

JACK D. JONES

03-11-92

Ho, Gus +
AN INTERESTING
READERS SPEAK!
ON REST ROTATION
GRAZING.

HOPE ALL IS GOING
WELL AND YOU'RE WORKING
HARD AS HELL ON
YOUR BOOK!

Best regards,
Jack

- We are having SPRING weather
here snow melting fast -
- P.S. I killed an elk -
a little over a month ago.

Our readers speak

Mt Standard 03-10-92

An election year, so remember

It's election year so all should remember and know — figures don't lie, but liars use figures. There are powerful vested interests who wish to manipulate, rather than listen to public opinion. The economic chickens are coming home to the U.S.A. to roost. — DONALD RITTER, 53 W. Park, No. 42

Elk and cattle can both win

Two articles in *The Montana Standard* about elk versus cattle on Robb Creek Game Range brings to mind a question. Why does it have to end in a win-lose, when it can be a win-win!

In 1986, 2,250 head of cattle grazed from late May through late November, plus most of the elk, deer and antelope that are there today. When cattle numbers are cut, not only do the few ranchers involved lose, but also the local county and state taxes. The Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department has shown on the two game ranges, Mt. Haggin and Wall Creek, that cattle run on elk range can in fact increase the amount of range available for elk. So without cattle the elk range over a long period may also lose!

The Blacktail Game Range is a perfect example. Bought back in the 70s, no cattle or grazing of any kind has been used. The elk use the ridge tops and higher elevations, but the bottoms and old hay meadows are not used. The range has deteriorated and is almost totally wasted year after year.

2,250 cattle for 6 months cut to 550 for 3½ months would be a great waste of the natural resource. John Cada said, "The only way both sides can win is to compromise." What about using Robb Creek and Blacktail on a rest-rotation with the Ledford Grazing Association? Rest-rotation with Snowcrest is a 100 percent cut! Is the FWP willing to compromise? Joel Peterson said "It is the direction of our

department to emphasize wildlife." Are they really willing to do this and make the tough decisions based on fact?

Yes, I'm a rancher, but also a sportsman and taxpayer like all of you. — GUS WUELFING, 200 Duncan District Road, Sheridan

AUGUST L. HORMAY
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March 27, 1992

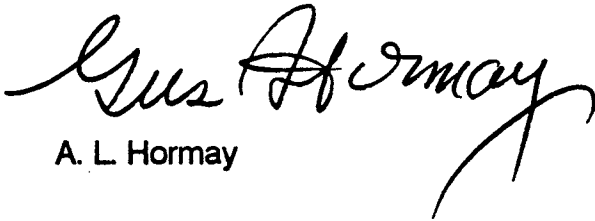
Dear Steve,

I am sorry for this late reply to your letter of February 14, 1992 about the Big Juniper and Hill Camp Allotments and rest-rotation grazing.

I am fully committed with work this year and will not have time to look at the allotments or to meet with parties interested in rest-rotation grazing.

However I'd appreciate hearing from you on your evaluation of results on the Hill Camp allotment and word on responses on Big Juniper.

Sincerely,



A. L. Hormay

March 27, 1992

Jack, [JONES]

About the Price Creek Allotment. As I told you over the phone the 3-treatment grazing formula for the Timber Creek Unit and the 2-treatment formula for the Reservoir Pastures Unit are good rest-rotation formulas.

The 3-treatment formula for the Timber Creek Unit was not properly applied, however. The treatments were not applied consistently in ABC order. At times grazing was started well before seed-ripe time. For several years seed ripe time was set by calendar date rather than plant growth stage. In spite of these deviations from formula, the vegetation should have improved.

There were lesser deviations from formula in the Reservoir Pastures Unit. The vegetation should have improved.

It appears that Dillons assessment of results - static trend in upland types and static to down on riparian types comes from misinterpreting vegetation responses.

