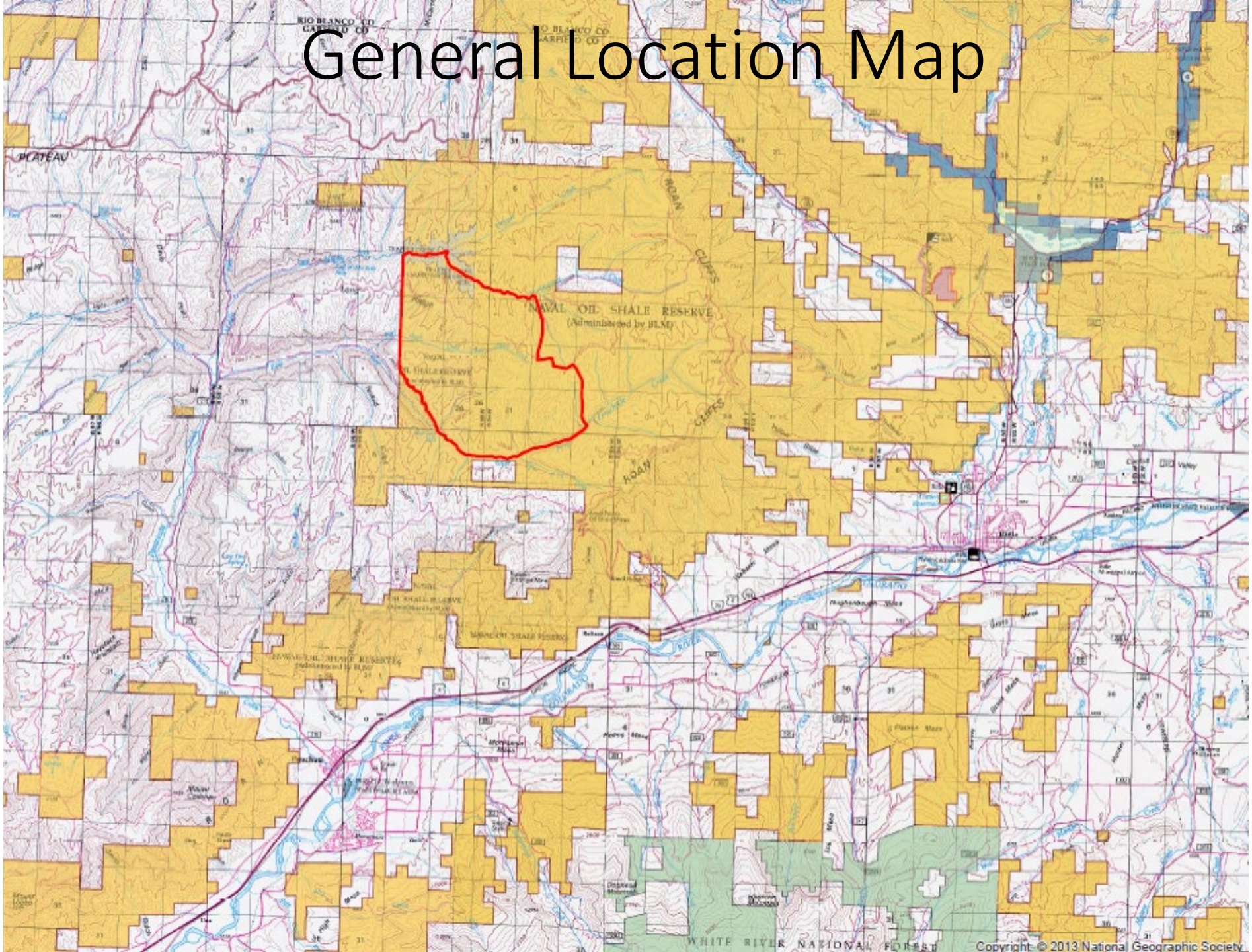
East Fork Common Allotment

Jan 27, 2022 RAC Presentation

General Location Map



East Fork Common Allotment History and Timeline

- **1962** – Decision issued to reduce the permitted use down to 1,521 AUMs (a 61% Reduction).
- **1965** –BLM granted temporary nonrenewable use for East Fork in the amount 2558 AUMs. The temporary nonrenewable use was later incorporated as part of active preference in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
- **1983** – East Fork evaluation reported "concerns have been expressed that livestock are over utilizing stream bottoms in East Fork and are consequently creating an adverse impact to fisheries habitat." A recommendation from the report suggested that a stronger monitoring program needs to be implemented in riparian areas.
- **1984** – The Resource Management Plan suggested that Active grazing preference for the East Fork Common Allotment was 2,064 AUMS. The 5-year average use was 1,707 AUMs and the initial allocation was 1,227 with the projected allocation at 2,064 after vegetation manipulation projects.

