

SAND Creek — Idaho

Sand Creek is located in southwestern Idaho at about 2,200 feet elevation. Annual precipitation is approximately nine inches

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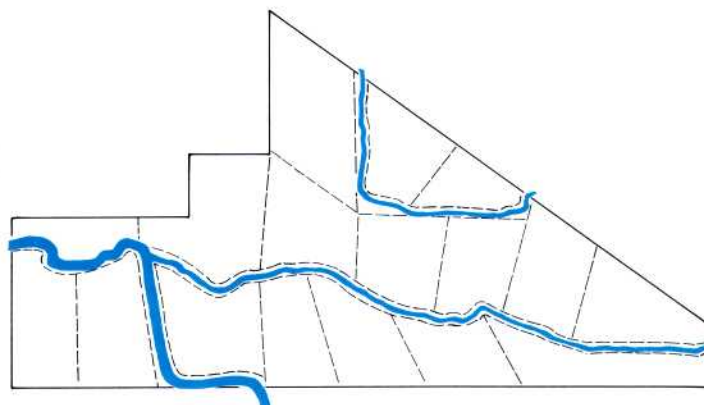
and comes mainly as snow and spring and fall rain.

In the early 1930s this privately-owned site was cleared and leveled to flood irrigate 170 acres of pasture. In recent years approximately 125 cows, 3 to 4 bulls and their offspring were grazed year-round. Portions of the area were grazed for short periods and devoted to producing hay for winter feed.

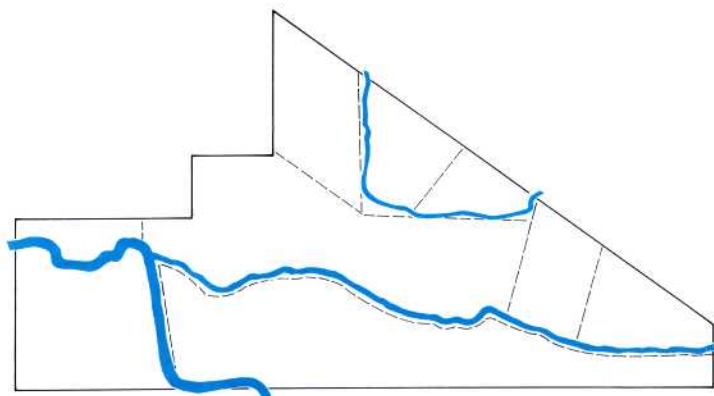
Earthen irrigation and drain ditches and streambanks were trampled and eroding. Ditch maintenance was a major operating cost. Significant amounts of sediment were entering Sand Creek.

In late 1987 the property was sold. The new owner set a goal of maximizing profit. Protection of riparian areas or reducing nonpoint source pollution were not planning considerations.

Additional pastures and high animal density allowed forage to be grazed to the proper stubble height and properly rested to encourage optimum regrowth.



After Planning



Before Planning

With the traditional pasture configuration and season-long, continuous grazing, livestock could not be economically managed to optimize forage production (or protect riparian areas, reduce erosion of irrigation and drain ditches and streambanks, and minimize sediment contribution to Sand Creek).