

# Rangeland Health Assessment

## Camas Creek Field Allotment (01091)

### Table of Contents

<b>General Allotment Information</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Livestock Grazing Management</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Standard 1: Watershed .....	4
Standard 2: Riparian Areas and Wetlands/Standard 3: Stream Channel and Floodplains ...	4
Standard 4: Native Plant Communities.....	4
Standard 5: Seedings.....	5
Standard 6: Exotic Plant Communities .....	5
Standard 7: Water Quality .....	5
Standard 8: Threatened and Endangered Species .....	5
<b>Appendices and Maps</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Appendix 1 Indicators of Rangeland Health .....	7
Maps.....	8

### General Allotment Information

The Camas Creek Field Allotment (01091) is located approximately 14 miles southwest of Hill City, Idaho, and approximately five miles southeast of Little Camas Reservoir (Map 1). The allotment is divided into two pastures, which consist of BLM-administered, State, and private lands totaling approximately 588 acres (Table 1). These figures represent the most current and accurate estimates acreages, based on existing fence lines.

Table 1. Land status acres by pasture, Camas Creek Field Allotment, Elmore County, Idaho.

<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Total</b>
1-Northwest	122	55	118	<b>295</b>
2-Northeast	68	225	0	<b>293</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>588</b>

The allotment area is located within U.S. Department of Agriculture Major Land Resource Area B-10, the Central Rocky and Blue Mountain Foothills (USDA, 2006). Elevations range from 5,450 - 5,800 feet. Major landforms include slopes and drainages. The dominant soil type is the Elkcreek-Demast complex which accounts for approximately 90% of the allotment. The Loamy 12-16" ecological site associated with this soil type has a characteristic plant community of mountain big sagebrush, Idaho fescue, and bluebunch wheatgrass [ecological sites are named by their general soil type and precipitation (inches); actual precipitation at nearby Anderson Dam and Glens Ferry varied (Figure 1)].

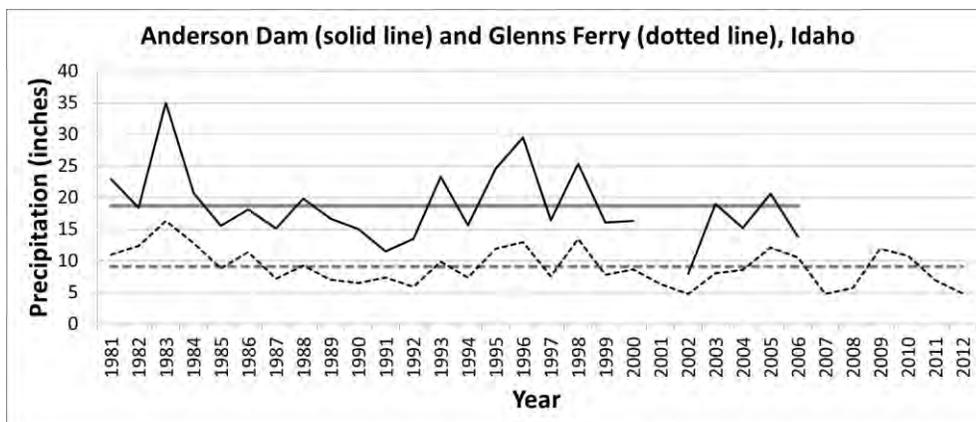


Figure 1. Annual and mean precipitation at Anderson Dam and Glens Ferry, Idaho (Source: National Climate Data Center).

No wildfires have been identified in the Camas Creek Field allotment since 1957, according to BLM records.

### Livestock Grazing Management

The Camas Creek Field Allotment was created through a Range Line Agreement in 1968. The current authorized use periods are June 16 through November 15 annually for a total of 42 permitted Animal Unit Months (AUMs) (Table 2).

Table 2. Authorized Use Summary, Camas Creek Field Allotment, Elmore County, Idaho.

Authorization Number	Livestock		Season of Use		% Public Land	Authorized AUMs*		
	Kind	Number	Begin	End		Active	Suspended	Permitted
1101604	Cattle	14	06/16	07/31	100	21	0	21
	Cattle	6	08/01	11/15		21	0	21
<b>Total</b>						<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>

\*AUMs represent Animal Unit Months.

