

**Standards for Rangeland Health
and
Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management
for
Public Lands in Oregon and Washington**

**UPDATE for the
Paisley Flat Allotment #422**

7/11/13

The original Paisley Flat Allotment Rangeland Health Assessment was conducted in 2004.

The Paisley Flat Allotment has a total of 4,549 acres BLM administered lands. The allotment contains five pastures grazed in the winter and the spring in a rotational grazing system. This allotment is grazed under two permits operated by one livestock operator. Permit authorization number 3601408 authorizes 467 AUM's in winter and spring. A lease permit authorization number 3600245 authorizes 118 AUM in the trail pasture of the Paisley flat allotment from 12/03 to 1/24. In 1963, the majority of the allotment was successfully seeded to crested wheatgrass. In 1971, most of the allotment was sprayed for sagebrush control and reseeded to crested wheatgrass. Seeding maintenance was performed in portions of the allotment in 2005 again.

Summary of Rangeland Health Assessment for Paisley Flat Allotment (00422)

Standard	Assessment Findings 2004	Current Assessment 2013	Comments
1. Watershed Function – Uplands	Met	Met	The 2004 RHA states that the Soil Surface Factor is slight in the majority (74%) of the allotment and 8% of the allotment was rated in the severe condition class likely due to invasion and occupancy of cheatgrass. Some reseeded has been completed. Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates, moisture storage, and stability that are appropriate to soil, climate, and landform. Available trend data show that plant cover and the amount and distribution of bare ground is within the range of variability expected for the ecological sites found in the majority of the allotment. The most abundant plant composition is Wyoming sagebrush and crested wheatgrass making up 74% of the allotment. This vegetation was rated to be in good condition at a late ecological status. Annual cheatgrass has invaded all the pastures and in the two northern pastures make the majority of the forage and understory vegetative cover.
2. Watershed Function Riparian/ Wetland Areas	Met	Met	The 2004 RHA states that there is one acre of palustrine wetland found in the allotment and they are rated in Proper Functioning Condition. Livestock grazing does not appear to be a factor limiting riparian/wetland function. These conditions continue to be true in 2013.
3. Ecological Processes	Not met	Met	In the 2004 RHA this standard did not meet due to a lack of crested wheatgrass seeding maintenance and lack of an appropriate grazing system. In 2004, a rotational grazing system was implemented along with seeding maintenance in 2005 and 2006. Plant reproduction is appropriate and organic matter is accumulating in the form of litter and is being incorporated into the soil. The crested wheat seeding looks to be maintaining plant populations at an appropriate level. Trend photos indicate good vigor of perennial vegetation and trend is stable to upward within the allotment. Cheatgrass is a large component within the two northern pastures. Noxious weeds that occur in the allotment are 3 acres of Halogeton. These are being monitored and treated under the current integrated noxious weed management program.
4. Water Quality	NA	NA	This standard is not applicable to the assessment area. There are no perennial streams in this allotment.
5. Native, T/E, and Locally Important Species	Met	Met	Special status wildlife species within the allotment are bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, peregrine falcon, burrowing owl, kit fox, sage-grouse, and pygmy rabbit. Mule Deer and Pronghorn antelope are located within the allotment also. No nesting habitat occurs in the allotment for bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, or peregrine falcon. Foraging areas exist for Ferruginous hawk and bald eagles. No nesting habitat occurs for burrowing owls. Potential habitat is present within the allotment for kit fox and pygmy rabbit. No resource conflicts exist for any of the above mentioned species. Pronghorn antelope and mule deer are common within the allotment and at appropriate population levels. No known sage-grouse leks occur within the allotment. Restoration of native vegetation in functioning sagebrush systems is limited by the supply of native seeds, and current technologies and protocols and have been met with limited success. Cheatgrass monocultures in the northern pastures do not provide usable sage grouse habitat and if left

			undisturbed, these areas will most likely not be used by sage-grouse. Previous restoration efforts planted crested wheatgrass in a mosaic pattern to leave some sagebrush on site. No major conflicts exist between current cattle grazing and sage-grouse within this allotment. Overall this standard is being met for wildlife species within the allotment. The abundance of cheatgrass primarily in the northern pastures and amount of salt desert shrub communities appear to be the limiting factors for sage-grouse and most sagebrush dependent wildlife species. With the risk of cheatgrass conversion, prescribed fire is not recommended as a management tool for restoration.
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Guidelines for Livestock Management

Existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on the Paisley Flat Allotment are consistent with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (August 12, 1997). The pasture is grazed at an appropriate season coordinated with precipitation, plant growth, and plant form to promote appropriate vegetative cover and optimal rangeland health. BLM lands are grazed in coordination with private lands to minimize conflicts and promote adequate livestock distribution.

2013 Team Members

Name	Title
Lori Crumley	Rangeland Management Specialist
Vern Stofleth	Wildlife Biologist
Theresa Romasko	Assistant Field Manager
Grace Haskins	Weed Management Specialist
Bill Cannon	Archeologist
Jimmy Leal	Fisheries Biologist
Chris Bishop	Recreation
Todd Forbes	Assistant Field Manager

2013 Determination

Existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on the Paisley Flat Allotment promote achievement of significant progress towards the Oregon Standards for Rangeland Health and conform with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

Existing grazing management practices or levels of grazing use on the Paisley Flat Allotment will require modification or change prior to the next grazing season to promote achievement of the Oregon Standards for Rangeland Health and conform with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.


 Thomas E. Rasmussen, Field Manager

9/16/13
 Date

Paisley Flat Allotment

Monitoring Summary (2013):

The livestock grazing on the Paisley Flat Allotments includes two permits including one for 118 AUM's from 12/3-1/24, and one for 467 AUMs from 13/1-6/1. All utilization was measured on crested wheat or native perennial grasses typically the key forage species. Utilization in the NE and NW pastures was often greater than the allowable 50% on key forage species. This does not accurately represent the objective of grazing in this pasture. The NE and NW pastures are heavily infested with annual cheatgrass. Perennial grasses and crested wheatgrass plants are minimal and lacking within the pasture. The objectives of livestock grazing in these two pastures is to utilize cheatgrass as forage plants to minimize seed production and thatching of plants. Therefore to obtain livestock use on cheatgrass the minimal perennial grass species do get grazed harder. It is recommended utilization in the NE and NW pastures of the Paisley Flat Allotment be measured on cheatgrass plants instead of key perennial plants.

Actual Use and Utilization

Year		NE	NW	SE	SW	Trail
	AUM					
2013 spring	290	13	10	37	0	0
2013 winter	194					50
2012 spring	214	43	34	29	32	
2012 winter	227					
2011 spring	214	36	29	34	25	
2011 winter	296					
2010 spring	221	55				3
2010 winter	287					
2009 spring	231	81		60		
2009 winter	173					70
2008 spring	211					33
2008 winter	90					
2007 spring	125				13	
2007 winter	311					43
2006 spring	137	40		42		
2006 winter	305					30
2005 spring	138	50	50			
2005 winter	187					50
2004 spring	391	70	70	50	60	
2004 winter	173					42
2003 spring	308	63	50	86		
2003 winter	147					52

Paisley Flat (Main) Pasture:

Observed Apparent Trend

PS-2B	2012	PF-2	2012	PF-4	2012	PF-5	2012
Vigor	6	Vigor	7	Vigor	4	Vigor	5
Seedlings	4	Seedlings	4	Seedlings	4	Seedlings	4
Surface Litter	5	Surface Litter	5	Surface Litter	3	Surface Litter	4
Pedestals	4	Pedestals	5	Pedestals	4	Pedestals	4
Gullies	5	Gullies	5	Gullies	5	Gullies	5
Total	24	Total	26	Total	20	Total	22
<i>Rating</i>	<i>Stable</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Upward</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>stable</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>stable</i>