East Fork Common Allotment History and Timeline

- **1990** – East Fork Evaluation Summary was completed. Its purpose was to "determine the correct stocking rate for the allotment". **In several years between 1982 and 1988 there was "heavy use in the bottoms and light use on the hills and ridges".**
- The report stated that there was not enough data to support a reduction in permitted use at the time since pasture rotation and management had recently changed.
- The **report suggested methods to improve grazing distribution** would involve: **1) increased riding to help scatter or control the timing of grazing within pastures, 2) construction of additional water developments, 3) land treatments such as prescribed burning, and/or 4) construction of additional pasture fencing."** The evaluation also suggested that "More emphasis needs to be placed on monitoring of riparian areas since studies are wholly insufficient on these sites which are considered critical areas".

East Fork Common Allotment History and Timeline

- **1999** - Land health standards were assessed. Most of the Roan Plateau was determined to be marginally meeting land health standards. The main concerns were the streams and associated riparian areas. Condition evaluations indicated that these areas were functioning at risk with an upward trend.
- **2003** – Riparian condition was identified as an issue and concern on the East Fork Common Allotment in the Glenwood Springs Resource Monitoring Plan.
- **2013** - A land health evaluation was repeated. This assessment found that many of the streams and riparian areas were in a static condition and had not made any additional progress towards meeting the standards since the 1999 assessment. Further data collected through an Ecological Site Inventory showed that many upland sites are dominated by brush species and forage production was much lower than would be expected. Forage production available to livestock was calculated to determine appropriate Animal Unit Months (AUMs) on an allotment. Based on the ESI, 1,299 AUMs of livestock forage were identified on the East Fork Common Allotment. The estimation was made based on 33 inventoried sites across the East Fork, JQS, and Clough-Alber allotments.

East Fork Common Allotment History and Timeline

- **2015** – The Record of Decision was signed for the "Revised" Roan Plateau Resource Management Plan. Management guidance was included for riparian areas, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

The Northwest Colorado Greater Sage Grouse Resource Management Plan was signed. The Roan Plateau was identified as general habitat for sage grouse and further guidance was given to direct livestock grazing management.

- **2016** – BLM coordinated with grazing permittees on 5 Alternatives that were being considered in the draft EA for permit renewal. No comments were received.

- **2017** – A proposed decision was sent out on March 1. The decision would cut the permits in half and implement a new allotment management plan. The decision was protested by the permittees, Garfield County, Colorado Independent CattleGrowers Association, and Wildlands Defense.

