

This is 60% utilization

What it looks like to go from not grazed to
permitted grazing

The story . . .

- When, in 2015, the Beaver Ranger District (Fishlake National Forest) allowed the permittee of Ten Mile Allotment to graze a 47.5-acre enclosure that had not been grazed in 6 years (except briefly by a few unauthorized cattle in 2012), the losses were appalling.
- But a month later, the Forest's Range Program Manager said measurements showed that the upland grazing "had met the 60% standard" (by being at 61% utilization.)
- All 3 national forests in southern Utah (Fishlake, Manti-La Sal, and Dixie) use this 60% standard, which is regarded as "heavy grazing" in rangeland literature.
- Holechek, et al. (1999) summarized 25 studies showing 30% utilization is superior ecologically and economically.

What 6 years of not grazing had looked like:
tall grasses among sagebrush, recruiting aspen



What 6 years of not grazing had looked like:
vegetated banks down into riparian area



What 6 years of not grazing had looked like:
recruiting aspen, grasses and forbs beneath



What 6 years of not grazing had looked like:
ground-nesting bird's nest



And then . . . 60% grazing

or how this permittee “met standard”

What 60% utilization looks like:
Even rabbitbrush browsed



What 60% utilization looks like:
bunchgrasses grazed to their base



What 60% utilization looks like:
Even rabbitbrush browsed



What 60% utilization looks like:
Browsed elderberry



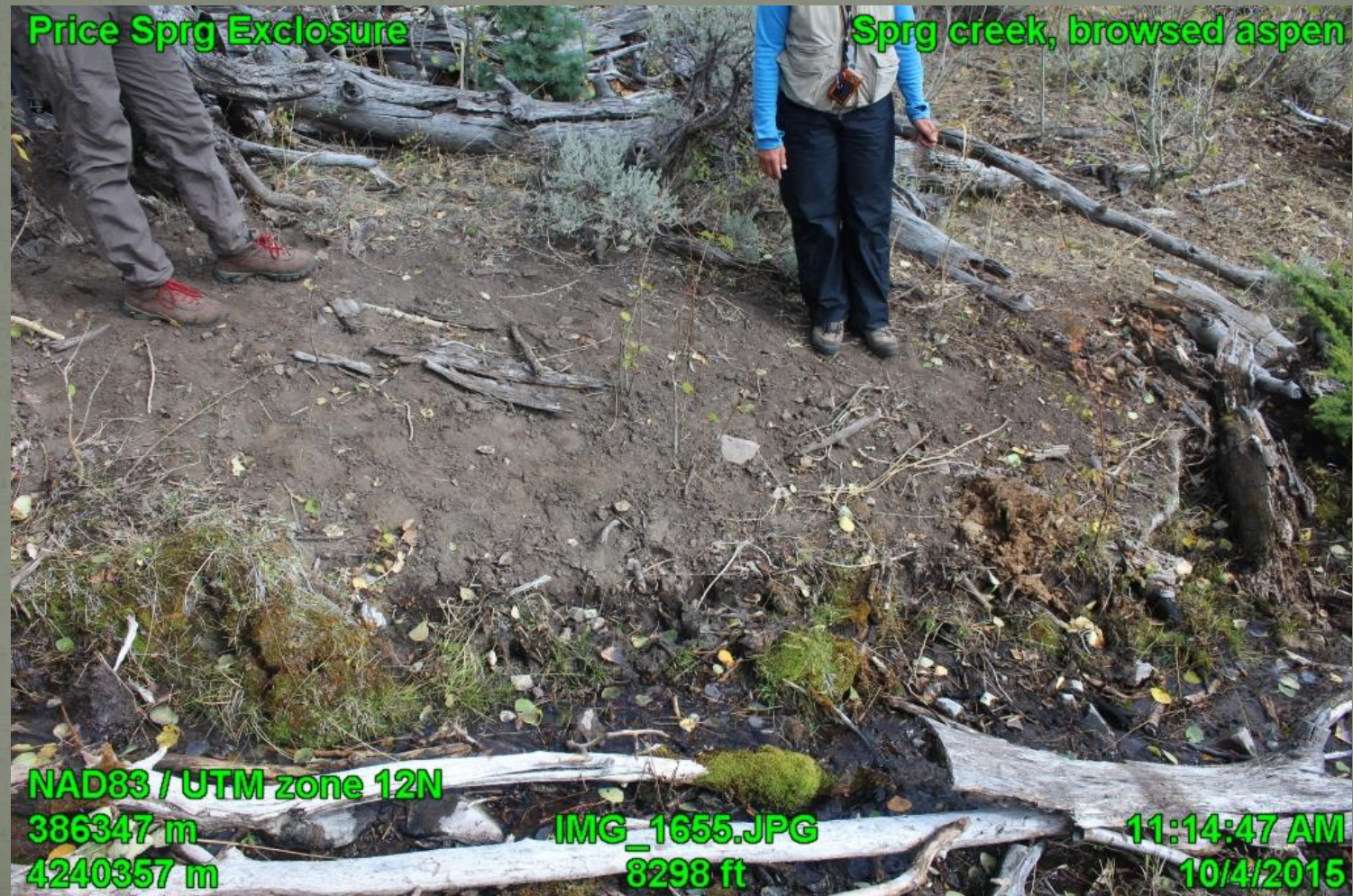
What 60% utilization looks like:
Browsed aspen



What 60% utilization looks like: Denuded slopes



What 60% utilization looks like:
Denuded slopes down into riparian area



Price Sprg Enclosure

Sprg creek, browsed aspen

NAD83 / UTM zone 12N

386347 m

4240357 m

IMG_1655.JPG

8298 ft

11:14:47 AM

10/4/2015

What 60% utilization looks like:
Grazed bunchgrasses and mountain mahogany



What 60% utilization looks like:

Blue grama, needle-and-thread,
Letterman's needlegrass – mowed down



What 60% utilization looks like:

Grazed, trampled grasses



What 60% utilization looks like:
Browsed sagebrush



What 60% utilization looks like:

Browsed mountain mahogany



What 60% utilization looks like:

Grazed bunchgrass,
only exotic cheatgrass seedheads remaining



What 60% utilization looks like:

Cow dung beneath old mountain mahogany



Reference

Holechek, JL, H Gomez, F Molinar, and D Galt. 1999
Grazing studies: what we've learned. *Rangelands* 2(12.12-
16.

Available on request from maryobrien10@gmail.com