Observed Apparent Trend

PF-6	2012	PF-07	2012	PF-8	2012
Vigor	2	Vigor	6	Vigor	3
Seedlings	1	Seedlings	5	Seedlings	3
Surface Litter	3	Surface Litter	5	Surface Litter	3
Pedestals	4	Pedestals	5	Pedestals	5
Gullies	4	Gullies	5	Gullies	5
Total	15	Total	26	Total	19
Rating	<i>downward</i>	Rating	<i>upward</i>	Rating	<i>Stable</i>

PS-2B photo trend: Stable

In 2006, photos look to have many AGCR plants. In 2008 compared to 2006 there are fewer perennial plants established in the 3X3 photo plot. Between 2008 and 2012 the trend looks stable the same number of perennial plants established.

PS-1B photo trend: upward

This trend plot has recorded photo trend only. Established in 2005 trend looks to be upward and currently stable. Soil looks to be more stabilized and crested wheat well established and some increased seedlings on site with the seeding that was maintained.

PF-2: stable and upward:

Photos from 1966 to 1972 looked to have a stable trend with the herbicide treated sage brush and perennial grass species. Photos document treatments applied. Crested wheatgrass plants look to increase in density from 1966 to 1975. In 1979 sagebrush increases on site and looks stable through the early 1990's however by 2001 the crested wheatgrass seeding looks to be heavily use and in need of maintenance. Photos in 2008 and 2012 show a stable and highly upwards trend of established wheatgrass plants being maintained with appropriate grazing practices.

Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-2	2012	2008	2001
Bare Ground	5	14	31
Litter	43	29	24
Rock/Gravel	15	38	29
Vegetation	37	19	16

PF-4: photo trend: stable

Crested wheat grass plants look to have a stable plant population site. In this area previous comments were the crested wheat was difficult to establish due to poor soil conditions. This pasture has an increasing abundance of cheatgrass plants and should be managed to graze plants heavily in the spring to manage the cheatgrass.

Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-4	2012
Bare Ground	26
Litter	29
Rock/Gravel	0
Vegetation	30

PF-5: photo trend: stable

Looks like possible two areas of photos taken inconsistent location possibility? Crested wheatgrass plants look stable however some increase has occurred in sagebrush plants over time.

Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-5	2012	2001
Bare Ground	27	23
Litter	43	41
Rock/Gravel	9	10
Vegetation	21	25

PF-6: photo trend: stable/ downward

Increase in sagebrush on site, high utilization of plant shows increased bareground over time. Minimal litter accumulation on the soil surface. Brush beating occurred and increased the potential for higher frequency of crested wheatgrass plants.

Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-6	2012
Bare Ground	23
Litter	30
Rock/Gravel	19
Vegetation	28

PF-7: SW Pasture photo trend: stable/

Crested wheatgrass maintenance was performed in 2006 on this site and sagebrush was mowed. Crested wheatgrass looks to be doing well on the site. Some sagebrush seedling establishment is occurring on site. Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-7	2001
Bare Ground	34
Litter	14
Rock/Gravel	28
Vegetation	24

PF-8: NW pasture: photo trend: stable/upward

Crested wheatgrass was planted unsuccessfully at this site in 1963. Crested wheatgrass plants did not establish well mostly likely due to the high salinity in the soil as was evident from the Russian thistle plants. In 1963 this site was predominantly covered with weedy annual species of mustard and Russian thistle with minor perennial shrub components. By 1990 the area was restored with increased native perennial shrub components greasewood, rabbitbrush, and salt brush. Although 2012 was a very dry year and some plant desiccation was observed perennial plants are well established on site and vegetative cover looks to have remained stable.

Long term trend vegetative cover

PF-8	2012
Bare Ground	22
Litter	32
Rock/Gravel	0
Vegetation	15