Their assessment seems to be based on whether or not certain objectives were reached. Objectives such as those set forth in the 1991 Draft AMP. See the attached. Hardly any of those objectives are attainable or realistic.

I would like to go over the allotment with you and see what has happened. I don't want anyone but you to know my thoughts on this matter at this time or perhaps even in the future. I have to see the allotment first.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gus", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

AUGUST L. HORMAY
101 ACADIA STREET
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In order to meet the objectives, it will be essential to manage the vegetative uses to provide for the physiological growth requirements of the following key species.

Bluebunch wheatgrass (all pastures)
Thickspike wheatgrass (all pastures)
Basin wildrye (all pastures)
Big bluegrass (all pastures)
Columbia needlegrass (all pastures)
Mountain brome (Timber, State and Sand Creek)
Alpine timothy (Timber, State and Sand Creek)
Slender wheatgrass (Timber, State and Sand Creek)
Rough fescue (Timber, State and Sand Creek)
Winterfat (Reservoir)
Saltsage (Reservoir)
Geranium (Reservoir)
Lupine (all pastures)
Rose (all pastures)
Willow - available (all pastures)
Aspen - available (Timber, State and Sand Creek)

SEED
RIPE
DATE
AUGUST
10
APPX.

V. Summary of Studies Data

All upland range and riparian studies were reviewed, analyzed, and interpreted in the 1990 formal allotment evaluation. Suffice it to say that the upland range studies were of very little help in assessing progress toward objectives. If anything can be said about these studies, it would be that they do provide a measure of differences in annual vegetative production. No conclusive evidence as to changes in range condition or trend could be extracted from the studies data. Perhaps this indicates a static trend?

The riparian studies, on the other hand, indicate that general trend appears to be static to down allotment-wide. Willow communities are losing vigor, with little reproduction occurring and decadence increasing in mature plants.

VI. 1991 Draft AMP Objectives

A. Riparian/Wetland Areas

Short Term:

UA^L

1. Limit livestock-caused streambank alteration of all nonfishery streams to 25% or less of a given stream reach.

UA

2. Limit livestock and wildlife browsing on willows to 50% of the available willow leaders (current year's growth).

UA

3. Limit utilization of palatable species on key areas within the riparian areas to 50% by weight of the current year's growth.

UA = Unattainable

Long Term:

- UA 1. Decrease the percent composition of Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum spp.*) while increasing the percentages of sedges (*Carex spp.*), mannagrass (*Glyceria spp.*), and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*) in the understory of all woody riparian zones.
- UA 2. Increase the woody canopy along West Fork Price Creek from 6% to 20% for stream reach number CE-5 and from 26% to 35% on stream reach number CE-6.
- How? 3. Maintain the present woody canopy of 35% on the Middle Fork Price Creek (CE-7).
- How? 4. Maintain the present woody canopy of 30% along Sand Creek south of the county road (CE-25).
- UA 5. Increase the woody canopy along East Fork Corral Creek from 5% to 35%.
- How 6. Maintain the present woody canopy of 50% on the West Fork Corral Creek.

B. Wildlife and Their Habitat

Short Term:

- How 1. Provide yearlong rest from livestock grazing on at least 1/3 of the key elk winter range on the allotment each year. Sand Creek, Corral Creek and Timber pastures contain key elk winter range.
- UA 2. Provide quality trout habitat in the West Fork of Corral Creek and Price Creek by maintaining a summer water temperature of less than 70°F (21.1°C) and by maintaining an average width/depth ratio of 5 or less on both creeks. Limit livestock-caused streambank alteration to 10% or less on all fisheries.
- UA 3. Provide waterfowl nesting cover by ensuring a 10"-12" residual stubble height (post grazing treatment) in the riparian and wetland areas in at least two pastures north of the county road on an annual basis.

Long Term:

- How 1. Provide seasonal habitat for up to 10% of the "Gravelly Elk Management Unit" elk herd. (MDFWP population goal for the Gravelly Elk Management Unit is 8000-8500 head). Provide up to 1600 AUMs of forage for elk every year.

