



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Surprise Resource Area
602 Cressler Street
P.O. Box 460
Cedarville, CA 96104

February 20, 1996



4100 (CA-028)

Cathy Barcomb
Nevada Commission for the
Preservation of Wild Horses
Stewart Facility, Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Dear Cathy:

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 1995 regarding Tuledad Allotment management and our recent gather of wild horses on the Buckhorn and Coppersmith areas. I am sorry it has taken this long to get back to you. Between furloughs, budget crises, East Lassen planning, and trying to get the Bighorn Sheep decision out, it has been a pretty hectic time (not a very good reason, I know).

First, let me thank Roy Leach, Rich Heap and you for meeting with us in early December. I appreciated your comments, and I came away from the meeting with a much better understanding of your concerns and expectations. As we begin to assess and analyze the possibility of removing excess wild horses in our Fox-Hog area, I hope to incorporate and address the concerns you raise in a multiple use decision.

I am currently working with Rob Jeffers, our wild horse specialist, to try and get a start on population modeling, beginning with the Coppersmith and Buckhorn herds. Rob has been in contact with the University of Nevada at Reno, and are trying to arrange for training in the use and application of the population model.

Thanks also for your recommendations regarding management of the Tuledad Allotment. I believe we can accomplish what you are recommending.

At the present time, we have two issues which need to be addressed through an environmental assessment for 1996. Included is reissuance of the Dollarhide grazing permit (which recently expired), and the proposed conversion of the Goodwin-Jones permit from sheep to cattle. Because we have not yet made a long-term management decision for Tuledad, I am also proposing to address the annual authorization (terms and conditions) for the 1996 grazing season. We are incorporating the concerns you have addressed in the analysis and I hope to have an Environmental Assessment completed and to issue a Proposed Decision within the next two weeks.

At the same time, we are continuing to work toward a long-term decision for management of this area. We held several public workshops in January to in order to get some public feedback regarding the range of landscape options for the planning area. We had some general consensus that the range of alternatives was adequate, so now we are beginning the task of detailed alternative development. For the Selic-Alaska, Red Rock Lake and Tuledad portion of the planning area, the Technical Review Team will be meeting in early March to continue their work. Unfortunately, we had to postpone the meeting we had planned in January due to the impact of the furlough.

We recently completed a summary of bitterbrush monitoring data for 1993-1995. I have enclosed the report for information.

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me, and again, please accept my apology for the delay in getting back to you. As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan T. Stokke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Susan T. Stokke
Surprise Resource Area Manager

Enclosures

To: Area Manager, Stokke
From: Wildlife Biologist, Barnett
Subject: Bitterbrush data from Tuledad Allotment
Date: February 9, 1996

Enclosed are 7 figures showing bitterbrush data gathered on Tuledad Allotment. Bitterbrush transects are scattered throughout the allotment; in the key bitterbrush areas, the 3-way exclosures and in other areas of Tuledad. Data on utilization and form class were collected from 25 plants per transect.

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Form class decreased noticeably in 1994. However, this may be a function of observer bias. 1994 was the first year I ran the transects. After gaining more experience, and calibrating my measurements with others, I firmly believe my early readings were low. I believe 1995 readings are more accurate.

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List of figures:

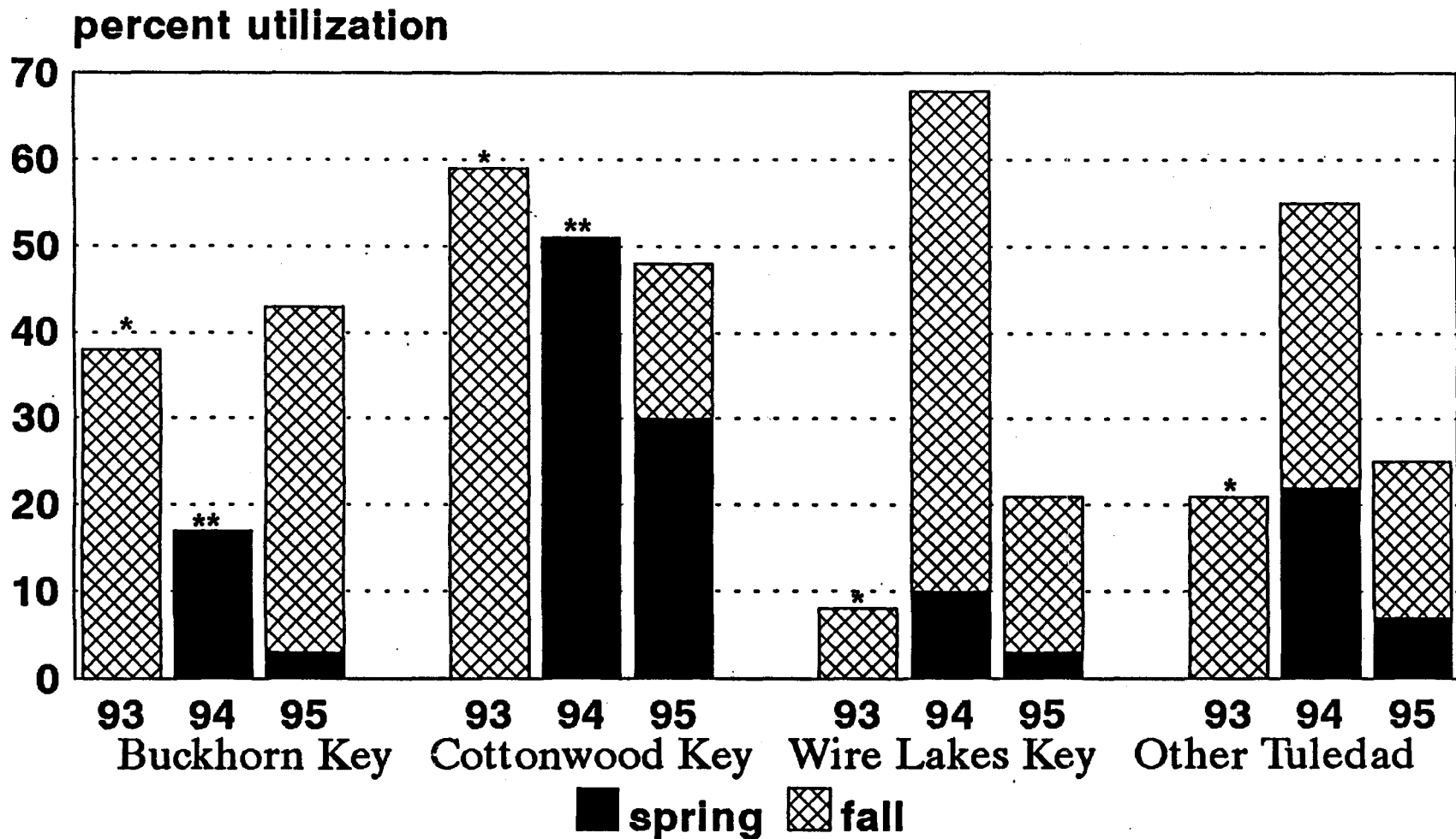
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Figure 1

