

Management Plan

Bamber Mountain C&H Allotment

Republic Ranger District

Colville National Forest

Region Six

Prepared by: *J. M. Cliskey* Date *Sept 1, 1976*  
Supervisory Range Conservationist

Reviewed by: *Dan H. Brunson* Date *Sept 2, 1976*  
Permittee

Recommended by: *Jack Francis* Date *9-16-76*  
District Ranger

Recommended by: *Laymond J. Evans* Date *9/30/76*  
Range Staff

Approved by: *Robert B. Leveil* Date *10/1/76*  
Forest Supervisor

U. S. D. A. FOREST SERVICE

REGION SIX

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS REPORT

COLVILLE NATIONAL FOREST  
REPUBLIC RANGER DISTRICT

BAMBER CATTLE ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY SHEET

I. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

The proposed action is to implement a deferred rotation system of grazing on approximately 4,700 acres of National Forest land contiguous to and extending from National Forest lands but nominally bounded on three sides by state and private lands comprising the south bank of Toroda Creek at its confluence with the Kettle River. The Allotment boundary is better defined on the succeeding Vicinity Map and/or the Range Allotment Map attached as Appendix \_\_\_\_\_.

The deferred rotation system has been selected as providing the least environmental impact and with sound management will improve existing vegetative and soil conditions, thus enhancing red-meat production to help meet the Nation's future needs. The grazing system is conducive with all other resources.

II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Implementation of the deferred rotation system may cause some damage to individual tree regeneration during critical establishment periods after a good seed crop, but this generally is offset with natural regeneration of tree overstocking subsequently requiring tree thinning for stand improvement.

III. ALTERNATIVES TO THIS PROPOSED ACTION WHICH WERE CONSIDERED

A total of five alternatives were considered, one of which is an existing practice, two rotation systems and/or a combination thereof, and no action or grazing.

Alternative No. 1 is continuous use or season-long grazing which is the previous practice. Livestock (cattle) are free to graze the most palatable and accessible plants continuously year after year at approximately the same time.

Alternative No. 2 is a deferred rotation system, the selected alternative system. It is based on three units, the time of grazing being deferred in sequence and rotated each year.

Alternative No. 3 is a rest rotation system in which one of the three units would be rested each year then rotated into use.

Alternative No. 4 is a combination of No. 2 and No. 3 above, wherein a deferred sequence is used one year followed by a rest sequence the following year.

Alternative No. 5 is no action or grazing.

IV. FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES FROM WHICH COMMENTS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED OR RECEIVED

Significant verbal communications have been made between the Forest Service, the permittee, the State (DNR), Soil Conservation Service (S.C.S.) on the proposed action. Written comments have not been requested nor received.

V. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

No significant adverse environmental impacts are apparent in the analysis for the proposal. Several beneficial impacts on range, wildlife, timber, watershed and fisheries will occur with the proposed system.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the proposal be developed within the guidelines contained in the report.

## I. DESCRIPTION

### INTRODUCTION

This analysis deals with the evaluation of the grazing system needs of the Bamber Cattle Allotment on the Republic Ranger District, Colville National Forest. There is no Land Use Planning project at present covering this land. Unit planning process covering similar lands in the vicinity tend toward a management emphasizing timber and forage production.

An objective review of the alternatives is in order to obtain the most logical and satisfactory grazing system for this area. The environmental, economic and social impacts are to be considered.

The objectives of this Environmental Analysis Report are:

1. To identify conflicts and diversified interest in uses and values of this land area.
2. To outline procedures, practices and/or methods of eliminating existing or potential single or special interest management and practices inconsistent with other resource values.
3. To enhance management of all forest resources of this Allotment on a sustained yield basis, utilizing sound range management principles.

Commercial timber stands in the area are of vital importance in meeting long range regulated harvests established for the Colville National Forest. Approximately 6 million board feet of timber will have been harvested from the allotment area beginning in 1957 to the closing of the current Bubble Sale in March 1978. No other sales are scheduled in the current 5 year Timber Sale Plan.

The Allotment has a population of mule deer, whitetailed deer, American black bear, and several grouse species as game species together with the coyotes and occasional predatory cats, i.e. cougar and bobcat, known to the area.

### PROPOSAL

The Allotment is located in the State of Washington, Congressional District 5, Ferry County, Colville National Forest, Republic Ranger District.