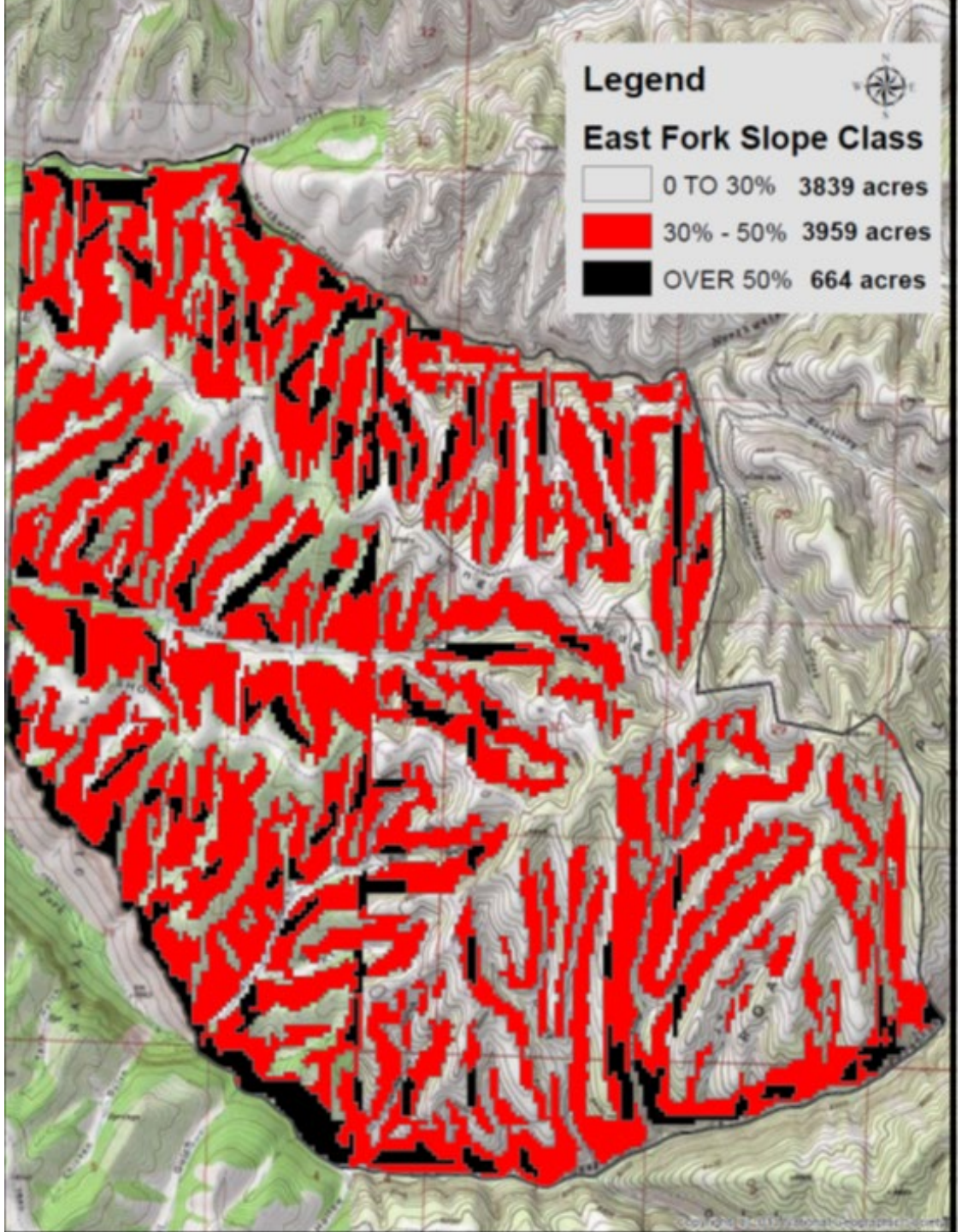
East Fork Common Allotment History and Timeline

- **2018 –** Further meetings with the permittees and consultants resulted in the BLM **pursuing additional data in riparian areas to determine potential and create baseline data**. It was agreed that the ESI alone was not sufficient to make changes to the permit and that objectives and management triggers should be employed and monitored.

- **2021 - Results of a 4-year study and interim management from 2018-2021 show no improvements in riparian areas.** When considering all the indicators 4 of the 5 streams decreased in the indicators related to deep rooted species that help to stabilize stream banks.

- **2022** – BLM is incorporating the new data into an Environmental Analysis (EA) for the renewal of the grazing permits. BLM will consider 5 Alternatives in the EA.