Based on actual use reports submitted by the authorized livestock operator or annual authorizations, annual use ranged from 25 to 42 animal unit months (AUMs) between 1997 and 2013 (Table 3). The current grazing permit allows livestock numbers to vary annually, provided the period of use and AUMs are not exceeded. According to the permittee, use occurs primarily during the summer. Use was within the permitted AUMs; however, there were variations to the authorized season of use.

Table 3. Actual use between 1997 and 2013, Camas Creek Field Allotment, Elmore County, Idaho.

Grazing Year	Use Period		AUMs	
	On Date	Off Date	Use Period	Year
1997	06/15	07/10	25	25
	08/01	11/15	0	
1998	06/10	07/15	34	34
	08/01	11/15	0	
1999	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	
2000	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	

Grazing Year	Use Period		AUMs	
	On Date	Off Date	Use Period	Year
2001	06/15	07/20	30	30
	08/01	11/15	0	
2002	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	
2003	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	
2004	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	
2005	06/16	07/15	21	42*
	08/01	11/15	21	
2006	06/15	08/01	31	31
	08/01	11/15	0	
2007	06/10	07/20	28	28
	08/01	11/15	0	
2008	06/12	07/20	26	26
	08/01	11/15	0	
2009	06/16	07/31	21*	42
	08/01	11/15	21*	
2010	06/21	07/29	28	28
	08/01	11/15	0	
2011	06/16	06/28	8	38
	06/29	08/09	30	
2012	06/16	07/31	21*	42
	08/01	11/15	21*	
2013	06/16	07/31	Non-Use	0
	08/01	11/15	Non-Use	

\*AUMs no actual use on file. Numbers shown were taken from annual grazing bills.

### Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health

In 2004, the BLM conducted two rangeland health field assessments in the Camas Creek Field Allotment using *Interagency Technical Reference 1734-6, Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health ver. 3* (Map 1). The Elmore County Soil Survey (USDA-SCS, 1991) was used to identify ecological site descriptions, based on mapped soils and landforms, which were verified during field visits. Natural resources were assessed in accordance with the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health, as adopted by Idaho BLM in 1997.

Rangeland health field assessments used a variety of indicators to help determine rangeland health. However, no single indicator provided sufficient information to determine rangeland health and only those indicators appropriate to a particular site were used. Therefore, not all indicators were given equal weight from in different locations. For example, indicators #1-Rills and #6-Wind-scoured Blowouts/Deposition would not occur on a site with flat terrain and a gravelly soil surface. These indicators would be rated “none to slight” by default; but, would not be given the same weight as more applicable indicators for that site, e.g. #4-Bare Ground and #10-Plant Community Composition Relative to Infiltration and Runoff, when determining overall attribute ratings for the site. In rangeland health field assessments, “none to slight” and “slight to moderate” categories reflected the normal range of variability expected for the ecological site. However, “moderate”, “moderate to extreme”, and “extreme” categories reflected a significant departure from expected conditions for the ecological site.

**Standard 1: Watershed**

***Rangeland Health Field Assessment***

Twelve of the 17 rangeland health indicators (1-11 and 14) relate to soil stability and hydrologic function (Table 4). The number in the range of departure columns represents the number of assessments with the indicator rating in that category. For example, the indicator for the ability of the soil surface to resist erosion (#8) rated in the “slight to moderate” range of departure from expected conditions for the ecological site at one site, etc.

Table 4. Watershed indicators of rangeland health, East Bennett Mountain Allotment, Elmore County, Idaho.

Indicators of Soil Site Stability and Hydrologic Functioning	Range of Departure				
	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme	Moderate	Slight to Moderate	None to Slight
1-Rills					2
2-Water Flow Patterns				2	
3-Pedestals/Terracettes				2	
4-Bare Ground			1	1	
5-Gullies					2
6-Wind Scoured blowouts/depositions				1	1
7-Litter Movement					2
8-Soil Surface Resistance to Erosion			1	1	
9-Soil Surface Loss or Degradation				2	
10-Plant Community Composition and Distribution Relative to Infiltration and Runoff			1		1
11-Compaction Layer					2
14-Litter Amount			1		1
<b>Total Indicators = 24 (12@2sites)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>

Of the 24 indicators relating to watershed health, four indicators rated in the “moderate” range of departure from expected conditions for the ecological site at one of the sites (B-241), and at the other site (B-204), all indicators of soil/site stability and hydrologic function rated in the normal range of variability (Table 4, Appendix 1, Map 1).

