

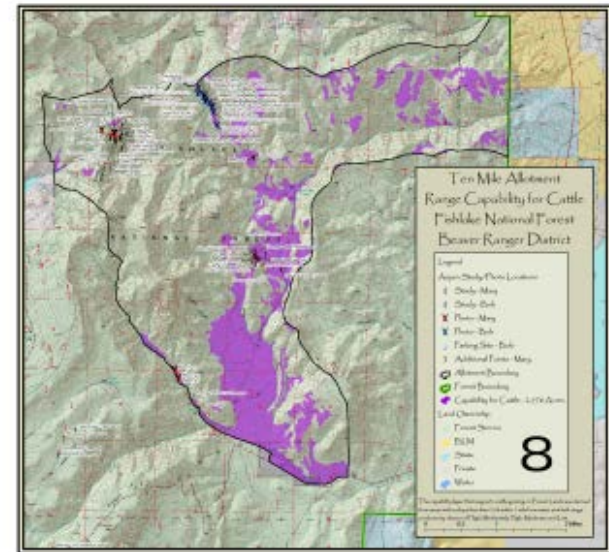
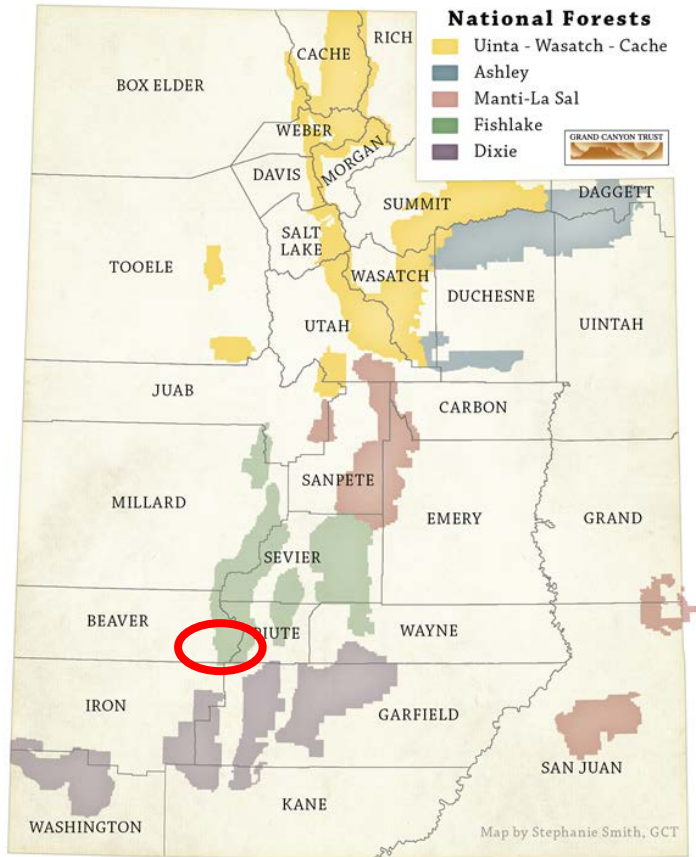


