

# **Appendix 2 - Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (BLM, 1997)**

## **Introduction**

The Range Reform '94 Record of Decision (BLM, 1995a) recently amended current grazing administration and management practices. The ROD required that region-specific standards and guidelines be developed and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. In the State of Oregon, several Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) were established to develop these regional standards and guidelines. The RAC established for the part of the state covering the Beaty Butte allotment is the Southeastern Oregon RAC. These standards and guidelines for Oregon and Washington were finalized on August 12, 1997 and include:

### **Standard 1 - Upland Watershed Function**

Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates, moisture storage, and stability that are appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

### **Standard 2 - Riparian/Wetland Watershed Function**

Riparian-wetland areas are in properly functioning physical condition appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

### **Standard 3 - Ecological Processes**

Healthy, productive, and diverse plant and animal populations and communities appropriate to soil, climate, and landform are supported by ecological processes of nutrient cycling, energy flow, and the hydrologic cycle.

### **Standard 4 - Water Quality**

Surface water and groundwater quality, influenced by agency actions, complies with State water quality standards.

### **Standard 5 - Native, T&E, and Locally Important Species**

Habitats support healthy, productive, and diverse populations and communities of native plants and animals (including special status species and species of local importance) appropriate to soil, climate, and landform.

Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management cover the following categories and are presented in detail on pages 15-18 of BLM (1997): general, livestock grazing management, facilitating the management of livestock grazing, and accelerating rangeland recovery.

RANGELAND HEALTH STANDARDS - ASSESSMENT  
JULY 22, 1998  
BEATY BUTTE ID TEAM

**STANDARD 1 - UPLAND WATERSHED**

This Standard is being met on the allotment. The indicators used to evaluate this standard are Soil Surface Factor (SSF), which documents accelerated erosion; and plant community composition, which indicates root occupancy of the soil profile.

Soil Surface Factor (SSF) is an indicator of accelerated erosion and is a method of documenting observations regarding erosion. Of the 506,985 acres of public land in Beaty Butte Allotment, 4,086 (0.8%) have an SSF rating higher than slight. A copy of the form used to document SSF is attached (Attachment 1, "Determination of Erosion Condition Class").

Another indicator of Upland Watershed condition is plant composition and community structure. Current plant composition is compared to a defined Potential Natural Plant Community for the identified soil type and precipitation zone. As shown in the 1994 allotment evaluation (page 27, BLM 1994b), Table VII, 86% of the area is in mid- to late seral stage with a static to upward trend.

**STANDARD 2 - RIPARIAN/WETLAND**

This Standard is not being met. Lotic site inventories were completed in 1996 and 1997. Intermittent and perennial reaches were inventoried. On the reaches on public land in Beaty Butte allotment along Guano Creek, 4.35 miles are in Proper Functioning Condition, and 5.15 miles of stream are not in proper functioning condition (2.9 miles are Functional At Risk with no apparent trend (apparently neither degrading nor improving), and 2.25 miles are nonfunctional). The team determination is that livestock use is a significant factor for not meeting this standard on these reaches of Guano Creek.

On the reaches on public land along Sagehen Creek, 2.2 miles are in Proper Functioning Condition and 0.4 miles are in Functional At Risk Condition with an upward trend. Current livestock use is not a significant factor in not meeting the standard on this reach, as indicated by the upward trend in condition.

East-West Gulch is in Functional At Risk Condition with downward trend. This stream is a "G" Channel under the Rosgen Rating System, meaning the channel is incised. In order to achieve Proper Functioning Condition, the channel will need to widen and form a new flood plain. Livestock use will neither impede nor supplement this process of developing a new flood plain. By definition, a "G" Channel will go through this process no matter what type of vegetation community exists (e.g., willows and sedges as opposed to bluegrass and sagebrush). Current livestock use is not a significant factor for not meeting this standard on

this intermittent stream.

Current information indicates almost all Lentic sites are in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC).

### **STANDARD 3 - ECOLOGICAL PROCESSES**

The interdisciplinary team determined that this Standard is being met. Plant composition and community structure on 86% of the area are in mid- to late seral stages (ESI 1988) and trend is static or improving (BLM, 1994b).

### **STANDARD 4 - WATER QUALITY STANDARDS**

There are no water quality listed streams under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act in the allotment. While no water quality sampling has been done in the Beaty Butte Allotment, our professional experience would lead us to predict that the streams are probably not meeting the state standard for water temperature. Most of the stream reaches are intermittent. As stream flows decrease, standing water in the ponding areas is likely to exceed temperature standards. Livestock grazing is not a significant factor in not meeting this standard. Natural flow patterns and the intermittent nature of the streams will prevent the streams from meeting temperature standards (BLM 1998).

### **STANDARD 5 - BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

The interdisciplinary team determined that this Standard is being met. The 1988 ESI data shows a wide diversity of plant communities, with 86% of the allotment area in mid- to late seral stages. There are several small sites with State sensitive plants. Conservation Agreements between Bureau of Land Management and US Fish and Wildlife Service are being written to protect and monitor two of these plant species. Livestock grazing is currently excluded from one site, and monitoring is being conducted at another site to determine potential threats to the plants.

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