**Standard 2: Riparian Areas and Wetlands/Standard 3: Stream Channel and Floodplains**

No streams or springs occur on public lands; therefore, these standards do not apply.

**Standard 4: Native Plant Communities**

***Rangeland Health Field Assessment***

Both rangeland health field assessments were conducted in native plant communities (Map 1). Nine of the 17 rangeland health indicators (8, 9 and 11-17) relate to biotic integrity (Table 5). The number in the range of departure columns represents the number of assessments with the indicator rating in that category (see Standard 1 for explanation).

Table 5. Native plant community rangeland health indicators, Camas Creek Field Allotment, Elmore County, Idaho.

Indicators of Biotic Integrity	Range of Departure				
	Extreme	Moderate to Extreme	Moderate	Slight to Moderate	None to Slight
8-Soil Surface Resistance to Erosion			1	1	
9-Soil Surface Loss or Degradation				2	
11-Compaction Layer					2
12-Functional/Structural Groups				1	1
13-Plant Mortality/Decadence				1	1
14-Litter Amount			1		1
15-Annual Production			1		1
16-Invasive Plants				1	1
17-Reproductive Capability of Perennial Plants					2
<b>Total Indicators = 18 (9@2 sites)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

Three of the 18 indicators of biotic integrity rated in the “moderate” range of departure from expected conditions at site B-241 (Table 5, Appendix 1). At B-204, all indicators of biotic integrity rated within the normal range of variability.

#### **Standard 5: Seedings**

No seedings have occurred on public lands; therefore, this standard does not apply.

#### **Standard 6: Exotic Plant Communities**

Although exotic plants may occur here, they do not occur to the extent that the standard for native plant communities would not apply. Therefore, this standard does not apply.

#### **Standard 7: Water Quality**

No surface water occurs on public lands; therefore, this standard does not apply.

#### **Standard 8: Threatened and Endangered Species**

##### *Plants*

No federally listed or BLM Special Status Species are known to occur. Surveys were conducted in June 2004.

##### *Wildlife*

The general health of upland communities is important for a broad diversity of wildlife, including sensitive species. Habitat was evaluated using native upland plant community information (Standard 4). These assessments provide information regarding abundance, diversity, vigor, cover of plants, structure and trend of plant communities, grazing utilization, and weed presence.

The gray wolf was removed from the Endangered Species list in 2009. However, it remains a BLM Special Status Species. Wolves have occurred on the upper portions of the Bennett Mountain Area, but none have been observed within this allotment. A few gray wolves, preying on livestock, were removed from a nearby allotment in 2003 and 2008.

The public lands support Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) for greater sage-grouse (Map 1), a candidate species under the Endangered Species Act. PPH are areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value (breeding/lekking, nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitat) to maintaining sage-grouse populations. Aerial surveys for sage-grouse leks were conducted in 2002 and 2004; none were observed. The allotment provides potential early and late brood-rearing habitat. Rangeland health assessments indicated adequate native shrub, grass, and forb diversity to provide suitable brood-rearing habitat.

Based on upland rangeland health assessments, the area provides suitable habitat for flammulated owl and northern goshawk, both BLM Sensitive Species, and spring/summer/fall habitat for mule deer and elk.

***Fish***

No fisheries are present and there is no potential for fisheries to occur.

