

DETERMINATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Achieving Standards for Rangeland Health and Conforming with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management

Resource Area: Baker

GMA: Burnt River

Grazing Allotment Name/Number/Pastures: South Bridgeport #11301/03

Public Land (acres): 3,845

Streams on Public Lands (miles): 2.0

Assessment Participants (Name & Discipline or Interest):

_____	Greg Miller	Wildlife Biologist
_____	Jackie Dougan	Fisheries Biologist
_____	Zona Irby	Biological Technician
_____	Todd Kuck	Hydrologist
_____	Gary Guymon	Rangeland Management Specialists
_____	Cindi Burton	Rangeland Management Specialists
_____	Craig Martell	Rangeland Management Specialists
_____	Sue Badgley	Rangeland Technician

Standard 1: Watershed Function - Uplands

Standard Met X

Standard Not Met _____

Standard Not Present _____

Livestock not a significant factor _____

Livestock a significant factor _____

Rooster Comb:

This pasture has a good component of the key species identified for the soil sites and the ecosystem is intact. Most soil sites exhibit good infiltration and permeability rates. When you combine the soil structure with the cover of plant species and litter component, the moisture storage and stability is good. All the indicators are showing the watershed is functioning properly.

Standard 2: Watershed Function – Riparian/Wetland Areas

Standard Met _____ Standard Not Met X Standard Not Present _____
Livestock not a significant factor _____
Livestock a significant factor X

Causal factors for not achieving this standard in Rooster Comb Pasture:

Livestock use in the riparian areas indicates that utilization levels are exceeding 50% in the Cave creek and East fork of Cave creek. Some trailing and trampling is occurring, but the riparian species components are still present. Historic placer mining and current mining has contributed to the downgrade and inhibited recovery of one of these riparian systems. It will take a long period of time to improve conditions even without livestock impacts. Continued over use by livestock would continue to hinder this recovery process. Heavy juniper cover and increase in the sage brush in the watershed is a non-livestock factor.

Standard 3: Ecological Processes

Standard Met _____ Standard Not Met X Standard Not Present _____
Livestock not a significant factor _____
Livestock a significant factor _____

Rooster Comb Pasture:

This standard is being met even though there has been historical over grazing. Change in livestock numbers and grazing time has benefited the upland areas. Evidence of a healthy, productive and diverse plant communities are supported by a working ecological process of nutrient cycling, energy flow and the hydrologic cycle. The pasture has evidence of a substantial increase in juniper and sagebrush, which could eventually, could reduce the ecological process. Sagebrush was sprayed in 1969 in some areas and is back to the pre spray years, along with an increase in the rabbit brush component.

Standard 4: Water Quality

Standard Met X Standard Not Met _____ Standard Not Present _____
Livestock not a significant factor _____
Livestock a significant factor _____

Rooster Comb Pasture:

Evidence and assessment information indicates surface water and groundwater quality is not influenced by agency actions and generally this watershed complies with State Water quality standards and is not having a negative effect on the Burnt River that has been listed as a 303d stream. Some minor affects may occur with current mining operations.

Standard 5: Native, T&E, and Locally Important Species

Standard Met X Standard Not Met _____ Standard Not Present _____
Livestock not a significant factor _____
Livestock a significant factor _____

Rooster Comb Pasture:

Assessment information determined no negative impacts and that habitats support healthy, productive and diverse populations and communities of nature plants and animals appropriate to soil, climate and landform. Several noxious weeds sites have been identified in this pasture. Special Status Species Management (California bighorn sheep and Sage-grouse are present) means the use of all methods and procedures necessary to improve the condition of special status species and their habitats to a point where their special status recognition is no longer warranted.

Recommendations:

1. Make changes to grazing plan:
 - a. Adjust grazing system, livestock numbers and time to meet utilization standards on riparian areas.

2. Better livestock distribution:
 - a. Require maintenance of spring and reservoir developments. Require more frequent riding to keep livestock scattered out better. Pasture fence to make upper Cave creek a separate use area. Inventory pasture for possible new water developments and fencing to achieve resource goals. Build small enclosure around Rooster comb spring area for protection.

3. Juniper/sagebrush treatments:
 - a. Burn or cut either species to enhance other native species within the ecosystem and use juniper where needed in the stream channel to enhance riparian areas and reduce use by livestock.

4. Monitor the grazing changes to see if utilization standards are being met or if the carrying capacity will need to be adjusted to keep utilization at a moderate level.

5. Make sure miners are following a plan of operation.

Authorized Officer concurrence with findings _____

Date _____