browse	<30%	30.2% (+/-5%)	Yes	
Keefer/Daughtry/Big Hill	Photopoint established at Keefer, see below. Also, photo of Daugherty below.				
West Creek/Keystone	Photopoints established, see below.				
Willow Patch	Greenline	>4"	3.5"	Yes	10/29/2012
	Bank Alteration	<20%	44%	No	
	Woody Browse	<30% (single stem spp.) <50% (multi-stemmed spp.)	61%	No	

Effectiveness

Effectiveness monitoring occurred on the Willow Patch MIM in the Willow Patch pasture on 8/9/2012 with the following results:

Stubble Height				Woody Use	Streambanks			Woody Species Age Class		
Median SH all key species (inches)	Average SH for all key species (inches)	Dom key species for SH	Avg Ht of dom key species	Woody Species Use - all woody species (%)	Streambank Alteration (%)	Streambank stability(%)	Streambank cover (%)	Percent seedlings	Percent Young	Percent Mature
4.00	4.0	CAUT	#N/A	23.4%	54%	59%	69%	41%	31%	27%
n=	115	41		61	82	81	81	30	24	20
95% conf Int [†]	0.4		1	6%	1%	*	*	0		
95% Ci ²	0.96			5%	6%	5%	5%	7%	7%	7%

	Vegetation Ratings			Width and Shade		
	Greenline Ecological Status Rating	Site Wetland Rating	Winward greenline stability rating	Greenline-greenline width (m)	Average Woody Plant Height (m)	Shade Index
	61	71	5.13	4.02	1.1	0.02
Rating	Late	Good	Mid			
n=	108	108	108	80	12	126
95% conf Int [†]	*	3.7	*	0.21	0.29	*
95% Ci ²	5.75	3	0.16	0.30		

The final implementation monitoring results shown under question 2 was from Squaw Creek cattle. The circumstances of this livestock use are described under question 3.

3. Discussion of any unauthorized use and/or any maintenance issues related to fences or water development.

Unauthorized use occurred in the Mill Creek unit due to a neighboring permittee’s failure to keep cattle on the Challis Creek allotment. Trespass across private land is likely to have contributed to the unauthorized use. Also, unauthorized use that resulted in excess of standards occurred in the Willow Patch unit due to the Squaw Creek permittees’ inability to maintain the boundary fence between the Squaw Creek allotment and the Garden Creek allotment. Another factor was the gate between the two allotments had been cut off and entry made wider for OHV access, but was never put back up by the trail crew. Notice of Non-Compliance was sent to the Squaw Creek permittees and a permit action was taken on the Challis Creek allotment.

4. Brief review of Allotment compliance with established annual use indicators and the terms and conditions from this Opinion including a discussion on specific successes and failures.

The permittee did not meet bank alteration standards on Willow Patch due to unauthorized use by the neighboring permittee. Cows grazed Mill Creek after August 15, partially due to the fact that the herd doesn’t know the rotation well and this caused issues for him keeping them where they belong. The permittee was responsive and moved

livestock as soon as they were notified. There was some unauthorized use from Challis Creek permittee on Mill Creek but move they moved their livestock within 24 hours of being notified. Also, the Daugherty unit was over-utilized in 2012. The lack of springtime precipitation also contributed to the need to move cows earlier than the rotation schedule suggested.

The permittee had some difficulty with the pasture rotation and was not able to use the Willow Patch pasture due to unauthorized use by Squaw Creek permittees. The Garden Creek permittee was able to accommodate the change and moved livestock to other units without exceeding grazing standards. The permittee is very cooperative and did a good job with all the changes to make the grazing season a successful.

5. Any relevant information that becomes available regarding Snake River Basin steelhead or spring/summer Chinook salmon habitat trends and/or spawning and rearing locations that would modify the assumptions made in this Opinion or result in effects not considered.

No additional information became available in 2012.

6. A clear description of compliance with the terms and conditions contained in this incidental take statement. N/A

N/A

7. Any management recommendations for subsequent years.

Work with Squaw Creek permittees to find a solution to recurring problems with cattle trespassing in the Garden Creek allotment, such as rebuilding the log worm fence between the two allotments along Aspen Creek.

The trails team lead said he would make sure the gate is replaced.

PHOTOS

Willow Patch:



Alteration along the banks of upper Squaw Creek at the MIM site in Willow Patch, 8/9/2012.



Stubble height at less than 4" at the MIM site in Willow Patch on 8/9/2012.



Willow Patch MIM on 10/29/2012.

Daugherty:



Daugherty pasture on 8/8/2012. The forest requested that cows be moved based on observations from this day.

Mill Creek:



Mill Creek MIM site at the end of the season, 10/16/2012.



Top of Mill Creek MIM downstream view at the end of the season, 10/16/2012.

Keefer:



Keefer photopoint, downstream view, 8/13/2012.



Keefer photopoint, upstream view (stack of old rails marks private land boundary), 8/13/2012.

West Creek:



Upstream view from West Creek photopoint, 8/13/2012.

Keystone Gulch:



Keystone Gulch photopoint. Gulch is dry most of the year, 8/13/2012.

Spruce Gulch:



Spruce Gulch MIM site at end of season, 10-31-2012.



Healthy stubble in Spruce Gulch at the end of the season, 10-31-2012.