## Appendices and Maps

### Appendix 1 Indictors of Rangeland Health

Allotment - Pasture		1091	1091
Identifier		B-204	B-241
Location		02S09E01	02S09E01
Ecological Site		Loamy 12-16	Loamy 12-16
Indicator	Attribute		
1. Rills	S-H	N-S	N-S
2. Water Flow Patterns	S-H	S-M	S-M
3. Pedestals/Terracettes	S-H	S-M	S-M
4. Bare Ground	S-H	S-M	M
5. Gullies	S-H	N-S	N-S
6. Wind Scoured, Blowouts and/or Depositions	S-H	S-M	N-S
7. Litter Movement	S-H	N-S	N-S
8. Soil Surface to Erosion	S-H-B	S-M	M
9. Soil Surface Loss or Degradation	S-H-B	S-M	S-M
10. Plant Community Composition and Distribution Relative to Infiltration and Runoff	H	N-S	M
11. Compaction Layer	S-H-B	N-S	N-S
12. Functional / Structural Groups	B	N-S	S-M
13. Plant Mortality / Decadence	B	N-S	S-M
14. Litter Amount	H-B	N-S	M
15. Annual Production	B	N-S	M
16. Invasive Plants	B	N-S	S-M
17. Reproductive Capability of Perennial Plants	B	N-S	N-S

**S**= Soil/Site Stability; **H**= Hydrologic Function; **B**= Biotic Integrity

**N-S** = None to Slight departure from expected range    **S-M** = Slight to Moderate departure from expected range    **M** = Moderate departure from expected range    **M-E**= Moderate to Extreme departure from expected range    **E** = Extreme departure from expected range

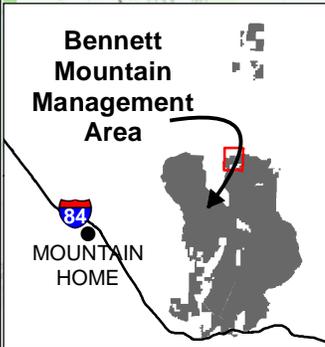
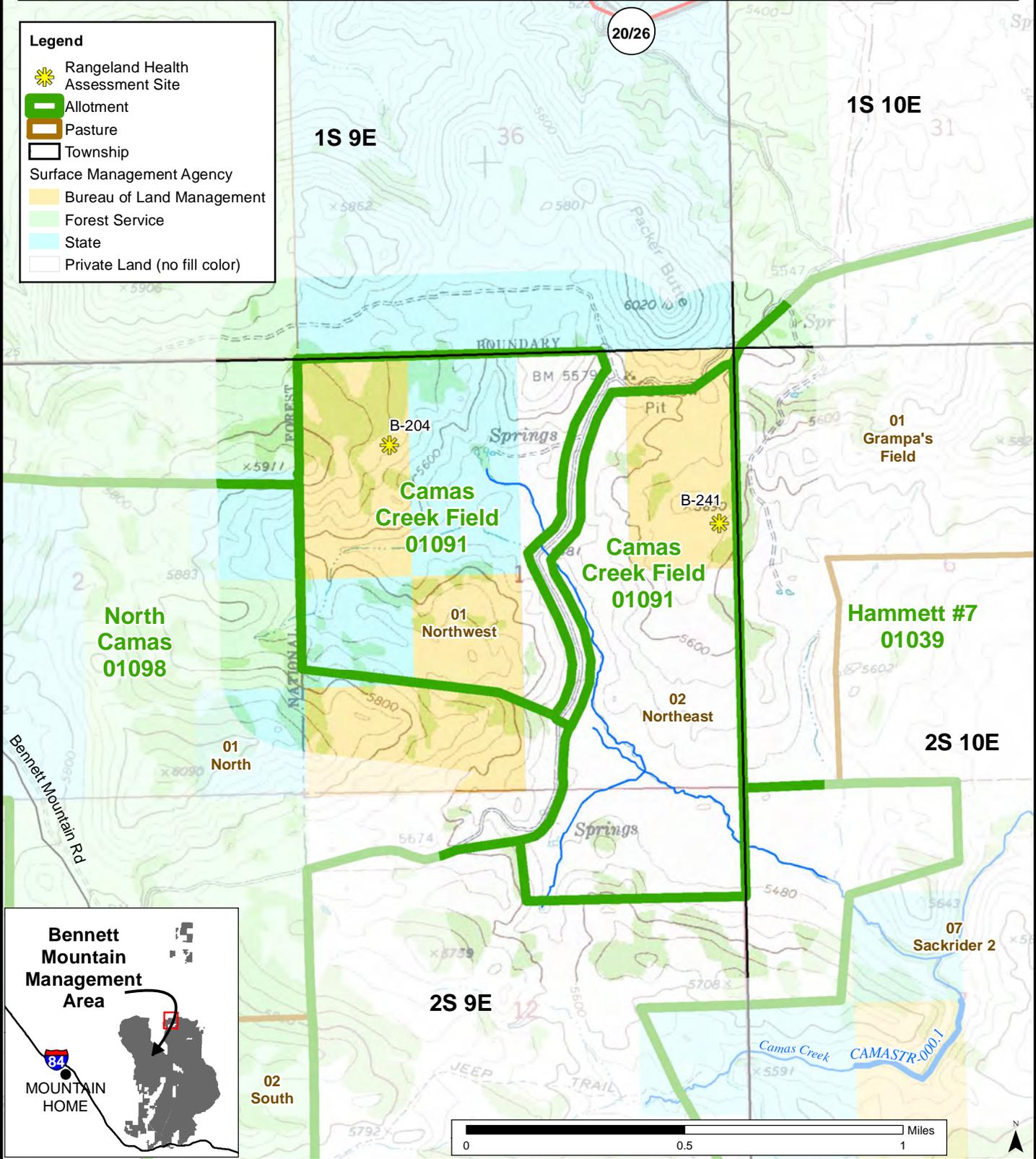
## Maps