Terrain Characteristics




General Terrain

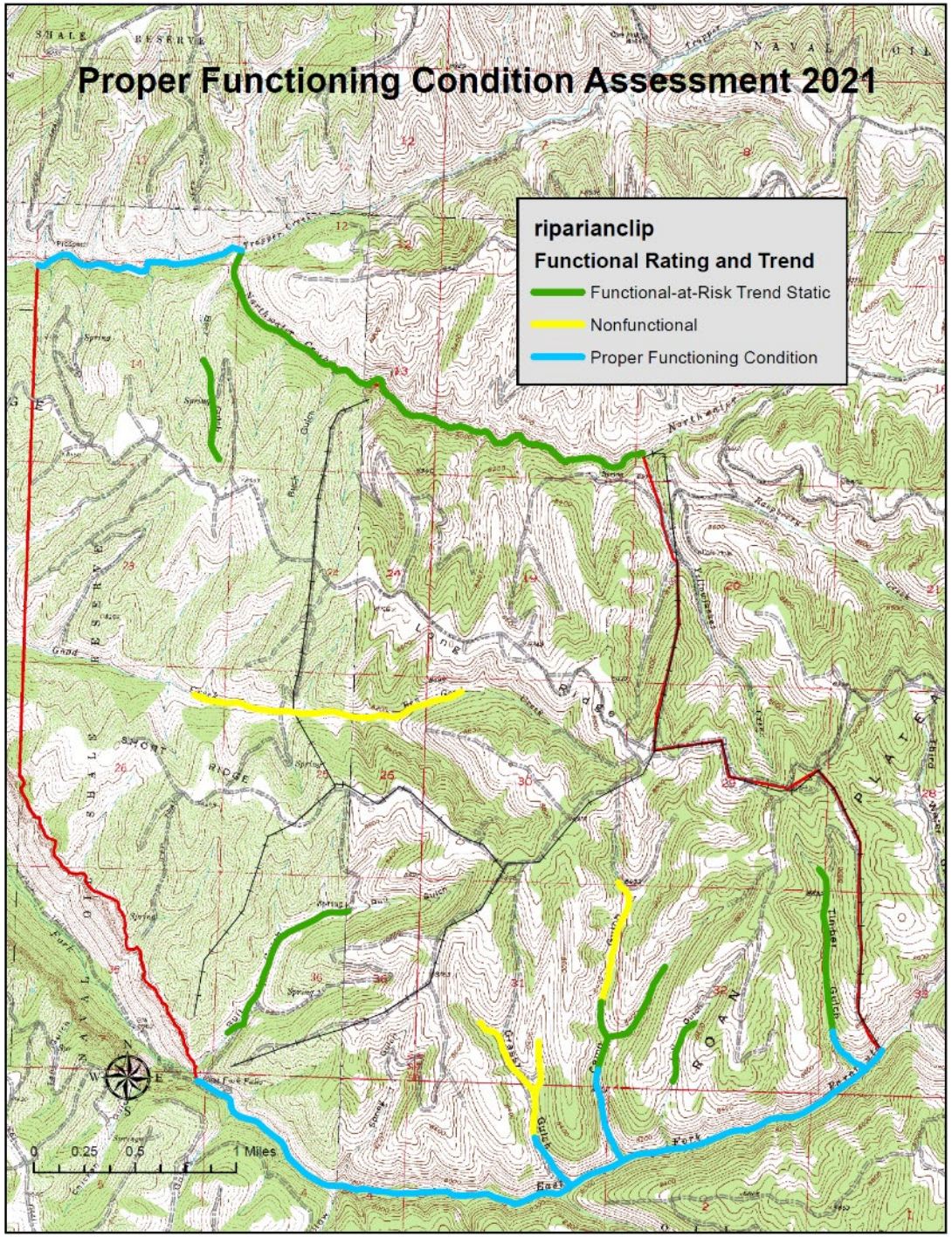

General Terrain


General Terrain

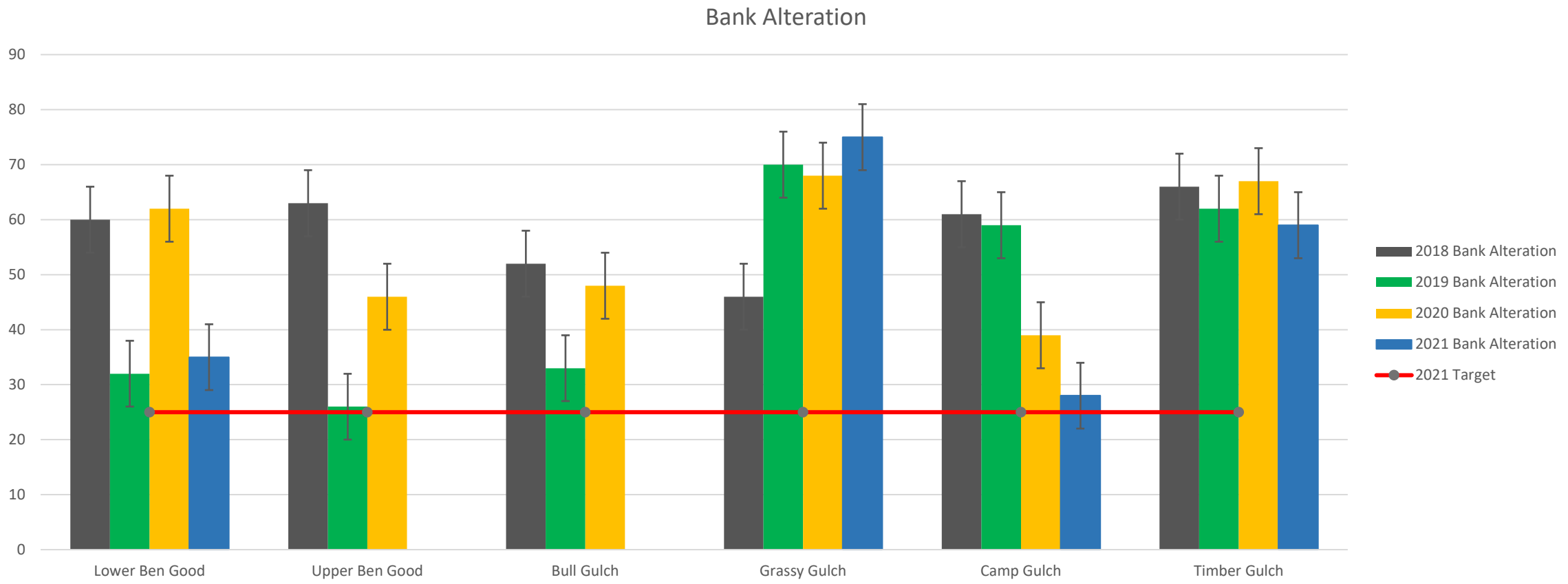
Riparian Proper Functioning Condition Assessments

