

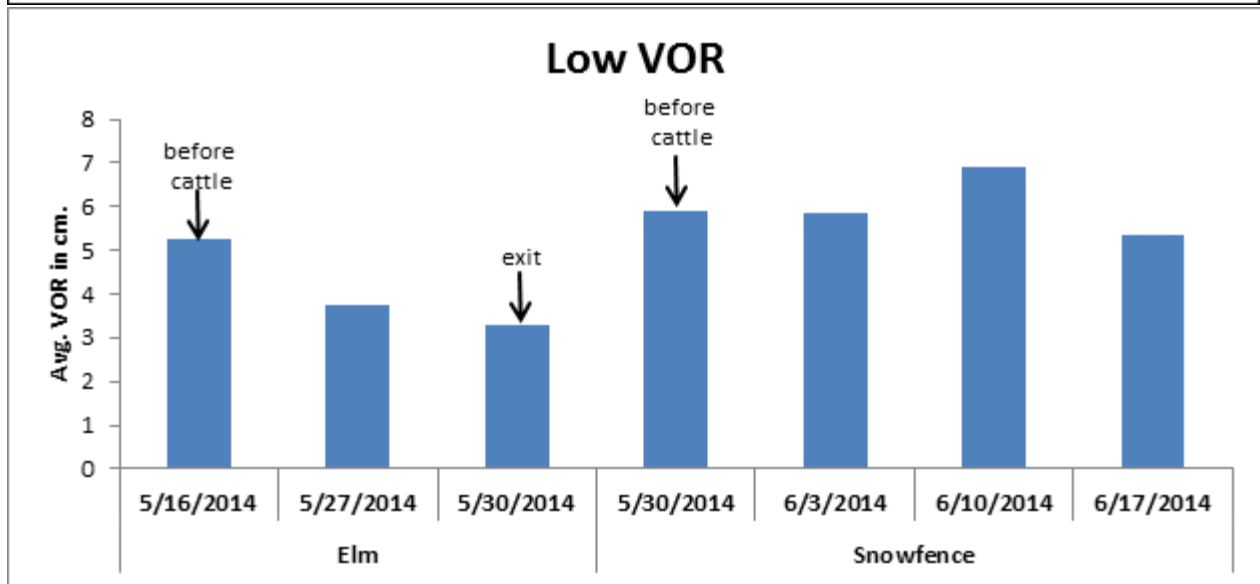
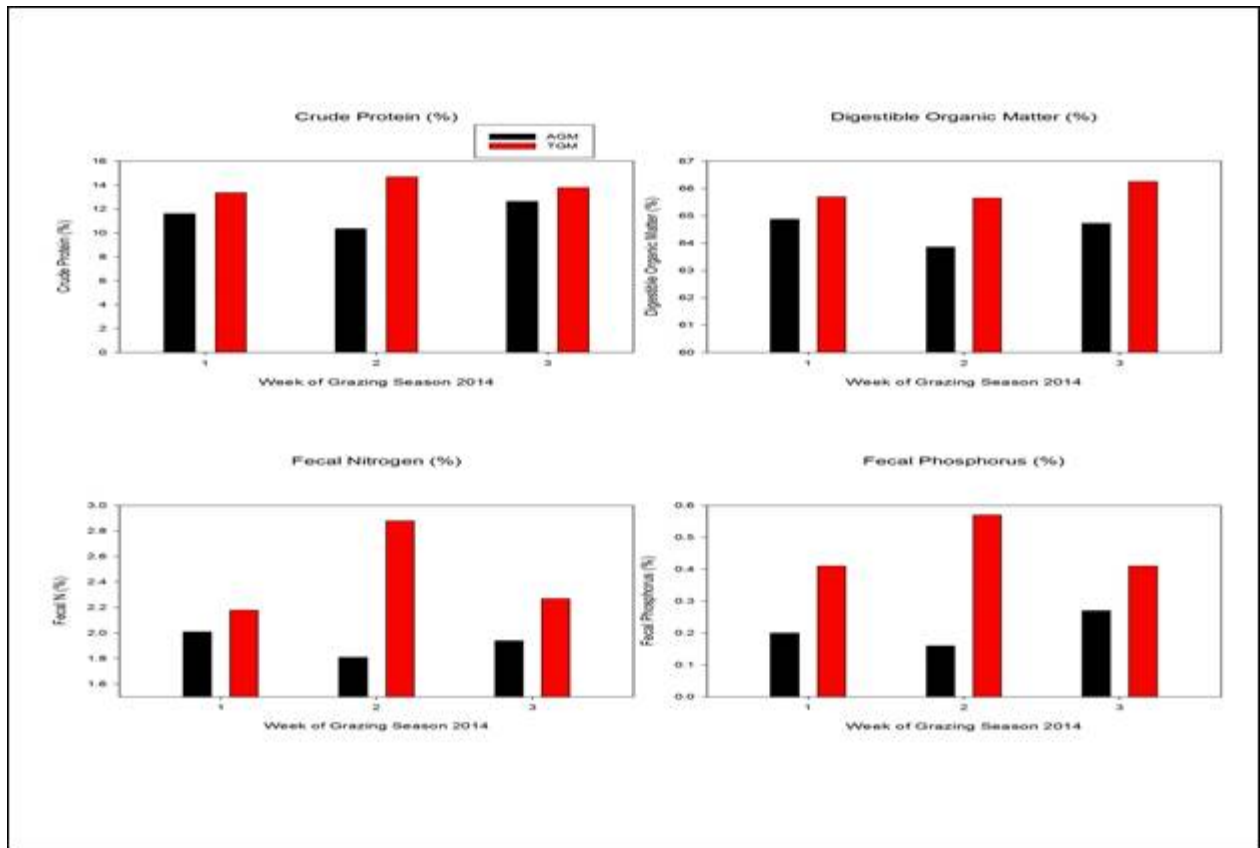
AGM Weekly Update

