



Cooperative Rangeland Monitoring Programs

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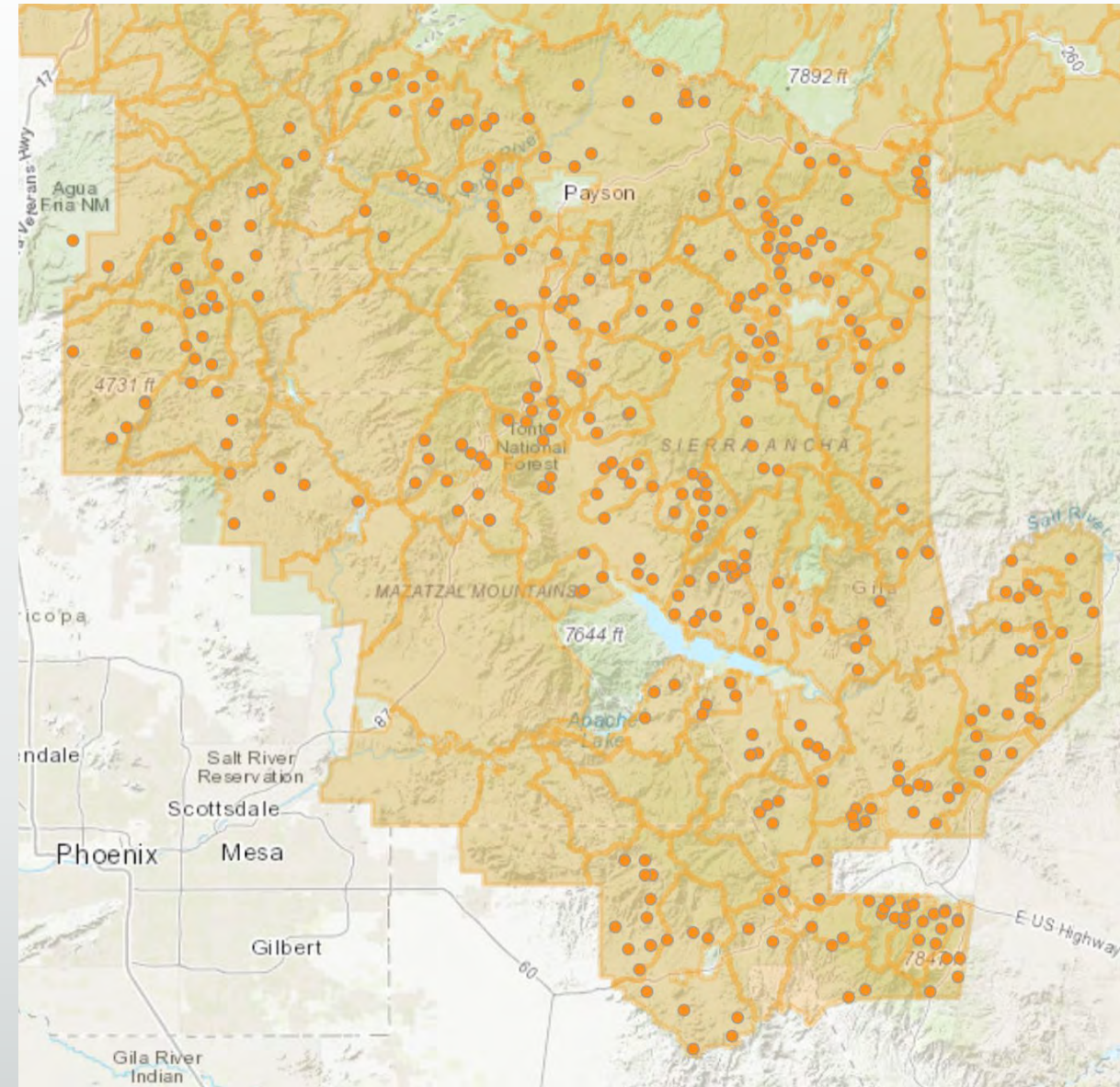
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Reading the Range

- Dr. Jim Sprinkle began the program in 2003 at the request of stakeholders
- Collect monitoring data in cooperation with grazing permittees and Tonto National Forest (NF) personnel.
- Currently 81 allotments participate. By fall 2022 all active allotments will be included. 4 vacant allotments remaining.



Reading the Range



- During monitoring efforts rancher participation is 100%, USFS staff participation ~ 95%
- Approximately 30 allotments are monitored in the spring/fall.
- Monitoring schedule is based off are NEPA priorities, recent fires, and those not yet participating.
- Tonto NF and Tonto NRCD provide funding to hire seasonal field assistants.

