

**2008 END OF SEASON REPORT
COPPER BASIN ALLOTMENT**

TERM GRAZING PERMIT				AUTHORIZED USE				ACTUAL USE			
NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.	NO.	ON DATE	OFF DATE	H.M.
2077	6/6	10/15	9014	1082	6/6	10/15	4696	907	6/6	10/7	3668
1228	7/1	10/15	4320	1418	7/1	10/15	4988	50	6/10	10/7	196
								611	7/1	10/7	1969
								395	7/2	10/7	1260
								251	7/21	10/7	644
3305			13334	2500			9684	2214			7737

Actual use was % of full permitted head months, and % of full permitted cattle numbers.

UNIT DATES AND UTILIZATION RESULTS:

ACTUAL GRAZING SCHEDULE			ALLOWABLE STDS	ACTUAL RESULTS
UNIT NAME	ON DATE	OFF DATE	RIPARIAN %Utilization/Stubble Height	RIPARIAN %Utilization/Stubble Height (% Browse)
Lehman Basin	6/6	7/2	50%	18% uplands
Lehman Canyon	6/25	6/28	50%	No Data
Horse Wallow	6/26	7/12	50%/4"	6", (42%)
Lower Riparian	7/13	7/15	50%/4"	5", (19%)
Potholes	7/16	7/30	50%/4"	4"
Basin Flats	7/28	8/13	50%/4"	4"
Little Canyons	8/9	8/20	50%/4"	4"(33%), 4"(36%), 4"(44%)
Anderson Canyon	8/18	8/29	50%/4"	No Data
Swamps	8/30	9/12	50%/4"	5"
Upper Riparian	8/30	9/11	50%/4"	4", 6"(7.5%)
Mine Canyon	9/12	9/18	50%/4"	No Data
Cabin Creek	9/12	9/18	50%/4"	4"(16%)
Corral Creek/Sugarloaf	9/18	9/25	50%/4"	4"(16%)
Coyote	9/26	10/5	50%/4"	6"(17%), 5"(13%)
Hamilton	10/6	10/7		No Data
Mine Hill				REST
Left & Right Navarre				REST
Little Lake Creek				REST
High Canyons				REST

Allotment Inspections: Allotment inspections were conducted on the following dates: 6/17, 7/10, 7/11, 7/15, 7/16, 7/22, 7/23, 7/28, 7/29, 8/4, 8/13, 8/14, 8/19, 8/21, 8/27, 8/29, 9/5, 9/10, 9/11, 9/16, 9/23, 9/25, 10/1, 10/15 and 10/30. Allotment inspections included project maintenance checks, cattle location checks and utilization monitoring.

Rested units included: Mine Hill, Left and Right Navarre, Little Lake Creek (due to poison), and the High Canyons (Lake Creek, Muldoon, Star Hope, Bear Canyon, and Broad Canyon).

Information: The precipitation information for the District is included in the table below. While this information is collected at the office in Mackay and is not specific to your allotment areas, it does give a good idea of the available moisture on the District. The totals for 2008 are compared to the average total precipitation by month for Mackay from the Desert Research Institute website for 1931-2005. Low precipitation levels and a late summer with cooler temperatures caused vegetation to mature later than usual this year. This helped in preventing upland vegetation from drying out early but slowed grass production on early units.

Month	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Total
Precipitation (in inches)	2.26	0.28	0.78	0.11	0.39	0.47	0.00	1.01	0.18	0.55	6.03
Average Precipitation 1931-2005	0.7	0.60	0.61	0.68	1.09	1.34	0.93	0.80	0.67	0.57	8.07

The cooler conditions made woody browse utilization patterns more consistent with past use levels than those seen in the 2007 grazing season. This lighter use was seen across the district as a whole. A browse standard of 50% is included in your permit and should be watched carefully in the future. While this standard has not been focused on by range specialists in the past because minimal use of woody browse by livestock was observed, browse on willows, aspen, and riparian shrubs is an important consideration especially in hot, dry years. Using this tool to adjust movement dates could avoid overuse or missing end of season standards for herbaceous and woody species in these riparian areas during drought years.

