

Jonathan B Ratner

From: Delong, Don -FS <don.delong@usda.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2020 10:34 AM
To: Jonathan B Ratner
Cc: Cottle, Dave -FS
Subject: RE: Reports

Jonathan,

See my responses below...

Don

From: Jonathan B Ratner <jonathan@westernwatersheds.org>
Sent: Sunday, March 1, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Delong, Don -FS <don.delong@usda.gov>
Subject: Reports

Don,

I have been reviewing various docs and have a few questions for you:

1. Do any of your reports discuss the implications of Burton et al. and Roffe et al regarding livestock use of wetlands? If so which reports and location within those reports? Did you find these authors report benefits to boreal toads?
Yes, the technical report I did for BTNF sensitive amphibians (DeLong 2015). There's a detailed write-up starting on page A-89 (page A-86 in the 2014 version)... There's been a little confusion over versions. Discussion of studies by Roche et al. starts on page A-90 and Burton et al. (2009) starts on page A-97. I've seen some people cite Burton et al. (2009) to support statements about livestock grazing benefiting toads, but one of the implications of looking into the nuances of the study is that --- while there may be benefits in some situations --- Burton et al. (2009) doesn't provides much support for this. Some definite study-design limitations for their study being used to show benefits of livestock grazing on toads. Studies by Roche et al. (2012, 2013) don't show benefits.
2. Do any of your reports discuss Kalinowski et al. I am seeing in other places where the conclusion was livestock have minimal impacts on voles but this seems illogical. I have read a wide range of literature on water vole (*Microtus richardsoni*) in the Bighorn and Shoshone national forests finding for that species that livestock was the primary factor in habitat degradation. The results were so clear that on the Bighorn there is a 7" stubble height in known water vole habitat.
Yes, just looked. My mig. bird report for the Upper Green cites Kalinowsky (2012); a master's thesis, and Kalinowski et al. 2014) is the published version of this. Also in my Wildlife Discipline Input into K-17 project (DeLong 2018). Even though the paper says vole abundance was only "weakly negatively associated with cattle grazing," there was either very little difference in grass height between grazed and ungrazed or it was taller in the grazed area... so the authors probably shouldn't have said anything about relationship to grazing since they didn't even show a relationship between grazing and grass height or sward height. But they did demonstrate what I think was a strong relationship between vole occurrence and grass sward height.
3. Which of your reports are the most complete and up-to-date regarding suitable habitat for grey owls and swans from a livestock impacts perspective?

Probably DeLong (2012), which covers great gray owls and goshawks, but some additional info in DeLong (2016 and 2018). I haven't done any reports covering swans.

4. Same as #3 but for elk and deer?

I haven't really revisited elk and deer since my original report, DeLong (2009)... some of which was integrated into the report, "Updated Assessment of the Condition of Management Indicator Species Habitat..." (BTNF 2009). As far as I know, they cite the most up to date recommendations on utilization limits, including from the Western Assoc. of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (2009) for recommended utilization limits in mule deer habitat.

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