Reading the Range

- UA Cooperative Extension acts as unbiased third-party collecting data.
- UA does not suggest any management actions.
- An allotment with recent litigation at the US District Court successfully won their case using monitoring data.



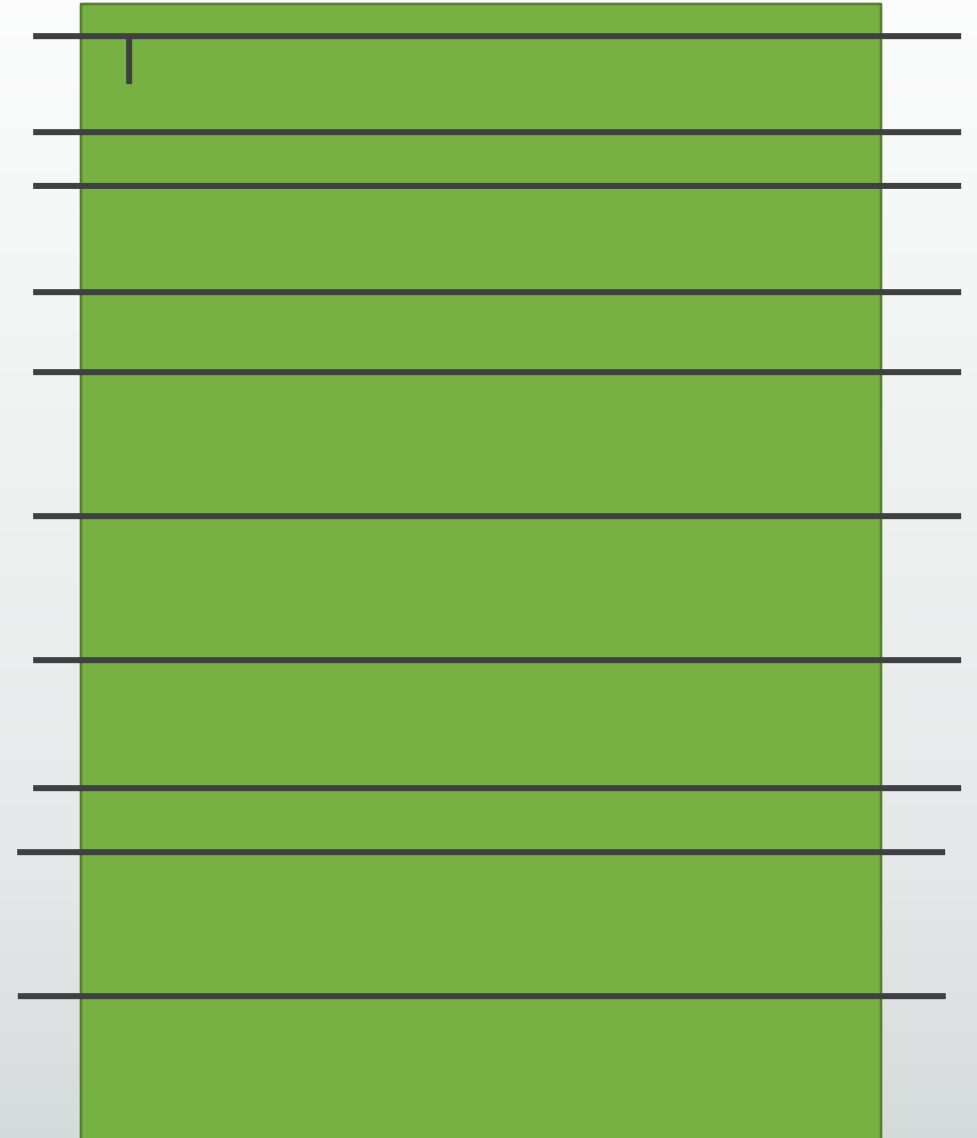
Methods Used

- 40X40 Frame
 - Ground cover points
 - Fetch
 - Frequency
 - Dry weight rank
- Clip 20 bags random production samples
- Utilization using USFS wheel if requested



Methods Used – Shrublands

- Macro pot
 - 300X100 foot transect
 - 10 lines of 100 feet
 - Line intercept
 - Belt density 5ft swath
 - Ground cover



