

History of Grazing Blurb

Let's start by skimming through the pages of the 1958 Dixie Roundup pamphlet printed by the St. George Lion's Club. <https://wchsutah.org/documents/dixie-roundup-1958.pdf> About four pages from the end is an advertisement for the 18th Annual Southern Utah Livestock show at Cedar City.



Grand Champion Steer of Southern Utah Livestock Show. Purchased by Bank of St. George for \$1350.

You should get a good idea of how important raising livestock was to our community back then.

The early Mormon settlers located a number of grasslands around the county and on the Arizona Strip where cooperative herds of livestock could be grazed including Hebron to the NW and Pipe Springs to the SE.

January 31, 1871 Deseret News

ST. GEORGE.—The following telegrams were received per Deseret Telegraph Line this morning:

ST. GEORGE, Jan. 31.

Deseret News:—Jos. A. Young, F. Little, Jos. W. Young, Jas. A. Little and B. Y. Jr. left this city on the 26th inst., and drove to Virgin city 33 miles, and held meeting the same evening. On the morning of the 27th they drove to Pipe Springs, 42 miles, and were much pleased with the country, which is unsurpassed for a stock range.

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Our General Conferences have of late years been held in the New Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, and spacious accommodation has been afforded the people; but in the approaching Conference we contemplate assembling in the lower main room of the Temple in St. George, which, being without galleries, affords but about one-sixth of the seating to be found in the New Tabernacle in Salt Lake City.

There being no railroad in this part of the land, many horses and mules will necessarily be used to bring the brethren and sisters who come to Conference. As general information to those who have not been here, we state that the stock range in the vicinity of St. George is very limited and hay and grain are scarce.

March 14, 1877 *Deseret News*

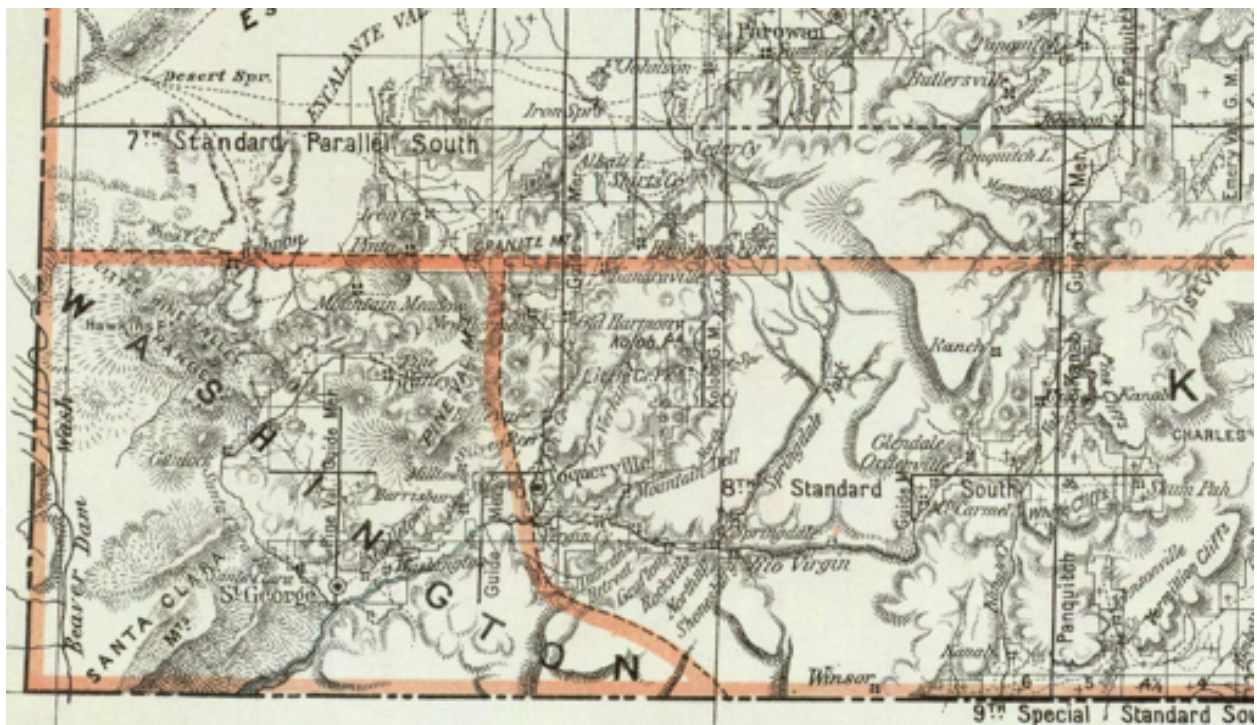
This announcement printed in the *Deseret News* was intended to alert those who would be attending the April General Conference which was going to be held in the newly completed Temple, that seating was limited and that there was not a suitable place to graze livestock in or near St. George.

gested the question, "Have you any good news from the sunny south?"

