

Range Management Case History No. 4 ^{1/}

Subject: Noncontinuous grazing.

Allotment: Long Creek.

Location: On the Sheridan Ranger District of the Beaverhead National Forest, about 40 miles south-southeast of Alder, Montana.

Vegetative Types:

- (1) Idaho fescue - Thickspike wheatgrass
- (2) Idaho fescue - Sandberg bluegrass
- (3) Idaho fescue - Sedge (Carex)

Pasture System: Four pastures.

Seventeen miles of fence was required. Government furnished the material and the permittee took care of the construction and maintenance.

Schedule of Use

Years	Early Season Use Graze for maximum live-stock production.	Mid-Season Use Grazing deferred to restore plant vigor and aid root development.	Late Season Use Grazing deferred until after seed ripens.	Not Grazed Rest the range to allow seedlings to become firmly established.
1963 ^{3/}	--	--	--	1,2,3 & 4
1964 ^{3/}	--	--	--	1,2,3 & 4
1965	4	1	2	3
1966	1	3	4	2
1967	3	2	1	4
1968	2	4	3	1
1969	4	1	2	3
1970	1	3	4	2

1/ Based on Actual Range Management Experience.
Beaverhead National Forest - Montana.

2/ By: Donald W. Nelson, Range Conservationist. Prepared as reference material for Range Management Training on September 12-13, 1966.

3/ Entire allotment rested in 1963 and 1964; sagebrush sprayed in June 1963.

Description of the Allotment:

Encompasses approximately 5,595 acres. Topography varies from relatively flat stream bottoms and low rolling ridges in the south and west portions, to moderately steep non-timbered ridges in the northeast corner. Elevation ranges from 7,000 to 8,000 feet. Average precipitation is from 15 to 20 inches a year -- much in the form of snow.

History, Schedule of Use and Increased Capacity:

Long Creek has experienced past heavy grazing use by both sheep and cattle.

From 1911 through 1917, an area comprising what is now three allotments, was stocked with 2,500 head of cattle and 50 head of horses. The season was six and one-half months long, starting on May 1. In 1917 the starting date was changed to June 1.

From 1918 through 1934, the same large area was stocked with as few as 1,620 to as many as 2,500 cattle. The season varied from as many as five months to as few as three and one-half months.

In 1935 this large area was divided into three allotments, Pole Creek, Middle Creek and Long Creek.

History of use from 1935 through 1954 is poorly recorded and of little value since the allotment boundary was not fenced -- the cattle grazed beyond the allotment boundary and sheep from adjacent allotments used the Long Creek Cattle Allotment.

Schedule of Use and Increased Capacity

1956	750 ^{4/}	0%	8/1 to 10/31	0%
1957	750 ^{4/}	0%	8/1 to 10/31	0%
1958	750 ^{4/}	0%	8/1 to 10/31	0%
1959	750 ^{4/}	0%	8/1 to 10/31	0%
1960	765	0%	6/1 to 10/31 (15H) 8/1 to 10/31 (750C)	0%
1961	765	0%	6/1 to 10/31 (15H) 8/1 to 10/31 (750C)	0%
1962	765	0%	6/1 to 10/31 (15H) 8/1 to 10/31 (750C)	0%
1963	Non-Use -- Sage brush Control			
1964	Non-Use -- Sage brush Control			
1965	750 ^{5/}	0%	7/16 to 10/15	20%
1966	800	6 2/3%	7/16 to 10/15	Not Available ^{6/} (But anticipate a two week extension or 16% increase.)

Results to Date:

1. Vegetation and soil conditions based on "judged trends" in 1964 are summarized on Forms R1-2210-7 and R1-2210-8 attached. Trends on both vegetation and soil are judged to be up. The two years of rest on the entire allotment (1963 and 1964) did much to improve plant vigor and provide an abundant seed source for the most desirable forage species.
2. The Rest-Rotation range management system initiated in 1965 is expected to overcome the harmful effects of grazing by controlling the frequency of grazing. The results at the end of 1965 were so obvious that the permit numbers for 1966 were increased from 750 to 800 cattle (6 2/3% increase in numbers).

4/ 15 Horses in Non-Use.

5/ 15 head Horse permit waived back to the Government.