Cattle Disaster in Ten Mile

A 2006-2015 Story and
What We Must Do About It

Mary O'Brien Moab, UT Dec. 8, 2015

Ten Mile Allotment: 2,578 acres “capable”
for cattle



The Ten Mile exclosure area in 2006 – Part I



The Ten Mile exclosure area in 2006 – Part II

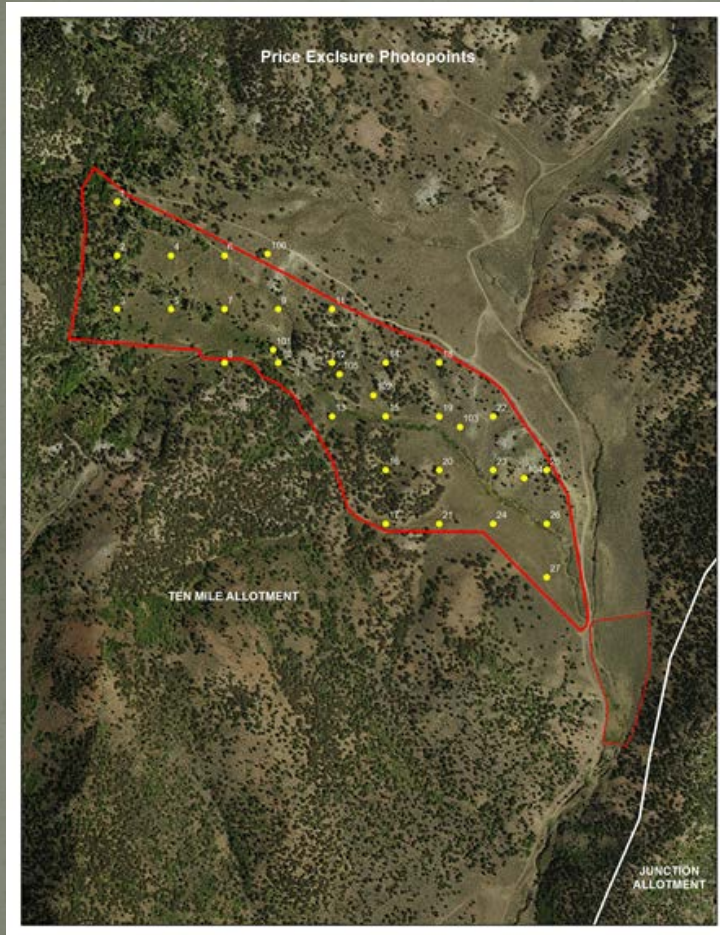


2007-2009: Tushar Allotments Collaboration



- For (at least) 5 years, Ten Mile Allotment was differently managed:
- 30% utilization (instead of 60%)
- 80 cow/calf pairs (instead of 200)
- Rest one pasture each year

2010-2015: the Forest Service photographed photo points annually inside the exclosure



2010



2014

2013: A photographer visited the exclosure to document recovery: Part I



A former cow pond is growing
deep-rooted sedges



Blue grama, a native grass, with seedheads

2013: A photographer visited the enclosure to document recovery: Part II



Aspen recruitment; grasses and forbs among sagebrush



She photographed the different conditions outside the enclosure; grasses grazed to their base

2014: Trust volunteers pulled invasive species in the exclosure



Lunch break amid lush riparian areas
where woolly mullein was being pulled



2014: Fishlake NF proposed a new
Ten Mile term permit

- 40% utilization (instead of 30%)
- 120 cow/calf pairs (instead of 80)
- No mention of resting a pasture a year.

THE TEN MILE PERMITTEE APPEALED THE
PERMIT THROUGH ATTORNEY JUSTIN
WAYMENT

July 2015: Volunteers returned to again pull invasive species in the exclosure



Sagebrush w/ dense grasses



2015:

The Regional Office rejected the Fishlake NF's proposed 2014 term permit and asked for one that is backed by science by November 2015

- The District then reverted to an old term permit without asking the RO why the term permit had been rejected, or considering continuing with current management until a new term permit is issued. The District allowed:
 - 60% utilization
 - 160 cow/calf pairs – on way to 200 cow/calf pairs
 - Grazing in all pastures; no pasture rested
 - Cows to graze the 6-year old exclosure

2015

- PERMITTEE HIRES STAGER CONSULTING TO PREPARE AN “ALLOTMENT REPORT:”

The lack of NEPA for the 30 percent use standard and this exclosure both used in some degree or the other to support the May 16, 2014 USFS decision make the decision invalid and unsupportable due to a lack of an adequate site specific EA or NEPA analysis.

August 13, 2015: An artist visited the enclosure – not knowing that cattle were about to graze...

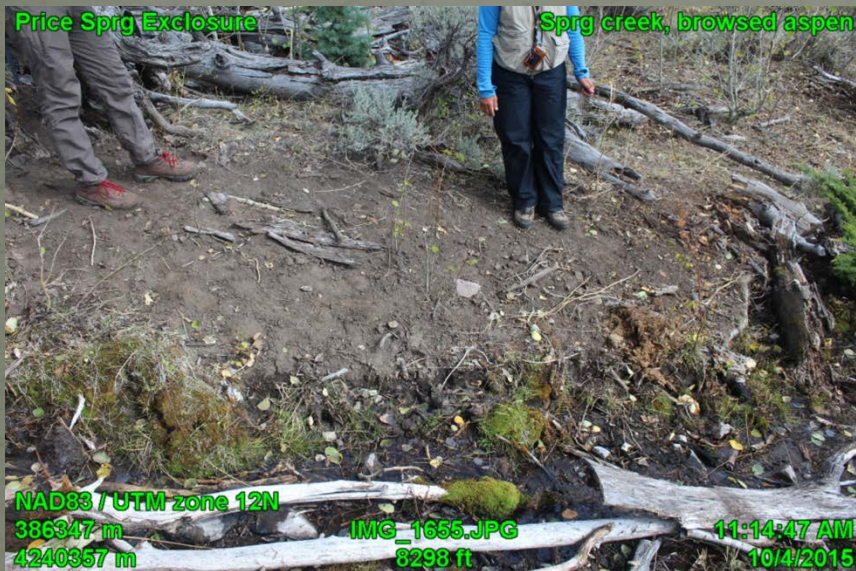


Unbrowsed mt mahogany



Bluebunch wheatgrass – a native that doesn't do well with even moderate grazing

By October 4, 2015: Destruction Part I



Denuded slope by one of the spring runs



Headcuts once again denuded in main spring run

By October 4, 2015: Destruction Part II



Denuded soil; perennial grasses grazed to their base;