# Camas Creek Field Allotment (01091)

## Assessment Map 1: Fire History, Rangeland Health Assessment, Monitoring, and Riparian

**Legend**

-  Rangeland Health Assessment Site
-  Allotment
-  Pasture
-  Township
- Surface Management Agency
  -  Bureau of Land Management
  -  Forest Service
  -  State
  -  Private Land (no fill color)



U.S. Department of the Interior  
 Bureau of Land Management, Idaho  
 Boise District, Four Rivers Field Office  
 Map date: May 26, 2014



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. This map, if digital, cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with its data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office webmaster at (208) 373-4000.

**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**Achieving the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health**

**Field Office:** IDB010 Four Rivers

**Allotment Name and Number:** Camas Creek Field (01091)

**Name of Permittee(s):** J.D. Aldecoa and Sons #1101604

**Introduction**

The Camas Creek Field Allotment (#01091) is located approximately 14 miles southwest of Hill City, Idaho, and approximately five miles southeast of Little Camas Reservoir. The allotment is divided into two pastures (Northwest and Northeast), and consists of approximately 190 acres of BLM-administered, 118 acres of State, and 280 acres of private lands, totaling approximately 588 acres.

**Standards Applicable:**

The Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management are used as management goals to maintain or improve resources, protect cultural resources, and sustain productivity of the land. Standards that are appropriate to a particular allotment are used, and provide information which is used to determine the health and condition of public lands. This document is the evaluation of information presented in the allotment rangeland health assessment and whether rangeland health standards are being achieved. The determination of what significant factors or causal agents are involved and whether or not livestock management practices are in conformance with applicable guidelines is presented in the Determination Document.

Standards 1 (Watersheds), 4 (Native Plant Communities), and 8 (Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals) apply to this allotment. Standards 2 (Riparian Areas & Wetlands), 3 (Stream Channel & Floodplains), and 7 (Water Quality) were not applied because no perennial streams or wetlands occur on public lands. Standard 5 (Seedings) was not applied because no seedings occur on this allotment. Standard 6 (Exotic Plant Communities) was not applied because, although exotic plant species are known to occur here, they do not occur extensively; therefore, plant communities are assessed under Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities).

**EVALUATE STANDARDS**

**Standard 1: Watersheds**

\_\_\_\_\_ Standard does not apply  
*Watersheds provide for the proper infiltration, retention, and release of water appropriate to soil type, vegetation, climate and landform to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.*

**Evaluation and Information Sources**

Two rangeland health field assessments from 2004 were used to assess the condition of the watershed.

## **Rangeland Health**

Although some areas had lower than expected soil resistance to erosion due to low amounts of litter and vegetation in the understory, overall the watersheds had sufficient protection against erosion and excessive runoff. In Pasture 1, no signs of erosion were observed and the area is at or near reference condition. In Pasture 2, the assessment documented a small, localized area of disturbance with mechanical soil damage from hooves.

## **Rangeland Health Changes**

No long term monitoring studies have been established in this allotment to document changes over time. No wildfires have been reported in this allotment since 1957.