The planned deferred rotation system of grazing (see Appendix for the proposed Management Plan) in effect, is conducive to improving timber, watershed, dispersed recreation and wildlife management objectives. Restoration of vigor and seedling establishment enhance conditions generally. There is very little browse on the Allotment, some ninebark and snowberry, however, direct competition on the browse species shared by livestock and

big game becomes unapparent. The availability and vigor of browse will increase under this type of management. This method of use may require refinement to receive the greatest output of red meat at the same time improving ranges and decreasing labor costs to permittee. Any and all improvements such as fencing, spraying, and water developments need to keep wildlife values in mind. Indiscriminant use of either method is contrary to good management. The planned deferred rotation system of management has been a great aid in the rehabilitation of range lands on this Allotment. Further physical improvement measures may be required for refinement of the grazing system. A rotational system of use was first attempted in 1974 without the needed improvements for total control, and has worked moderately well to this time. Most all areas appear to be on the uptrend as a result of it. A three-pasture deferred rotation is the basis of this program.

## II. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The deferred rotation system will have minor effects upon the environment adjacent to the area of concern. Short-term and long-term effects will occur to man and his activities in a wider range of influence. The effects of the proposal upon these factors are analyzed as follows:

Wildlife - One year out of three, pastures will be grazed during the critical growing stage of the forage and browse species. However, past studies have shown that in the early spring, livestock do not graze browse species if there is sufficient other forage available. Livestock may graze some of the browse in the last pasture used each year which will cause some conflict with deer.

Visual Resources - Under the proposed system of grazing, the plants will be utilized to a shorter stubble height than under other systems. However, under the proposed system, each unit will receive deferrment every year. Also some second growth will occur within the units used first.

Range - Range resources will not be affected by this proposal.

Soil, Water and Air - Soil, water and air will not be affected under this proposal.

Timber - Timber will not be affected by this proposal. However, there may be minimal effect with regeneration where livestock graze transitory ranges one year out of three.

Social - No known historical or archaeological sites exist within the Allotment. There is no activity at this time.

Fire control may be altered by the proposal. The grazing system is designed to perpetuate plants, therefore, the fire hazard could be decreased through increase in perennial fire resistant plants. Under-use may increase the fire hazard because some years large amounts of litter are left on the ground.

### III. FAVORABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Several favorable environmental effects will occur as a result of the proposed deferred rotation grazing system as follows:

Wildlife - Deferred rotation grazing permits the browse, forbs and other forage species to grow during the critical growing period two years out of three. This will permit the plants to increase their vigor which in turn, will produce more forage in pounds per acre. The deer population grazes primarily on forbs species, as there is very little browse. This system will allow mostly wildlife use on one out of three pastures each year. This will assist in maintaining a balance between forbs and grasses.

Visual Resource - Development of this proposal will offer the public a "driving for pleasure" experience as well as an opportunity to understand the use and nature of good range management practices.

Recreation and Aesthetic Use - A significant amount of recreation use in the area is associated with hunting, driving for pleasure, and minor amounts of huckleberry picking. The proposed system will enhance wildlife habitat, both consumptive and non-consumptive species, such as birds fur-bearers, and small forest animals.

Range - The proposed system will, over time, increase the carrying capacity of the Allotment. It will improve the trend and vigor of the key species. Under management, the Allotment will be able to produce more pounds of "red-meat" to help meet the Nations demand and need as well as the local livestock industry and economy.

Soil, Water and Air - In all areas, close inspection of use patterns, proper herding and salting, refinement of the grazing system, assistance in developing movement patterns and trails, water developments, and continued range improvement programs are all aids to improving vegetative and ground cover conditions. This in turn, will improve both the water quality and soil composition, The use of

the stream course for fisheries, both on-Forest and down-stream, should also increase. This will be due to decreases in siltation caused by grazing, and increases in riparian vegetation, which will maintain or lower water temperatures.

Timber - Improvement in the condition of the timber stands through thinning, weeding, harvest and removal of insect infestation will make the timber stands healthier. Livestock grazing will enhance regeneration in cutover areas by holding down competition, allowing the young trees to obtain the necessary moisture and soil nutrients for fast growth. Timber management and livestock grazing complement each other. Future timber sales must be coordinated with grazing to ensure the system working.