PFC Summary Determinations - East Fork Allotment				
Stream	**Assessment Date**	**Functional Rating**	**Trend**	**PFC Protocol**
Bull Gulch	4-Jun-21	Functional-at risk	Static	Lentic
Timber Gulch	2-Jun-21	Functional-at risk	Static	Lotic
Ben Good Creek	3-Jun-21	Nonfunctional	Downward	Lotic
Camp Gulch Lower	2-Jun-21	Functional-at risk	Static	Lotic
Camp Gulch Upper	2-Jun-21	Non-functional	Downward	Lotic
JV Gulch	20-Sep-21	Functional-at risk	Static	Lentic
Northwater Creek	25-Oct-21	Functional-at risk	Static	Lotic
East Fork Parachute Creek	21-Sep-21	Proper functioning condition	Upward	Lotic
Grassy Gulch	3-Jun-21	Nonfunctional	Downward	Lentic
Bear Gulch	5-Sep-19	Functional-at risk	Not apparent	Lotic

Map of Riparian Assessments



Bank Alteration Data



Common Hummucking Issue

Grassy Gulch

Common Hummucking Issue

Camp Gulch

Common Hummucking Issue

JV Gulch

Benches Adjacent to Riparian Areas

Foliar Cover of Native Perennial Grasses	Meeting Standard 25-75%	Marginal 15-24% or >75%	Not Meeting the Standard <15%
Ben Good Creek Upper			4%
Ben Good Creek Lower			0%
Camp Gulch			13%
Grassy Gulch			8%
Timber Gulch	25%		
JQS Allotment – Adjacent to East Fork Allotment			
Northwater Creek	47%		
2nd Water Creek	39%		

Lower Ben Good Creek

Upper Ben Good Creek

Camp Gulch

Grassy Gulch

Timber Gulch

Northwater Creek – JQS Common Allotment


Exclosure Fencing

Bull Gulch Buck & Rail Exclosure

8/18/2016

Allotment	Location	Elevation (ft)	Acres	AUMs	Stocking Rate Acres/AUM
East Fork Common	North of Parachute, CO	8,000-9,000	8,461	2,540	3.3
Encana Ranch (Private)	North of Parachute, CO	8,000-9,000	5,320	525	10.1
East Castle (Sheep only)	North of Wolcott, CO	8,200-10,400	9,479	2,342	4.1
North King Mountain	South of Toponas, CO	8,200-9,700	4,108	668	6.2
Catamount Common	North of Wolcott, CO	8,600-10,400	6,656	1,013	6.6
Benton	North of Burns, CO	8,000-8,600	1,499	162	9.3
Hack Creek	North of Gypsum, CO	8,400-10,200	5,647	531	10.6

Allotment	Location	Elevation (ft)	Acres <30%	AUMs	Stocking Rate Acres/AUM
East Fork Common	North of Parachute, CO	8,000-9,000	3,843	2,540	1.5
East Castle (Sheep only)	North of Wolcott, CO	8,200-10,400	7,639	2,342	3.3
North King Mountain	South of Toponas, CO	8,200-9,700	3,562	668	5.3
Catamount Common	North of Wolcott, CO	8,600-10,400	5,307	1,013	5.2
Benton	North of Burns, CO	8,000-8,600	1,474	162	9.1
Hack Creek	North of Gypsum, CO	8,400-10,200	2,759	531	5.2

