

# AGM Weekly Update

Good Day AGMers,

Lots of great stuff for you this week and still more to come. Thanks to the hard work of clipping and cattle handling crews, I was able to get my act together and bring you a photo tour of the Nighthawk pasture as we saw it for the VORs this week. We hope this serves as a reference for how the plots look given the weekly VOR reports for forage biomass. Please stay tuned for an extra email that will walk you through the plots.

## Highlights of Happening:

Craig reports healthy and happy AGM cattle this week in Nighthawk. No doctoring or mix-ups. Keeping the stock tanks full remains an issue for the cattle crew as hot weather and low wind continue into August.

There was no measurable precipitation for the second week in a row at CPER HQ. Despite a dry late July/early August, the accumulated precipitation for the year is well above average for 2015 (see graph below) with 11.42 in. up to today (76-year accumulated average to today: 9.10 in).

The average VOR in Nighthawk this week was 2.0 cm (~480 lb./acre). As reported upon entering Nighthawk, the forb stiff green thread, is dominating the VORs in one of the burned plots and one of the unburned plots. VORs taken on these plots hinder our ability to realistically report forage biomass as stiff green thread is avoided by cattle this late in its life cycle. For this reason, two extra transect consisting of 25 VORs were measured in the burned and unburned area this week to better estimate forage biomass. The average VOR in the burned area this week was 1.5cm (~355 lb./acre). The unburned plots averaged 2.6cm (~605 lb./acre). See chart below for weekly VORs throughout the herds stay in Nighthawk.

Above: VORs in Nighthawk for the first 4 weeks of cattle grazing. Our low forage threshold is 300 lb./acre.

Above: Precipitation for 2015 through July.

For detailed precipitation data, maps, last year's updates, scientist bios, and AGM documents, see our website: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=24218>. Remember to send your questions, concerns, and ideas my way and I do my best to have them addressed in next week's email.

## Photos of the Week



Above: The AGM steers wondering why I don't just use my mouth to clip.



Above: The clipping crews saddle up for a day of fun in sun.

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

Nick Dufek

