Allotment Management Plan
Yolo North

Chino Valley Ranger District,

Prescott National Forest

USDA Forest Service

Yavapai County, Arizona

Introduction

The Yolo North Allotment is essentially a two pasture allotment split by Connell Gulch which is a natural barrier that hinders livestock movement. The western half of the allotment is comprised of pinyon-juniper woodlands with intermixed grasslands. Soils have developed from basalt parent material and exhibit high shrink swell properties due to the higher clay component. The eastern half of the allotment is dominated by a ponderosa pine vegetative community with granitic soils. Dominant grass species across the allotment include sideoats and blue grama, squirrel tail, june grass, and mutton grass. Although variable, herbaceous conditions are generally good and soil conditions are generally satisfactory depending on slope and density of juniper cover.

Objectives

Desired conditions for this project are derived from the general Prescott Forest Plan goals of "managing forest lands with a primary emphasis on healthy, robust environments with productive soils, clean air and water, and diverse populations of flora and fauna.

Resource goals and objectives on the Yolo North Allotment are:

- Continue to improve/maintain soil conditions by striving to attain/maintain effective litter and vegetative basal area (vegetation ground cover).
- Continue to manage for a diverse population of flora that provides for watershed health, wildlife habitat, and forage for herbivores.

Grazing Management

A. ***Permitted Numbers, Season of Use, and Head Months***

Allotment	Grazing System	Grazing Season	Head Months	Equivalent Cattle
Yolo North	4 month duration continuous grazing	Variable	Up to 1240	Up to 310

- **Permitted Use:** This plan incorporates management flexibility by providing a range of allowable numbers (up to 1240 head months) that reflects variations in resource conditions and management objectives over time. It also allows for adjusting duration, timing and frequency of allotment use based on monitoring of forage availability, utilization, and resource conditions. Generally stocking would be adjusted within the range of numbers, although stocking could be less than the range in any given year to allow for extreme fluctuations of weather and available forage. Specific numbers of livestock (not exceeding equivalent permitted use) would be authorized in the yearly Bill for Collection.

- **Duration**: Grazing will be permitted seasonally not to exceed 4 months.

- **Intensity**: Forage utilization on upland forage will be targeted at 35% in pastures used during the growing season. Use during the dormant season would be 50% of current year's growth. Utilization on upland shrubs will be 50% of available leaders and utilization on riparian woody species will be 20% of current year's growth.

- **Frequency and Timing**: Management systems will continue to incorporate a seasonally deferred rotation in order to provide for grazed plant recovery and maintenance/improvement of species diversity. Timing of livestock moves will be dictated by utilization monitoring and management objectives identified above. Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) will be prepared each year in cooperation with the permittee to allow for consideration of current allotment conditions and management objectives. The AOI will detail the season's grazing schedule, the stocking level, maintenance needs, needed improvements, and allowable use levels of key forage and browse species.

B. ***Improvement Construction Specifications & Maintenance Responsibility***

Existing improvements are shown on the allotment map and range improvement inventory sheets of the Yolo North Allotment Term Grazing Permit.

All maintenance must be done annually whether the allotment is actually grazed or not.

Maintenance must occur throughout the season and cannot be a one-time action.

Damage resulting from big game, wind, other acts of nature, or human caused actions, must be repaired in a timely manner so as to ensure the integrity of the structures.

All maintenance of exterior fences must be completed prior to "turn on" (allotment entry) each year. *(It is the responsibility of the permittee to ensure that the necessary coordination occurs between adjacent allotments to ensure maintenance is completed in a timely manner).*

All new or reconstructed fencing will be built to accommodate wildlife passage using a 4-strand fence with a smooth bottom wire 18 inches off the ground and a total fence height of 42 inches or less.

All water troughs will include wildlife access and escape ramps.

C. ***Livestock Distribution Aids***

Application of standard management practices such as salting, herding, and controlling access to water to achieve proper distribution or lessen the impact on areas which are sensitive or are natural concentration areas will be applied by the permittee.
Protein, salt, and other supplements will not be placed within ¼ mile of water or any identified sensitive plant population.

D. ***Drought Management***

During extended or severe periods of drought, perennial grasses and major browse species may need rest in order to provide time to recover from drought induced stress. Move cattle when utilization in pastures is met. If complete removal is necessary, livestock may be authorized to return to the allotment once conditions improve; meaning sufficient recovery from the effects of drought stress has occurred and there has been enough herbaceous production to support livestock numbers.

E. ***Adaptive Management***

If monitoring indicates that resource objectives are not being achieved, management will be modified in cooperation with the permittee. Adaptive management allows the Forest Service to adjust: the timing, intensity, frequency and duration of grazing; the grazing management system, and livestock numbers. If adjustments are needed, they are implemented through the Annual Operating Instructions. Adaptive management will also allow for the optional construction of rangeland improvements if they have been identified and are determined, through monitoring, to be necessary for achieving resource objectives. Construction of new improvements will require additional site-specific clearances and must be coordinated with District range staff.

Mitigation Measures and Best Management Practices

The following mitigation measures and best management practices are included in this AMP to avoid or minimize effects to soil, water, and wildlife. Practices include but are not limited to:

- Preparation of annual operating instructions with the permittee to allow for consideration of current allotment conditions and management objectives.
- Periodic field checks to assess vegetation health and trend as well as soil function.
- Cooperation with permittee to provide stock water for wildlife needs during critical periods, if water is available at the sources (e.g. storage tank) and livestock rotations would not be disrupted.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Two types of monitoring will be used, implementation and effectiveness monitoring. Both qualitative and quantitative monitoring methods will be used in accordance with the Interagency Technical References, Region 3 Rangeland Analysis and Management Training Guide, and the Region 3 Allotment Analysis Handbook.

1. **Implementation monitoring** will be conducted periodically by the Forest Service and/or permittee and may include but is not limited to: livestock actual use data, grazing intensity evaluations during the grazing season, utilization at the end of the growing season (within key areas), and visual observation of vegetation and ground cover. Key areas are a relatively small portion of a range selected because of its location, use or grazing value as a monitoring point for grazing use. It is assumed that key areas, if properly selected, will reflect the overall acceptability of current grazing management over the range.* *(Monitoring of allowable use on key forage species is the joint responsibility of the Forest Service and the permittee. Although the Forest Service will make every effort to assist the permittee in ensuring compliance with standards, the permittee has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the allowable use standards are met).*

2. **Effectiveness monitoring** will be conducted to evaluate the success of management in achieving the desired objectives and will occur within key areas on permanent transects at an interval of ten (10) years or less. Effectiveness monitoring may also be conducted if data and observations from implementation monitoring (annual monitoring) indicate a need.

* Definition from "A Glossary of Terms Used in Range Management." Forth Edition, edited by the Glossary Update Task Group, Society for Range Management, Thomas E. Bedell, Chairman. 1998. Second Printing 2003.

Permittee Review / Agreement

Reviewed by/Agreed to Justin Cross Date 4/27/16

~~Steven Croll,~~ Yolo North Permittee

Justin Cross

Forest Officer Approval

Approved By Linda T. Jackson Date 12-8-2011

Linda Jackson, Acting Chino Valley District Ranger