The cooler summer temperatures also contributed to a bumper crop of Larkspur flowering later this year which created some issues with our grazing schedule. There were approximately 14 head that died from poison in Lehman Canyon in Late June. With that issue it was decided to clean those cattle to the Horse Wallow Unit a few days early. The next unit after Horse Wallow was scheduled to be Little Lake Creek. The Little Lake Creek Unit is known for having a large population of Larkspur in it so after inspection by the permittees it was discussed and decided that cattle should not enter that unit.

Monthly meetings were held out on the ground with members of the Copper Basin Association. These meetings were held to discuss management concerns, strategies and to readjust the schedule as necessary. These meetings have greatly improved permittee communications and helped to improve relationships within the association.

The Association started the season with one rider. After some concern with livestock placement, distribution and herd movement early on in the season, we met on the ground and the association decided to hire another rider. After hiring the other rider herd management improved greatly. There were at least 4 riders on the allotment for the last month of the season.

It was not communicated to the Forest Service that wolves were a management issue on the allotment in the 2008 grazing season.

Utilization: Allowable use levels were not exceeded in the Copper Basin allotment monitoring areas this season. Riparian areas received moderate utilization levels. The uplands showed light use with moderate use close to riparian systems. Many of the springs were also dry this season making water scarce, compounding distribution issues.

Compliance with Unit Schedule and Project Maintenance: The units on the allotment were used in an altered sequence from the initial annual operating instructions in order to avoid grazing areas with large populations of poisonous plants. Little Lake Creek was rested this year as a result. Making this adjustment helped with the management of the allotment.

There were some management concerns early in the season on the Lehman Canyon and Potholes units. A small portion of the herd was let back into upper Lehman Canyon after the poison had dried out. Overuse did not occur in the area but the decision to let cattle back in was not discussed with any of the District staff. The cattle were removed from the unit and a meeting was held to discuss the process for altering the grazing rotation when necessary or applicable. After that meeting it was found that Willow Springs in the potholes had cattle on it for 2 weeks and the cattle weren't started into the Basin Flats. The 2 units were to be used together this season. The cattle were cleaned from the Potholes promptly and a meeting with the permittees was held out there to discuss what had happened, why, and herd management options for the rest of the season.

The 2008 grazing season proved difficult for managing livestock due to dry conditions and poisonous plants. Even with the riding conducted by the riders and permittees, permittees were required to remove all livestock from the allotment 8 days prior to the permitted off-date due to forage utilization standards being met. Those 8 days were scheduled in Little Lake Creek and missing that unit was the difference between leaving the Forest on the permitted off date.

Recommendations:

The association should continue monthly "fence post" meetings or as needed. Communication between the association and district Range Specialists went much better this year. There was a breakdown when cattle were placed back into Lehman Canyon and when the cattle were not let into the Basin Flats soon enough. Be sure to maintain close communications with Josh Edwards on what is going on or needs to be changed out there on the allotment.

Herd management was improved this year. Having multiple riders improved everything on the allotment. Herd management, communications, relationships and resource conditions. It is understood that the drought conditions made management more difficult this season. Having two full-time riders has proven to be very beneficial in the

management of the allotment and is strongly recommended. If the riders cannot be there, association members need to be informed and prepared to pick up the riding duties as necessary

Follow management instructions in order to avoid any permit action, suspension or cancellation, as you have received a Notice of Non-Compliance for not doing so.

Continue to maintain range improvements to standard and replace older improvements as necessary.

Continue to hold monthly meetings with all Association members and the Forest Service during grazing season to discuss needs, issues and strategize herd management.

Learn to implement a monitoring program and make livestock moves based on appropriate use levels.