How

How

2. Continue to provide high quality sage grouse and mountain grouse habitat by maintaining the existing mixture of sagebrush, grasses and forbs.
3. Provide habitat for westslope cutthroat trout in the East Fork of Corral Creek. Westslope cutthroats may have to be reintroduced when habitat conditions are acceptable if they do not naturally re-enter the stream on their own. Any such action will be coordinated with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

C. Vegetative Diversity

Short Term:

UA

1. Limit utilization of palatable species on key areas within the uplands to 50% by weight of the current year's growth.
2. Limit noxious weed infestations to present levels or less, with emphasis placed on eradication of new infestations of spotted knapweed and other noxious weed species not presently known to occur on the allotment.

Has this ever been accomplished elsewhere?

Long Term:

UA

How

How

How

1. Maintain all upland range sites in their present mid-late seral ecological status.
2. Increase size and distribution, and diversify age classes of existing quaking aspen stands.
3. Increase the canopy coverage and provide a balanced age class distribution of willow within the riparian areas, while maintaining the present willow species diversity.
4. Maintain or increase populations of any plants present with a state rank of S1, S2, S3, or SU.

D. Recreation

Short Term:

How

How?
Fencing?

1. Do not allow willows or quaking aspen to become heavily hedged as this reduces scenic values associated with the recreational experience.
2. Reduce the effect that animal waste, associated unpleasant odors, and annoying insects have on recreationists by not allowing livestock to congregate along stream bottoms or in undeveloped campsites.

?

- 3. Reduce the opportunity for hunters to encounter livestock by removing all cattle from the allotment prior to the opening date of the general big game season.

Long Term:

How

How

- 1. Increase hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities by improving fish and wildlife habitats.
- 2. Maintain scenic values and continue to provide a broad spectrum of high quality recreational opportunities.

E. Economics

Short Term:

- 1. Minimize the economic impact on the Price Creek permittee by allowing livestock grazing at a level that is at or near historic use levels.

Long Term:

- 1. Authorize livestock use at a level that can be sustained over time while meeting all resource objectives.

VII. DEFINITIONS

Community:

A group of organisms that form a distinct ecological unit. Such a unit may be defined in terms of plants, animals, or both. (Mountain Foothills Environmental Impact Statement, 1980.)

Ecosystem:

An interacting natural system with the component organisms and the abiotic environment functioning as a whole. (BLM)

Ecological Status:

The present state of vegetation and soil protection of an ecological site in relation to the potential natural community for the site. (BLM)

Habitat:

The place where an animal finds the required arrangement of food, cover, and water to meet its biological needs. ("Wildlife Habitats in Managed Rangelands - The Great Basin of Southeastern Oregon," 1986.)

Heavily Hedged:

Plants with 50% or more of the available second year or older (not current annual growth) leaders clipped. Leaders which are unavailable due to height (above 1.5

03-30-92

H/O GWS

Our information.

Also a framed picture
of the Matador R/R
Award & range examples
is in the front office
for all to see.

I will send you
a photo of the
picture (display)

regards — JACK

I am leaving for
Germany May 14 - June 2

PEOPLE

RAY MARXER and Marion Cross, manager and retired manager of the Matador Cattle Company, Dillon, have been given the "Partners in Public Spirit



Ray Marxer

Award" by Cy Jamison, director of the Bureau of Land Management. The award was presented in January at the annual Montana Winter Grazing Seminar in Dillon. The Matador has worked extensively with noted range management consultant Gus Hormay in devel-



Gus Hormay

oping a rest-rotation grazing system. Since initiation of this program in 1975, the ranges on the Matador, one of the largest ranches in the west, have continued to improve for both livestock and wildlife, according to the BLM.

MONTANA Farmer Stockman

(11 FEB 1992)