

Standards of Public Land Health Evaluation of 63177 RED HILL Allotment [12/16/2009]

The Roswell Field Office conducted rangeland health assessments at 1 study site within 63177 RED HILL. The assessments looked at the Soil/Site Stability, Hydrologic Function and Biotic Integrity indicators within the vicinity of each study site. Existing monitoring data was incorporated into and in support of the field assessment. The summary of each assessment is attached and shown in the following table.

Study Area or Assessment Area	UPLAND			BIOTIC			RIPARIAN		
	Meets	Monitor an Indicator	Does Not Meet	Meets	Monitor an Indicator	Does Not Meet	Meets	Monitor an Indicator	Does Not Meet
63177-SO OF HIWAY-F029	X			X			N/A		

Twenty-two (22) indicators for Rangeland Health were evaluated for public land on the Red Hill allotment, 63177. Ten of these assessed soil site stability, 11 hydrologic functions and 13 assessed biotic integrity. These qualitative assessments in conjunction with quantitative information gathered from previous data collected at the trend study plot location within the allotment was utilized to make rangeland health determinations. Quantitative evaluations are performed by the Roswell field Office interdisciplinary teams, which include some or all of the following: ground and vegetative cover and composition, production, frequency and ecological condition. The collections which were initiated in the late 1970's/early 1980's are scheduled and conducted approximately every 5 years. This allotment is in the "I" (Improve) category.

This allotment contains 7,138 acres of public land. The study is located on a Limestone Hills SD-2 ecological site. Four of the indicators were rated as a Moderate degree of departure from the ecological site description. Each of these indicators was influenced by the presence and encroachment of creosote or juniper. The remaining and the majority of the indicators were rated as "None to Slight" or "Slight to Moderate" degree of departure from the ecological site description. There are no riparian areas on the public land in this allotment.

Recommendations: With the majority of the indicators falling in the "None to Slight" or "Slight to Moderate" category, this allotment is rated as "Meeting" the standard for Rangeland Health. Continue the rangeland monitoring studies to insure proper stocking rates are maintained and that the perennial grass cover and good plant composition remains. The team would also recommend the evaluation of potential brush (Creosote, juniper) control and to implement a land treatment if warranted. Another recommendation by the team is to move the current study location to a site which would better represent the pasture. The current location is being influenced by an adjacent livestock water site.

RFOs Upland and Biotic Standard Assessment Summary Worksheet

SITE 63177-SO OF HIWAY-F029

Legal Land Desc	SWSE 8 0070S 0090E Meridian 23	Acreage	7138
Ecosite	042BY021NM LIMESTONE HILLS SD	Photo Taken	Y
Watershed	13050003050 MALPAIS		
Observers	ARNOLD, TRAUTNER, ORTEGA	Observation Date	12/16/2009
County Soil Survey	NM632 LINCOLN	Soil Var/Taxad	
Soil Map Unit	033	Soil Taxon Name	LOZIER
Texture Class	NM632 GRV-L	Soil Phase	LOZIER
Texture Modifier	NM632 VERY GRAVELLY LOAM		
Observed Avg Annual Precipitation		Observed Avg Growing Season Precipitation	
NOAA Annual Precipitation		NOAA Growing Season Precipitation	
NOAA Avg Annual Precipitation		NOAA Avg Growing Season Precipitation	
Disturbances and Animal Use:	This study is located approximately 200 yards from a water location, and is heavily impacted by livestock use. The team recommends moving the study to a location that would better reflect the use of the entire pasture.		

Part 2. Attributes and Indicators

		Departure from Ecological Site Description/Ecological Reference Areas				
Attribute	Indicators	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme	Moderate	Slight to Moderate	None to Slight
S H	Rills					X
Comments:						
S H	Water Flow Patterns				X	
Comments:	Short and stable					
S H	Pedestals and/or Terracettes			X		
Comments:						

S H	Bare Ground				X	
Comments:						
S H	Gullies					X
Comments:						
S	Wind-scoured, Blowouts, and/or Deposition Areas					X
Comments:						
H	Litter Movement					X
Comments:						
S H B	Soil Surface Resistance to Erosion				X	
Comments:						
S H B	Soil Surface Loss or Degradation				X	
Comments:						
H	Plant Community Composition and Distribution Relative to Infiltration and Runoff			X		
Comments: Influenced by creosote and juniper.						
S H B	Compaction Layer				X	
Comments:						
B	Functional/Structural Groups			X		
Comments: Juniper and creosote encroachment						
B	Plant Mortality/Decadence					X
Comments:						
H B	Litter Amount				X	
Comments:						
B	Annual Production					
Comments:						
B	Invasive Plants			X		
Comments: Creosote and Juniper encroachment						
B	Reproductive Capability of Perennial Plants					X
Comments:						
S	Physical/Chemical/Biological Crusts					X
Comments:						

B	Wildlife Habitat					X
Comments:						
B	Wildlife Populations					X
Comments:						
B	Special Status Species Habitat					
Comments: Not applicable						
B	Special Status Species Populations					
Comments: Not applicable						

Part 3. Summary

A. Indicator Summary - Each of the indicators are associated with one or more of the attributes below. An indicator is placed in a category (columns) above and summed for each of the Standard Attributes.

Standard Attribute		Extreme	Moderate to Extreme	Moderate	Slight to Moderate	None to Slight
S	Soil	0	0	1	5	4
H	Hydrologic	0	0	2	6	3
B	Biotic	0	0	2	4	4

B. Attribute Summary. In this table, the Extreme and Extreme to Moderate columns in the table above are merged for the *Does not Meet* column, Moderate becomes *May Need More Info*, and Slight to Moderate and None to Slight merge to form the *Meets* columns. Values from the table are summarized below. Space is provided for rationale of the determination. This space should most certainly be used when the determination by the ID team conflicts with the summarized values. Provide the sources of information that lead to the determination. X out the appropriate box for each attribute to denote final agreed upon determination by the ID team.

Attribute	Rationale	Does Not Meet	May Need More Info	Meets
Soil		0	1	9
Hydrologic		0	2	9
Biotic		0	2	8

Site Notes: This allotment looks good overall, The team would recommend moving the study location away from the water location, to a site that better represents the pasture.

Determination of Public Land (Rangeland) Health for 63177 RED HILL

The Record of Decision (ROD) for the New Mexico Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (dated January 2001) adopted three Standards for Public Land Health. These are (1) Upland Sites Standard, (2) Biotic Communities, including Native, Threatened, Endangered and Special Status Species Standard and (3) Riparian Sites Standard.

The ROD also established a process for the BLM Field Offices for implementation. Through a public participation process, the Roswell Field Office developed and adopted indicators to use in conjunction with existing monitoring data to assess these standards.

Field assessment worksheets and other available data that evaluated the local indicators were completed for this allotment. Based on these assessments, it is my determination that public land within the Red Hill allotment, 63177, meets the (1) Upland Sites Standard and (2) Biotic communities, including Native, Threatened, Endangered and Special Status Species Standard. There are no Riparian areas on this allotment therefore this standard was not addressed.

/s/ J. Howard Parman
Acting Assistant Field Manager

03/18/2010
Date