Greeting AGMers,

It's been another exciting week here as we wrap up our initial vegetation measurements, continue bird surveys, and prepare the Headquarters pasture for the 214 head that will be arriving there on Friday. But that's only half the excitement. Last Friday we received our first fecal analysis! The results are quite interesting and have prompted us to weigh the AGM steers prior to their arrival to the Headquarters pasture. We will have some weight gain numbers for you all next week.

Highlights of Happenings:

- Fecal analyses show steers selecting vegetation with a higher crude protein content on the TGM vs AGM pastures for each of the 3 sample weeks (See chart below) – thus, less selectivity in the AGM herd for these steers. Digestible organic matter is higher for TGM than AGM steers in each of the 3 weeks, suggesting that the TGM steers are selecting a higher quality diet.
- With the number-of-days threshold being met this week, the AGM herd will be moved from Snowfence to the Headquarters pasture this Friday. In light of the fecal analysis results, before being sent to pasture, we will be weighing the steers to estimate gains so far. For comparison, we will be weighing the corresponding TGM steers as well.
- There were no mix-ups this week! We did, however, re-treat one steer for lump jaw and another for foot-rot. Both seem to be doing better as of today.
- Since last Wednesday, CPER headquarters received .17 inches of precipitation and rain gauges near Snowfence averaged .11 inches.
- The average VOR on Tuesday was 5.3cm, down from 6.9cm one week prior (see chart below for all previous weeks). Heavy grazing in and around the plots where we measure the VORs was apparent in areas of high western wheatgrass and blue grama density. Areas of high needle-and-thread grass density appeared trampled but less utilized. See the chart below for a summary of the VOR progression for each grazed pasture so far.



For more detailed precipitation data and maps, see our website: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=24218>. Also, feel free to send any questions, suggestion, or concerns relating to the project my way and I will do my best to respond in next week's email.



Our Crow Valley compadres identifying vegetation with the help of a TGM steer



Plan of Attack: The Cheyenne and Fort Collins veg crews getting ready for the day

Other Notables:

- Forb of the Week: Tansyleaf tansyaster (*Machaeranthera tanacetifolia*) has been flowering in many of the pastures at CPER. Patches its mini purple sunflower-ish looking flower can be seen from the road in some pastures. Check it out at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machaeranthera_tanacetifolia

On behalf of the USDA-ARS-Rangeland Resources Research Unit, I thank you all for your continued participation in this project.

Nick Dufek