**Evaluation Finding** – Allotment/watershed is:

- Meeting the Standard
- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards meeting
- Not Meeting the Standard

## **Rationale for Evaluation Finding**

The vegetation community associated with the watershed is providing for the proper infiltration, retention, and release of water to support nutrient and hydrologic cycling and energy flow.

### **Standard 2: Riparian Areas and Wetlands**

Standard does not apply

*Riparian-wetland areas are in properly functioning condition appropriate to soil type, climate, geology, and landform to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.*

## **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Topographic maps, aerial photography, and water rights files.

### **Standard 3: Stream Channel and Floodplains**

Standard does not apply

*Stream channels and floodplains are properly functioning relative to the geomorphology (e.g., gradient, size, shape, roughness, confinement, and sinuosity) and climate to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.*

## **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Topographic maps, aerial photography, and water rights files.

### **Standard 4: Native Plant Communities**

Standard does not apply

*Healthy, productive, and diverse native animal habitat and populations of native plants are maintained or promoted as appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform to provide for proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.*

## **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Two rangeland health field assessments from 2004 were used to assess the condition of the watershed in 2004.

## **Rangeland Health**

Native plant communities relatively health overall; however, some areas had higher than expected native plant trampling. In Pasture 1, the area was rated at or near reference condition, with a diverse and healthy plant community. In Pasture 2, the assessment documented a small localized area of disturbance, with mechanical soil damage from hooves, and excessive livestock use. This area is small in scale; the majority of the allotment's public lands are represented by the Pasture 1 assessment.

## **Rangeland Health Changes**

No long term monitoring studies have been established to document changes over time. No wildfires have been reported in this allotment since 1957.

### **Evaluation Finding – Allotment/watershed is:**

- Meeting the Standard
- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards meeting
- Not Meeting the Standard

### **Rationale for Evaluation Finding**

The plant community is being maintained and providing healthy, productive, and diverse native animal habitat; and supporting proper nutrient cycling, hydrologic cycling, and energy flow.

### **Standard 5: Seedings**

Standard does not apply

*Rangelands seeded with mixtures, including predominately non-native plants, are functioning to maintain life form diversity, production, native animal habitat, nutrient cycling, energy flow, and the hydrologic cycle.*

### **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Rangeland health field assessments, photographs, field visits, actual use reports, and allotment files.

### **Standard 6: Exotic Plant Communities, Other than Seedings**

Standard does not apply

*Exotic plant communities, other than seedings, will meet minimum requirements of soil stability and maintenance of existing native and seeded plants.*

### **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Rangeland health field assessments, photographs, field visits, actual use reports, and allotment files.

### **Standard 7: Water Quality**

Standard does not apply

*Surface and ground water on public lands comply with the Idaho Water Quality Standards.*

### **Evaluation and Information Sources**

Topographic maps, aerial photography, GIS data and imagery, field visits, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) data.

**Standard 8: Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals** \_\_\_ Standard does not apply  
*Habitats are suitable to maintain viable populations of threatened and endangered, sensitive, and other special status species.*

**Evaluation and Information Sources**

Rangeland health field assessments, photographs, field visits, plant and wildlife surveys, Conservation Data Center.

**Rangeland Health:**

***Plants***

No federally listed or BLM Special Status Species are known to occur in this allotment.

***Wildlife***

No federally listed wildlife species are known to occur here. Sage-grouse breeding habitat assessments were not conducted; however, vegetation communities are healthy and diverse and meet sage-grouse breeding and brood-rearing habitat requirements.

The area provides suitable habitat for flammulated owls and northern goshawks, both BLM Sensitive Species, and spring/summer/fall habitat for mule deer and elk.

***Fish***

No perennial streams occur on public lands in this allotment; therefore, the standard was not applied.

**Rangeland Health Change**

No long-term data have been collected to monitor changes; however, based on rangeland health assessments, it appears plant communities are being maintained in good condition.

**Evaluation Finding – Allotment/watershed is:**

- Meeting the Standard
- Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress towards meeting
- Not Meeting the Standard

**Rationale for Evaluation Finding**

Plant communities are functioning appropriately to cycle nutrients and energy sufficient to maintain a diverse and healthy perennial plant community; thereby meeting the potential needs of special status plant and wildlife species.