

**Determination
Standards for Rangeland Health and
Conformance with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management**

Field Office: Jarbidge Field Office

Watershed Name:
Cedar Creek

Allotment Name/Number: Pigtail Butte / 1088

Public Land (acres)			Streams on Public Land (miles): Cedar Creek (3.6 mi.) House Creek (0.3 mi.)
Upland: 28,562	Riparian: 14	Total: 28,576	
Date(s) of Field Assessment: 2003			Name of Permittee(s): Cedar Creek Cattle Co. Guerry, Inc.

Assessment Participants (Name & Discipline or Interest):

Arnie Pike, Rangeland Management Specialist
James Klott, Wildlife Biologist
Clare Josaitis, Natural Resource Specialist
John Ash, Natural Resource Specialist
Sheri Hagwood, Botanist
Patricia Courtney, Range Technician

Standard 1 (Watersheds)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources:

Soil loss is apparent in the interspaces as indicated by pedestals on bunchgrass in the Northeast Pasture. There is more bare ground than is expected in the. In native areas bare ground varied from a low of 7 percent to a high of 13 percent and from 4 percent to 26 percent in the Pigtail

Butte, Northeast Roseworth Reservoir, East Clark Seeding and West Clark Seeding Pastures in areas seeded to crested wheatgrass. The soil surface resistance to erosion was weak in the seeded areas in the Pigtail Butte, East Clark Seeding and West Clark Seeding Pastures. Some wind scouring has take place in seeded areas in the Northwest and Pigtail Butte Pastures. This erosion occurred following the fire when there was no cover on the soil. There had been no recent wind scouring.

Standard 2 (Riparian Areas and Wetlands)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	X Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
X Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	X Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s). <u>5</u>

Rationale/Information Sources:

The stream channel along the portion of Cedar Creek below the dam (17.3 – 18.8) is affected by irrigation releases from the reservoir. Because of this, normal riparian processes are not able to take place. The stream bed is cobbled and bouldered which helps to dissipate water energy but the stream banks lack adequate riparian species along their lengths for protection during high flow regimes. Stream banks and point bars are not able to build and form because of the scouring effects of irrigation releases. Livestock use along this stretch of Cedar Creek also exacerbates the formation and build up of point bars and stream banks. However, this stretch does have more stream banks and riparian indicator species present than the next segment immediately downstream and consequently is rated functional-at risk. As long as irrigation releases continue, it is unlikely that the current functionality of this portion of Cedar Creek will improve.

Cedar Creek segment 15.2 to 17.3 is also affected by reservoir irrigation releases which have resulted in erosion of the floodplain and stream banks. Subsequently, the stream channel is very wide, and relatively straight and ditch-like. The composition ratio of sedges to non-riparian type species such as Kentucky bluegrass is low. There is also a lack of willows within this system. Another factor contributing to the loss of stream banks is livestock use. Livestock regularly trail along this portion of Cedar Creek and are trampling and actively shearing a large percentage of the banks. Active sloughing of what stream banks are left is occurring. There are also very wide trails leading into the creek bottom from the uplands which are a source of sediment to the

system. The functionality of this portion of Cedar Creek could improve with the reduction of grazing use by livestock.

House Creek runs through the allotment from segment 0.0 to 0.3. This segment is immediately above the Cedar Creek Reservoir and approximately 2.9 miles of the creek runs through private land before entering the allotment. Since this segment was evaluated in 1998, more willows and riparian herbaceous species (both early seral type species) have become established. Consequently, the number of cut-banks has decreased as riparian vegetation has increased. A lot of sediment continues to be deposited into the channel. The stream channel is also still too wide, shallow, and ditch-like. Because of the observed improvements in this reach since the 1998 interdisciplinary assessment, it is likely that this part of House Creek is functional—at risk. It is recommended that another assessment be conducted by an interdisciplinary team to determine current functionality.

Standard 3 (Stream Channel/Floodplain)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	X Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
X Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	X Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s). <u>7</u>

Rationale/Information Sources:

(Refer to Standard 2.)

Standard 4 (Native Plant Communities)Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
X Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
X Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources:

Standard 5 (Seedings)Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	X Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	X Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s). <u>13</u>

Rationale/Information Sources:

In the Northeast Roseworth Reservoir, East Clark Seeding and West Clark Seeding Pastures, bur buttercup is common; forbs and nitrogen-fixing legumes are low in composition; and annual production is 25 to 50 percent because of the low grass composition. Shrubs more decadent than expected and grasses are low in vigor with low seedstalk production in the West Clark Seeding Pasture.

Sagebrush, native perennial grasses and forbs have established in areas seeded to crested wheatgrass in the Three-Mile Crossing, West Clark Seeding and East Clark Seeding Pastures.

Standard 6 (Exotic Plant Communities, Other than Seedings)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources:

Standard 7 (Water Quality)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s). <u>10</u>

Rationale/Information Sources:

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has identified and nominated the lower segment of Cedar Creek from Roseworth Reservoir to Salmon Falls Creek and the entire length of House creek as “water quality limited” on the 1996 303(d) list in Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) #17040213 for concerns of nutrients, sediments, dissolved oxygen (DO), pathogens and flow alterations, with severities rated as low for both creeks, only the lower portion of Cedar Creek currently remains on the updated 1998 303(d) list. As of 1998, House Creek has been delisted by DEQ and is no longer of concern.

Standard 8 (Threatened and Endangered Plants and Animals)

Check those that apply:[*One or more boxes must be checked.*]

<input type="checkbox"/> Standard doesn't apply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting the Standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are Significant Factors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, but making significant progress to meeting the Standard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Meeting the Standard, Livestock Grazing Management Practices are not Significant Factors.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conforms with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not conform with Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Guideline No(s).

Rationale/Information Sources:

Wild fires have reduced nesting habitat in the Pigtail Butte Allotment. Redband trout are present in Cedar Creek and House Creek. Some redband trout winter in Cedar Creek Reservoir. For the most part, Cedar Creek below the dam is not considered as suitable habitat for redband trout due to the operation of the dam. Water flows are stopped in the fall through spring reducing water levels for fish while the reservoir is filled for the summer irrigation season. Water temperatures and low flows in House Creek exceed the tolerance for redband trout. Water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen in Cedar Creek Reservoir can also reach a level that impacts trout survival. Higher water temperatures result in lower dissolved oxygen content in water. When the dissolved oxygen gets too low, it can result in mortality to fish, including redband trout.

No sensitive plants are known to occur in this allotment. Only limited surveys for sensitive plants have been conducted in this allotment and more species may occur. It is unknown whether the standard was being met for special status plant species. There is no information available to determine whether livestock grazing management was having a significant impact on sensitive plant species.

The flow of House Creek is controlled upstream from the Allotment by irrigators. Livestock grazing on the lowest quarter mile has nominal effect on water temperature in House Creek or Cedar Creek (Roseworth) Reservoir.

Determination

I have determined that Standard 4 is being met. Standards 2, 3, and 7 are not being met, progress is not being made toward achieving them, and current livestock grazing practices are a factor. Standard 5 is being met in all pastures except Northeast Roseworth, East Clark Seeding and

West Clark Seeding. In these pastures current livestock grazing is a factor. Standards 1 and 8 are not being met, but livestock grazing practices are not a factor. Current grazing practices do not conform to some of the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

/s/ E. Guerrero
Field Manager

5/12/04
Date