Comments from USFS and Ranchers

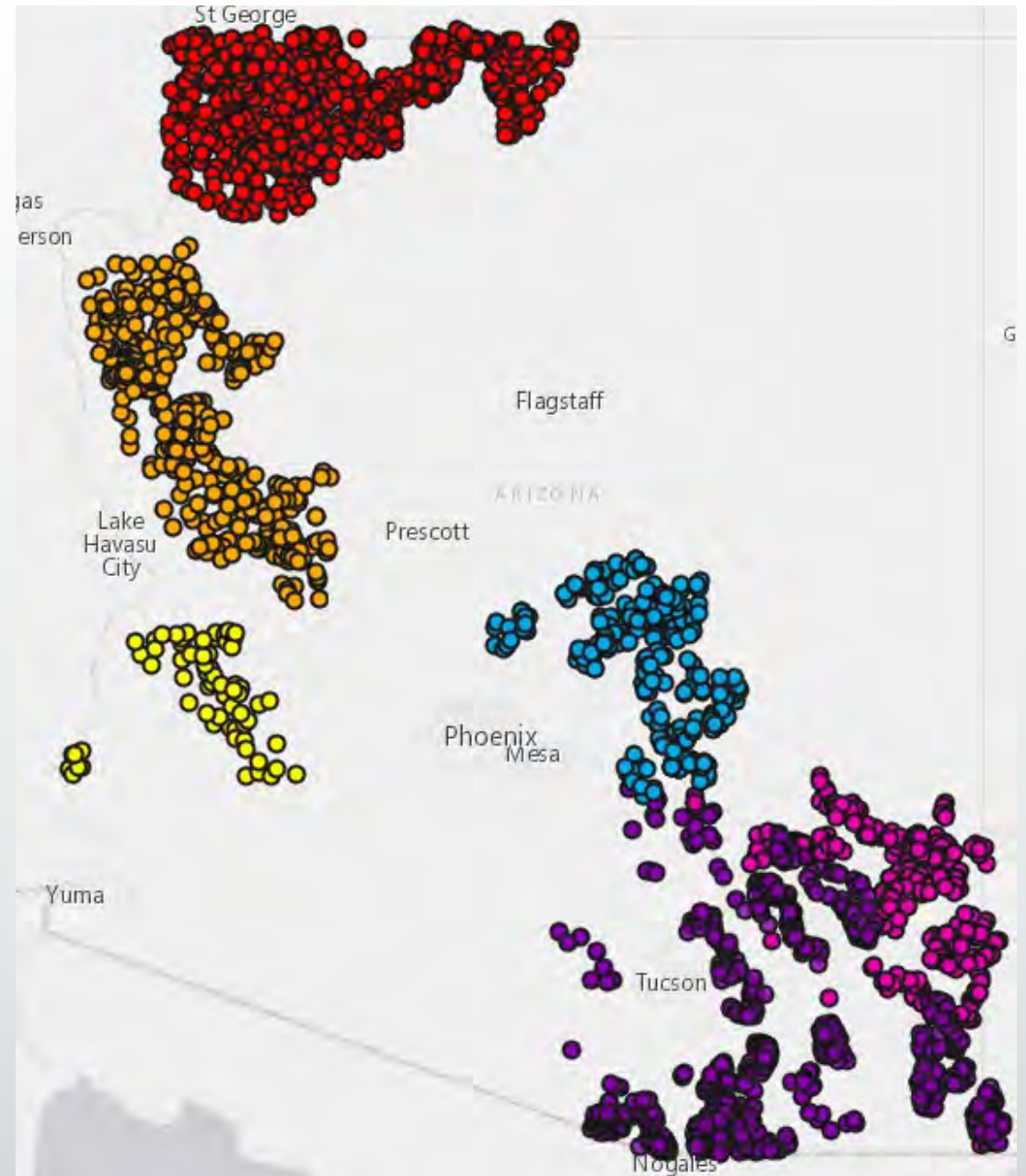
- Rancher feedback included "I appreciate your support and help as all the ranchers going forward will need U of A assistance as monitoring is one of the tools we should be using going forward in making an educated decision."
- TNF staff commented "With monitoring data, we were able to complete NEPA/Environmental Assessment (EA) on an allotment with recent litigation that caused several Forest permittees to reduce their authorized [livestock] numbers until the assessment was completed. RTR data gathered was used and relied on heavily throughout the analysis. The NEPA/EA was heavily scrutinized because of the litigation but RTR data gave us the utmost confidence moving through the project and helped us provide the deciding official with the most accurate, reliable, and relevant data for use in this decision."