Allotment	Location	Elevation (ft)	Acres <30%	AUMs	Stocking Rate Acres/AUM
East Fork Common 50% Reduction	North of Rifle, CO	8,000-9,000	3,843	2,540 1,275	1.5 3.0
East Castle (Sheep only)	North of Wolcott, CO	8,200-10,400	7,639	2,342	3.3
North King Mountain	South of Toponas, CO	8,200-9,700	3,562	668	5.3
Catamount Common	North of Wolcott, CO	8,600-10,400	5,307	1,013	5.2
Benton	North of Burns, CO	8,000-8,600	1,474	162	9.1
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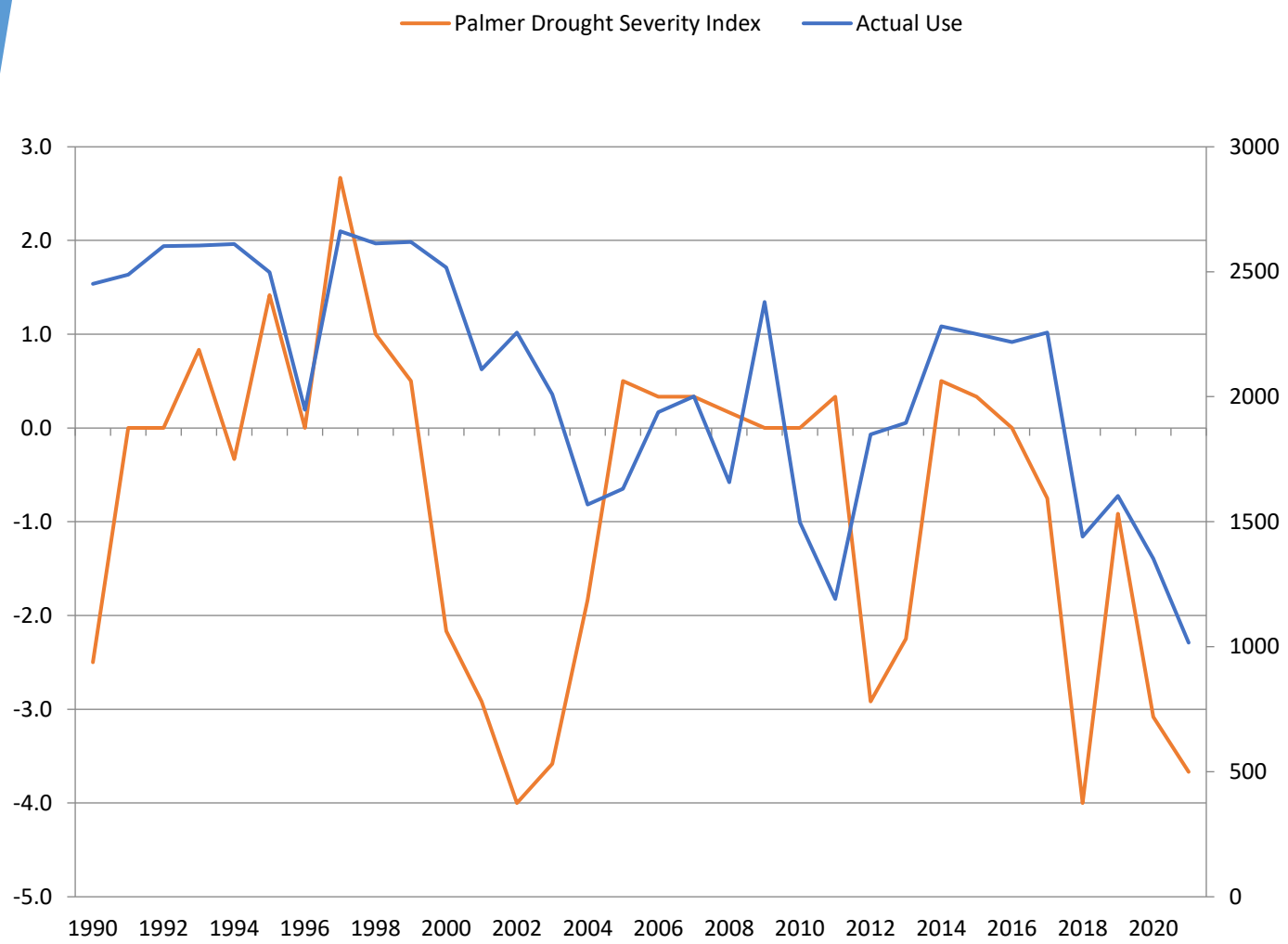
Palmer Drought Severity Index Compared to Actual Use



Alternatives to Consider in the Environmental Analysis

- Proposed Action
- No Action
- Temporary Reduction in AUMs 20-50% with Exclosure Fencing
- Conversion to Sheep Grazing
- 75% Permanent Reduction in Cattle