Cattle trailing down to water in one of the two spring runs

By October 4, 2015: Destruction Part III



Grasses grazed to their base; pedestaled



No comment needed

By October 4, 2015: Destruction Part IV

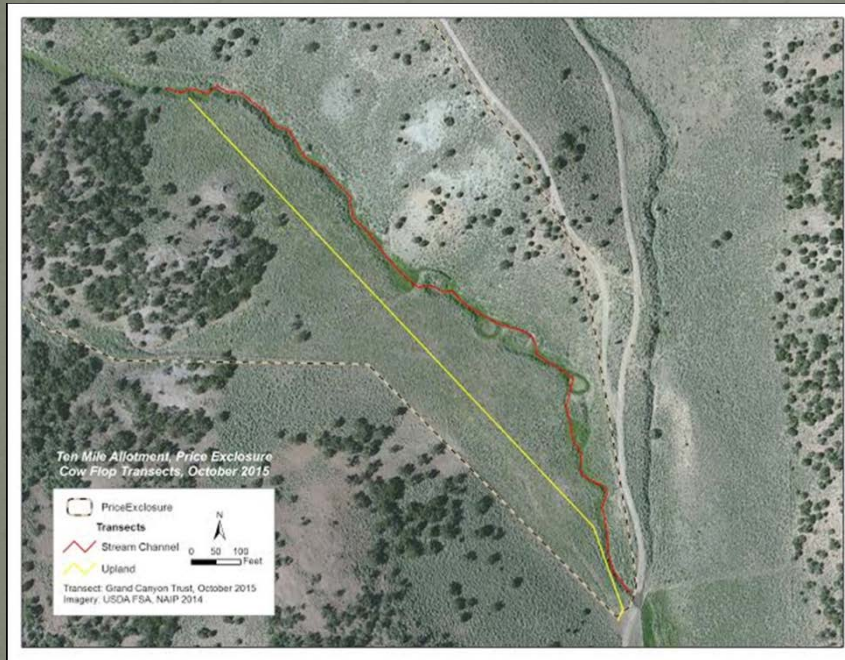


Soil denuded under old mt mahogany



Erosion on hill slope

November 2, 2015: Cow flop transects



Spring channel 513 flops; 1 every 3'
Upland area 296 flops; 1 every 4.7'



How did this happen?

After October 4, we learned that..

- The new (April 2015) District Ranger let the cattle graze the exclosure, in an attempt to avoid being sued by the permittee
- The District Ranger had never visited the exclosure (one hour from the District office), but had “driven by” once
- The Forest Supervisor , formerly a District Ranger, has never used an ungrazed area as a comparison with grazing to make decisions about grazing.
- The Regional Office had rejected the proposed 2014 term permit because they saw no reason to move from 30% to 40% or 80 cow/calf pairs to 120 cow/calf pairs

POST OCTOBER 4, we also learned that..

- The Fishlake Forest Range Program Director, measured that the upland grazing in the exclosure (see slides “met standard” (at 61%).
- The Range Program Director believed that the Forest could go no lower than 40% utilization without a “site specific amendment” to the 30-year old Forest Plan, no matter how depleted the conditions on an allotment.
- The Regional Office , however, says the forest standard of 40%-60% is a ceiling, not a floor.
- The Range Program Director believes that the Tushar Collaboration “ended” in 2009, so the Forest Service did not need communicated with the participants about grazing the exclosure.
- The Range Program Director believes that permittees can seed the national forest with exotic seeds for their cattle. One Tushar permittee says he spent \$15,000 seeding the Pine Creek/Sulphurbeds allotment with an “approved FS seed mix,” including exotic seeds.

DECEMBER 2015: What to do?

- All data on Ten Mile Allotment (and Pine Creek/Sulphurbeds Allotment) are to be handed in by Dec. 11 for consideration in a new term permit.
- We are waiting for answers to 8 questions re: utilization, exotic seeding, collaboration, the value of ungrazed reference areas, NEPA, accountability to science.
- We'll press for NEPA for the exclosure, and seeding of exotics

Is this just about Ten Mile Allotment?

- **Dec. 31, 2015:** Scoping begins for term permits on three cattle allotments on Monroe Mountain
- **Jan 2016:** A meeting is scheduled re: the Sustainable Grazing and Restoration Alternative in Canyons of the Ancients Nat'l Monument EA
- **Spring 2016:** Manti-La Sal NF plan revision begins
- **Spring 2016:** La Sals Sustainability Collaboration completes its recommendations on 7 FS, BLM, and State allotments
- **Summer 2016:** The Nature Conservancy allotment on Elk Ridge (Abajos) undergoes NEPA for a new term permit
- **2016:** A Draft EIS will be issued for a grazing plan in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
- **2016:** A Draft EIS will be issued for a grazing plan at Capitol Reef National Park

Consistently ...

- **30% utilization** is needed to protect many species and habitats
- **Ungrazed areas** are needed as reference areas and for their own multiple uses
- **Consensus collaborations** are essential for addressing issues and options otherwise not addressed by the Forest Service and BLM
- **Global warming** must be considered in grazing decisions
- Use of **independently-gathered, objective data** is essential to provide important ecological information not being gathered by the FS and BLM
- **The national forests and BLM lands are not ranches.** They are public lands about which you need to voice your concerns, document problems, and propose feasible solutions.