"Yes," said he; "lots of it, all the way from the great Colorado. Water is abundant over the whole stock range of mountains south of the Colorado river; feed was never better; cattle come up fat and fine. Ten thousand steers have been sold and shipped to distant markets."

July 6, 1890 *Salt Lake Herald*

By the late 1880s, cattle and sheep ranching had evolved into profitable ventures for both local settlers and outside large operators like Preston Nutter, who purchased water rights for grazing in Kane County and the Arizona Strip.



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A steady flow of water is of vital importance to St. George and the neighboring settlements, and the Dixie Forest Reserve would be created with this object in view. It is therefore unfair to assume that any grazing privileges will be recommended which would seriously damage the forest or brush cover. On much of the proposed reserve the damage resulting from the grazing of sheep would far outweigh any loss incurred by the owners of sheep from restriction of range, and the question would be decided accordingly.

I should be greatly obliged if you would write the citizens of St. George to this effect and assure them that before final recommendations are made by this Bureau the local sentiment will be most carefully considered.

Very respectfully,

GIFFORD PINCHOT,
Forester.

February 1, 1906 Iron County Record

Initially, the Department of Agriculture allowed 6,000 head of cattle and horses on the Dixie Forest Reserve but sheep were banned. There was a charge for 20 cents a head for the summer season.

Go to <https://wchsutah.org/documents/splitting-raindrops.pdf> for more on the history of Dixie Forest Reserve.

February 27, 1904 Washington County News

The Dixie Forest Reserve was created in 1905 by Congress. The chief forester Gifford Pinchot solicited the cooperation of St. George citizens and ranchers in this 1904 column which appeared in the Washington County News. The locals including church authorities were supportive because they had experienced the effects of overgrazing by outside outfits depending only upon the open range policy of the General Land Office.

The Forest Reserve lands were withdrawn from entry by new homesteaders in 1904, and local ranchers had to limit the number of livestock they could graze on Forest Reserve lands.

United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Washington, D. C., February 1, 1906.

Mr. Sylvanus Collett, St. George, Utah.

Dear Sir:—Provision has been made for the grazing of 6,000 head of cattle and horses in the Dixie Forest Reserve during the season of 1906. No sheep will be allowed in the reserve.

The summer grazing season will be from May 1, to November 15, the charge for which will be 20 cents per head. No stock will be allowed on the reserve lands from November 16 to May 1 except the few head of milch cows and work animals owned by actual reserve residents to exclude which would be a hardship. The stock of this class may be allowed in the reserve the year-long season, May 1, 1906, to April 30, 1907, the charge for which will be 35 cents per head. The stock for which you decide to issue yearly permits under the instructions may remain in the reserve until May 1, free of charge as provided in Forest Reserve Order No. 22.

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August 4, 1927 Washington County News

The son of Washington County's famed surveyor, J. M. Macfarlane became president of the Utah Cattle and Horsegrowers Association. He became an advocate for regulation of the public domain to protect local ranchers from large transient herds that relied on the open range policy.

Increasingly, raising livestock for a living became a way of life in Washington County and the Arizona Strip. The Dixie Stock Growers Bank opened for business in May of 1921 across the street from the St. George Tabernacle with \$60,000 of reserve capital.

DIXIE STOCKMEN WANT RANGE SAVED

Stockmen in Washington, Kane, Garfield and Iron counties are discouraged at the range regulation outlook in this part of the state and many small ranches and farms are being abandoned, according to J. M. Macfarlane, president of the Utah Cattle and Horsegrowers Association and chief brand inspector of the state who was in this section recently on an inspection trip.

The lack of regulation on the public domain is apparent everywhere in the smaller carrying capacity of the range each year, he said. The small ranchers, unable to make a living on a small scale, must turn to livestock for a living.

Their properties are being grazed by transient herds and their local stock is suffering. Some protection must be given these ranchers in the out of way places to assure them the use and enjoyment of their local resources if they are to continue to colonize, Macfarlane said.



Dixie Stock Growers Bank (1921)

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The Utah State Agricultural College (later USU) became interested in range science. In particular, professor John A. Widtsoe who had published studies and a book (*Dry Farming* 1911) began to advocate for the practice of dry farming.

In some areas of southern Utah, where grazing had been the most economically viable use, clearing the land, seeding it with wheatgrass or other perennial grasses became feasible. The practice effectively reduced the available range available for livestock use.

Dry Farming, John A. Widtsoe 1911



FIG. 11. Sagebrush on fertile clay loam under an annual rainfall of 15 inches. Utah. Wherever there is a thrifty growth of sagebrush, the success of dry-farming is certain.

APPENDIX

2013 Allan Savory TED talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/allan_savory_how_to_fight_desertification_and_reverse_climate_change?language=en

2017 Sierra Club rebuttal

<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2017-2-march-april/feature/allan-savory-says-more-cows-land-will-reverse-climate-change>

2021 Richard Teague Holistic Grazing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVNmM5dkG-Y>