6/ 1966 is a drought year but feed is adequate. Rest-Rotation Management was initiated on this allotment in 1965; it appears to minimize the effects of drought. It is judged that there will be adequate feed for a two-week extension of the season this fall.

3. In addition to an increase in numbers in 1966, it was possible to allow an increase in animal months due to the extension of the grazing season in 1965; this amounted to an additional 20%. Even though 1966 is a drought year it is anticipated that a two weeks extension will be granted for the 800 head of cattle this fall.
4. Experience this summer on this allotment indicates that Rest-Rotation Management minimizes the effects of drought.
5. Deer, moose, elk and antelope make moderate use of this area but no conflict between big game animals and domestic livestock is apparent.
6. Pronounced stream bank improvement has been self-evident since 1963. Improvement has been manifest each year since, including 1966. Streams traversing this allotment run clear and clean, while streams on the adjacent Upper Ruby River Allotment run milky and carry eroded soil materials.
7. Photos taken in 1962 of semi-wet stream bottoms show conspicuous amounts of wild iris plants (an invader under over-grazing); photos taken in 1965 on these same semi-wet stream bottoms show little or no wild iris. Instead of these, vigorous grasses are obvious and discernible. Ground cover is conspicuous. This has resulted in an improved watershed condition.
8. Observations and photos taken in 1965 and in 1966 disclosed the presence of many young grass plants (seedlings). Cow trails, along creeks, between water and salt grounds, etc., are filling in with young vegetation (largely grass plants).
9. The accumulated experience on this allotment, together with actual experience on other Forest Service allotments, concerning noncontinuous grazing (Range Management) is persuasive and reliable. Noncontinuous grazing should no longer be considered "on trial", "under suspicion", "experimental", and/or "on probation".
10. Another actual Range Management Experience has proven its worth to date and the indications are that this allotment will continue to demonstrate positive returns from the land by improving the watershed, range, wildlife, recreation and timber resources.

Appendix Material

- (a) R1-2210-7 Trend in Soil and Vegetative Condition Summary Sheet.
- (b) R1-2210-8 Vegetative Condition Classification by Range Types Summary Sheet.

TREND IN SOIL AND VEGETATIVE CONDITION SUMMARY SHEET
 (Reference FSH 2213.2, FSH2 2212.01 RJ, Chapter 700)

Forest Beaverhead Ranger district Sheridan Allotment Long Creek C&H

Date completed April 26, 1965 By Robert J. Pogue

Kind of livestock Cattle (cows w/ calves)

Primary Range

Condition class	Vegetative trend (acres)				Soil trend (acres)			
	Up	Down	Static	Total	Up	Down	Static	Total
Excellent								
Good	1251		2442	3693	982		2711	3693
Fair	1902			1902	1902			1902
Poor								
Very poor								
Total	3153		2442	5595	2884		2711	5595
Percent				xxxxx				xxxxxx

Secondary Range

Condition class	Vegetative trend (acres)				Soil trend (acres)			
	Up	Down	Static	Total	Up	Down	Static	Total
Excellent								
Good								
Fair								
Poor								
Very poor								
Total								
Percent				xxxxx				xxxxxx

NONE

VEGETATIVE CONDITION CLASSIFICATION BY RANGE TYPES SUMMARY SHEET
 (References FSH 2213.2 and FSH2 2212.01 RL, chapter 700)

Forest Beaverhead Ranger district Sheridan Allotment Long Cr. C&H

Date completed April 26, 1965 By Robert J. Pogue

Kind of livestock Cattle (cows w/calves)

- 1. Suitable for grazing use 5,595 acres
- 2. Open for grazing but should be closed _____ acres
- 3. Total area open for grazing use _____ 5,595 acres
- 4. Unusable area _____ acres
- 5. Closed to livestock use _____ acres
- 6. Total area unusable _____ acres
- 7. Net area of national-forest land _____ acres
- 8. Alienated land 5,595 acres
- 9. Gross area in allotment 5,595 acres

Condition class	Vegetation types (acres) - primary range open for grazing						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Excellent							
Good	3,313	70		85	225		3,693
Fair	1,737	50		115			1,902
Poor							
Very poor							
Total	5,050	120		200	225		5,595

Condition class	Vegetation types (acres) - secondary range open for grazing						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Excellent							
Good							
Fair							
Poor							
Very poor							
Total							

NONE