Evaluation of Monitoring Programs

UA Cooperative Monitoring

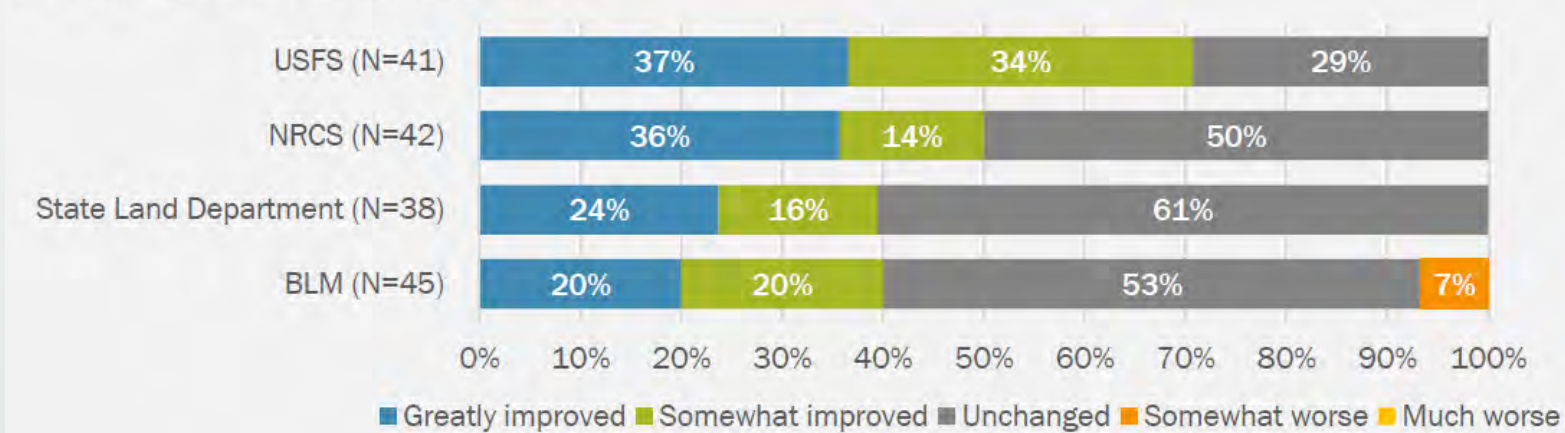
- Southeastern – Coronado National Forest
- Central – Tonto National Forest
- Northwest – AZ Strip, Kingman, and Yuma BLM Field Offices



Monitoring and Improved Relationships

- Rancher-agency relationships are complicated but potentially improving.

To what extent has monitoring on your grazing allotments and leases improved or worsened your relationship with the following agencies?

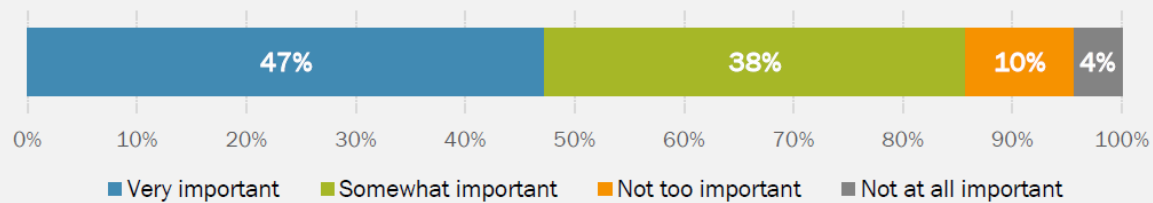


- Agency staff and ranchers highlighted the value of Extension rangeland monitoring programs in providing a common, trusted set of data and creating opportunities for dialogue.

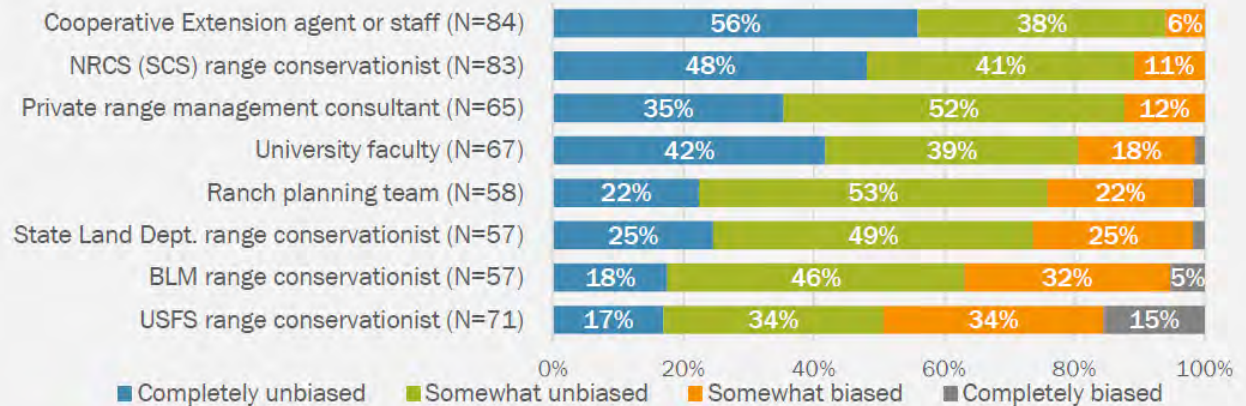
Reliable Data

- Ranchers and agency staff consistently indicated that they value the data collected through Extension monitoring programs.
- Having an unbiased third party involved in monitoring is essential, and Extension was consistently viewed as the most unbiased resource available to ranchers.

