

## **Divide Allotment 2023 End of Year Report**

**NMFS BO No: NWR-2012-3954**

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest  
Wallowa Valley Ranger District

16 May 2024

**Introduction:** The purpose of this report is to satisfy Terms and Conditions set forth in the Biological Opinion from NMFS, NWR-2012-3954, and USFWS, 01EOFW00-2012-F-0105. This report will cover the grazing activities and results from a variety of monitoring and adaptive management conducted during the 2021 grazing season.

### **Terms and Conditions**

1. To implement reasonable and prudent measure # 1 (take on SRB steelhead due to extended cattle access), the WWNF shall:
  - a. Construct the fencing, as proposed, for the Little Sheep Riparian Pasture before cattle turn out in calendar year 2014. The portions of the proposed fencing along the Divide-Marr Flat boundary and around Salt Creek are not part of the fencing that is being constructed to create the Little Sheep Riparian Pasture.
  - The Little Sheep riparian fence was built in 2013 and is 3.5 miles long. The fence was monitored annually from 2013-2022. Construction of the fence created the Little Sheep Creek riparian pasture. No grazing is planned within the Little Sheep Riparian Pasture.
  - b. Maintain and ensure proper operation of all enclosure structures, such as fences, designed to protect SRB steelhead spawning and rearing.
  - The Divide allotment contains the Carrol Creek enclosure fences. These enclosures distribute cattle away from steelhead spawning habitat within Divide Allotment.
2. To implement reasonable and prudent measure #2 (take on SRB steelhead due to streambank alteration), the WWNF shall:
  - a. Consistently implement grazing-related standards and guidelines to achieve RMOs regarding bank stability, water temperature, large woody material, lower bank angle, width/depth ratio and other aquatic habitat parameters that may be affected by livestock grazing.
  - b. If current utilization standards are insufficient to prevent less than 40% unwanted browse of shrubs or keep bank alteration at or below 20%, change the utilization standard for that pasture to facilitate meeting allotment objectives.
    - In 2018 All of the accessible steelhead habitat on Carrol Creek was fenced out.
3. Ensure that the permittee is aware of WWNF's resource objectives and the indicators WWNF is concerned with (stubble height, woody utilization, and bank alteration) and that the permittee knows how to monitor for those indicators.
  - The AOI was communicated to the permittee on 10 June 2022. The AOI contains the utilization standards and resource objectives.

4. To implement reasonable and prudent measure #3 (monitoring and reporting), the WWNF shall ensure that the following monitoring information is collected and reported to NMFS:
  - a. Carry out all proposed monitoring, including MIM monitoring for bank alteration.
    - This area is excluded by enclosure fence that was completed in 2018.
  - b. Provide an end-of-year report to NMFS by February 15 of each year. The following shall be included in the report for the Divide Allotment:
    - In 2021 976 head months were permitted. Approximately 820 head months were utilized because the cows went onto the allotment 20 to 40 at a time from June 20 to July 10 and were gathered off the allotment about October 20.
    - On/Off Dates

**Table 1.** Actual 2023 On/Off Dates

Pasture	Head	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
North Target Springs *	140	30-	-31		11-	-21
White Horse*	40	20-	-31			
Hepburn*						
Middle Target Springs*						
South Target	190			1-	-	-10
Little Sheep Riparian	No planned use					
Holding	As needed to manage cattle					
Cow Camp Horse Pasture	3 H/M	11-	-	-	-	-21

\*Contains listed fish species

- c. Results from all monitoring identified as part of the proposed action, to include utilization, unauthorized use, and compliance monitoring, to include any exceedance of endpoint indicators.

**Table 2.** 2015 and 2016 Utilization Standards Data

Pasture/ Key Area	Date	GLSH	GLSH Std.	WB	WB Std.	BA	BA Std	RTSH	RTSH Std
Target Spring pasture- lower Carrol Creek monitoring area	Fence has been constructed to enclose the spawning habitat of Carrol Creek that is within the Divide Allotment. This fence was completed in 2018.								
South Target K3A Riparian monitoring area	Fence has been constructed to enclose the spawning habitat of Carrol Creek that is within the Divide Allotment. This fence was completed in 2018.								

\*Woody browse not available for grazing or is not present

GLSH: green line stubble height

Std: Utilization Standard

WB%: woody browse percent utilization

BA: bank alteration

RTSH: riparian terrace stubble height

- d. Review of management and compliance successes and failures.
  - The steelhead spawning reaches of Carrol Cr were excluded from grazing in 2018.
  - In 2021 old enclosure fence was reconstructed.

- In 2020 The Permittee constructed a fence that divides the allotment into a north and south half of the allotment. Additional fence was also constructed at the mouth of Salt Creek to distribute cattle back into the Divide Allotment.
- In 2022 reconstruction of about ½ mile of the south boundary of the allotment fence occurred.
- e. Results of implementing and completing long-term trend monitoring using appropriate methodology needed to identify trends for riparian ecosystems on streams containing ESA-listed fish within the allotment.
  - The steelhead spawning reaches of Carrol Cr were excluded from grazing in 2018.
- f. Compliance with each pertinent term and condition contained in this opinion.
  - The steelhead spawning reaches of Carrol Cr were excluded from grazing in 2018.
- g. Review of adequacy of monitoring program for determining habitat condition and trends.
  - The steelhead spawning reaches of Carrol Cr were excluded from grazing in 2018.
- h. Management recommendations for subsequent years.
  - Continue fence maintenance and reconstruction and to manage grazing on the allotment based on use and monitoring.
- i. Multiple Indicator Monitoring data, including stream bank alteration.
  - See Table 2. The steelhead spawning reaches of Carrol Creek were excluded from grazing in 2018.