Social - The ability to manage this area for intensive resource management will ultimately provide additional revenues to the County through share of receipts and increased or extended employment.

Opportunities for increasing program goals and objectives, in range management, timber management, increased water quality, visual resource management, can be realized through implementation of this proposal. Communities, industry and agriculture, as well as recreationists, can benefit equally from these resources without impairment of the land.

#### IV. ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

With the implementation of the proposal, the following adverse impacts may occur:

Wildlife - Some impairment of free game movement may occur as a result of constructing fences. A light-to-moderate alteration to nesting and forage patterns of non-game species may occur in the pastures to be used that season. It may also affect the hunting areas for raptors and reduce the security cover for game animals in the pastures being used that season.

Visual Resources - The first pasture used each season will cause a negative effect for visual resources, until the vegetation starts some regrowth and thence to cure, then it will look more natural.

Range - Restrictions of livestock movement from their normal movement patterns will occur for the first few years until the livestock become accustomed to the change.

Soil, Water and Air - Air quality may be disturbed as a result of minor dusting just prior to the livestock being moved to the next pasture.

Timber - Regeneration may be affected one year out of three in each unit as it is being grazed.

Social - We do not anticipate any adverse impacts.

#### V. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

A total of five alternatives to the proposed action were analyzed as listed below.

Alternative No. 1 - is continuous use. This is the least desirable. The livestock would be turned on at approximately the same place each year and work their way on through the Allotment. Unless numbers are reduced serious impacts would result in the environment and to the basic resource.

Alternative No. 2 - Deferred rotation system, the selected system. It will provide grazing in each of the three units each year. The units would be rotated over a three-year period, each unit would be used first and also used last. This system allows the plants to be grazed during the critical growing period one year out of three.

Alternative No. 3 - Rest-rotation system, with this system based on three pastures, each pasture would receive one and one-third year's rest every three years.

Alternative No. 4 - Combination of the above.

Alternative No. 5 - No action.

Three of the Alternatives, 1, 3, and 4, will have some degree of degradation of the environment due to disturbance of the soil, wind and water erosion of soil, over utilization of forage plants and browse and visual resources. The alternative of no action would have a local socio-economic impact.

#### VI. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USE OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

This is analyzed from the standpoint of the preferred alternative identified in the resource allocation model for the Canadian Face Planning Unit, several miles to the North. Essentially, this is



a modified intensive forage timber management prescription.

Range - The primary benefit derived by range from the proposed system is the opportunity to restore plant vigor, improve trend and increase total production. This, in turn, will produce more pounds of "red meat".

Soil, Water, and Air - A quality environment will be improved over the long term. Litter and soil conditions will be improved along with less erosion and siltation.

Wildlife - Wildlife population and habitat values are not expected to outweigh the need for other resource management and economic needs of the Nation. The intensive grazing system will improve the long-term habitat requirements for wildlife including consumptive and non-consumptive species.

Timber - The proposed system is conducive to good timber management. Timber and range complement each other, however, all future timber must be fully coordinated to ensure the system to work.

Visual Resources - The selection of deferred rotation system of grazing provides the opportunity to improve the aesthetics of the area.

#### VII. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

The commitment changes the present ecological balance within the Allotment. This is irreversible and irretrievable. Within a period of time, a new ecological balance will be established.

#### VIII. CONSULTATION WITH OTHERS

To date written comments have not been requested on the subject matter. The deferred rotation system has been discussed with some Agency people such as the S.C.S., DNR, on an informal basis.

#### IX. MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Any one of man's uses upon the land will have effects upon the environment, and the following management requirements and constraints, must be met to reduce or minimize the effects.

All future timber sales, including road construction, must be fully coordinated with range. All future roads must have livestock and game passage tracts designed and constructed in cut and fill areas to allow uninhibited passage.

It is not presently known if there are any historical and archaeological sites involved in this proposal. However, before any construction improvements are implemented, an on-the-ground investigation for possible sites must be made.

Permit administration becomes a must to ensure the system to be workable and to prevent resource damage.

Coordination with timber is a must. Proposed timber sales should only be scheduled in one pasture at a time. A new sale should not be proposed until the existing sales are closed.

X. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Significance of environmental impacts are minor within the content of the proposed action.

Whereas the impacts are considered as minor and any controversial issues are limited in scope and to a few individuals, it is recommended that an environmental statement not be filed.