How important is it to you to have an unbiased third party participate in rangeland monitoring? (N=91)

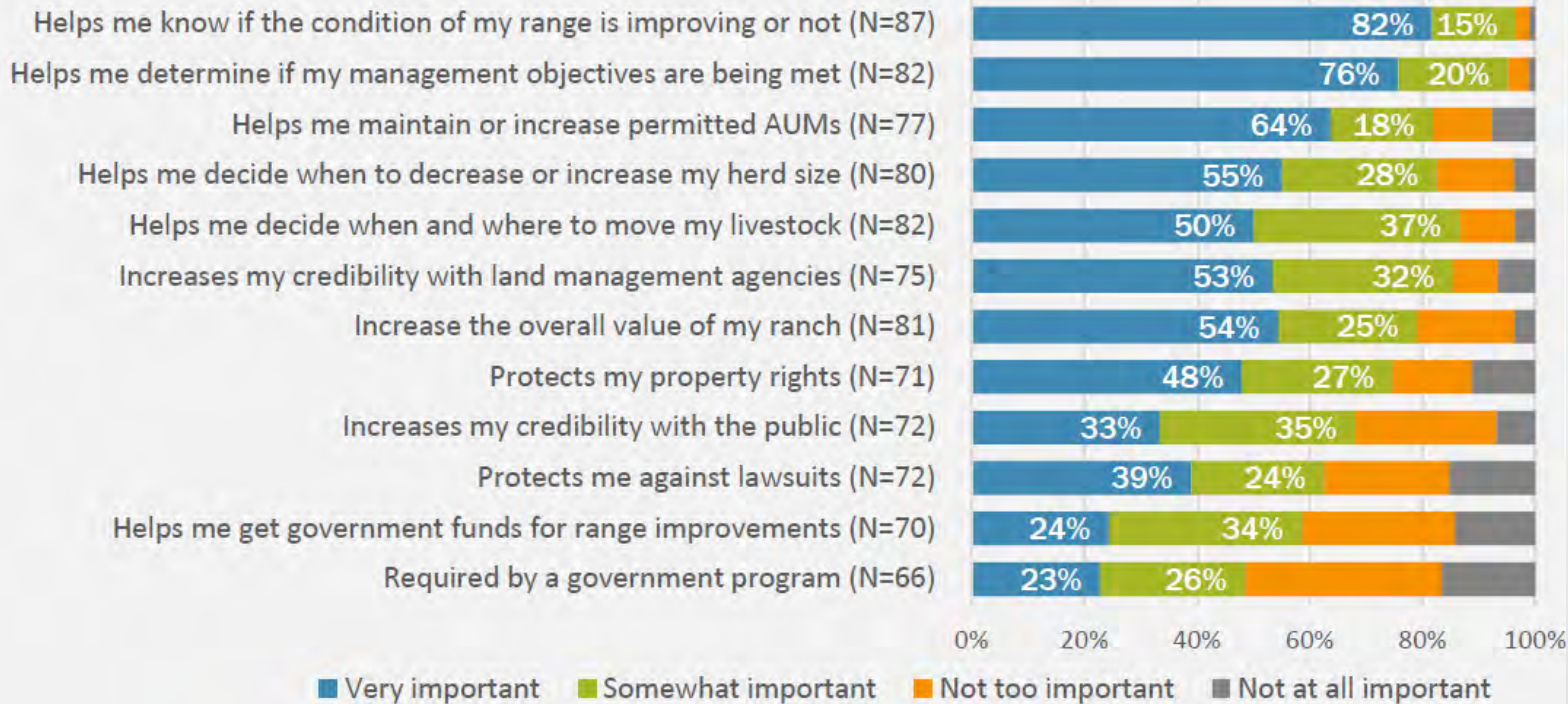


How biased do you think the following resources are?



Why Are Ranchers Monitoring?

How important to you are the following reasons for monitoring?



- Ranchers who were involved with Cooperative Extension reported using significantly more formal monitoring methods than ranchers who were not.