BITTERBRUSH UTILIZATION

1993 - 1995



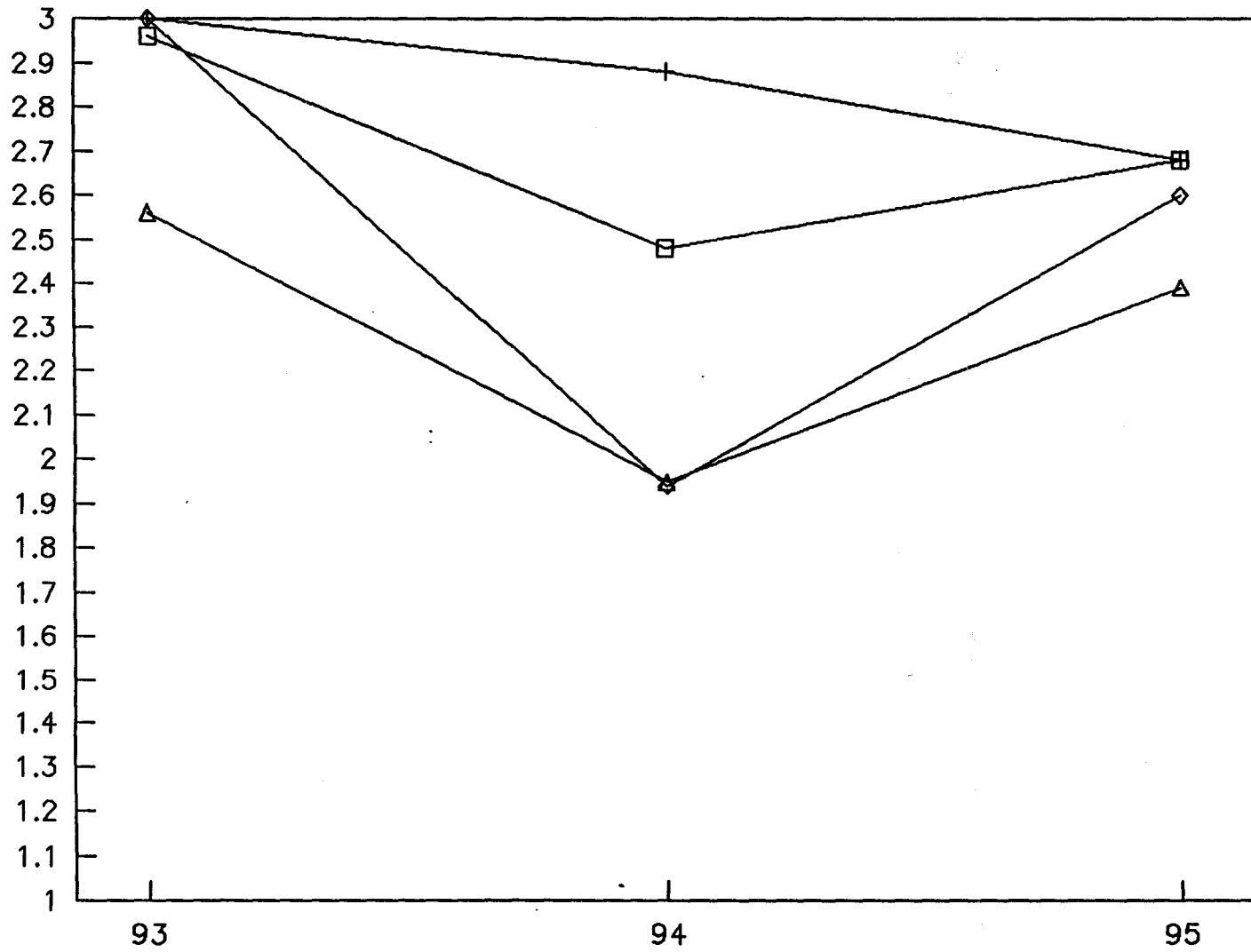
* No data in spring

** No data in fall

Figure 2

BITTERBRUSH

FORM CLASS 1992-1995

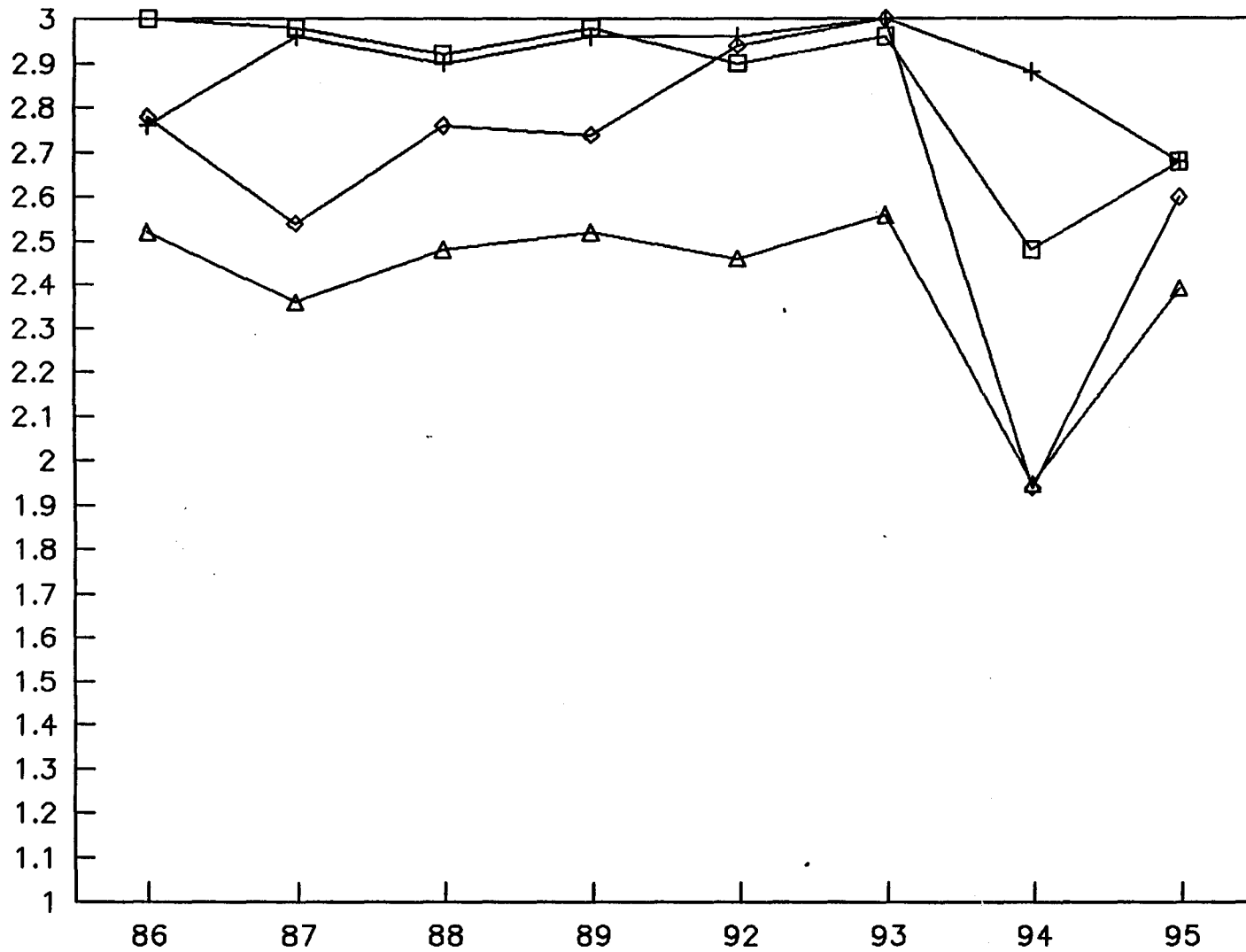


□ Buckhorn Key + Cottonwood Key ◇ Wire Lakes Key Δ Other Tuledad

Figure 3

BITTERBRUSH

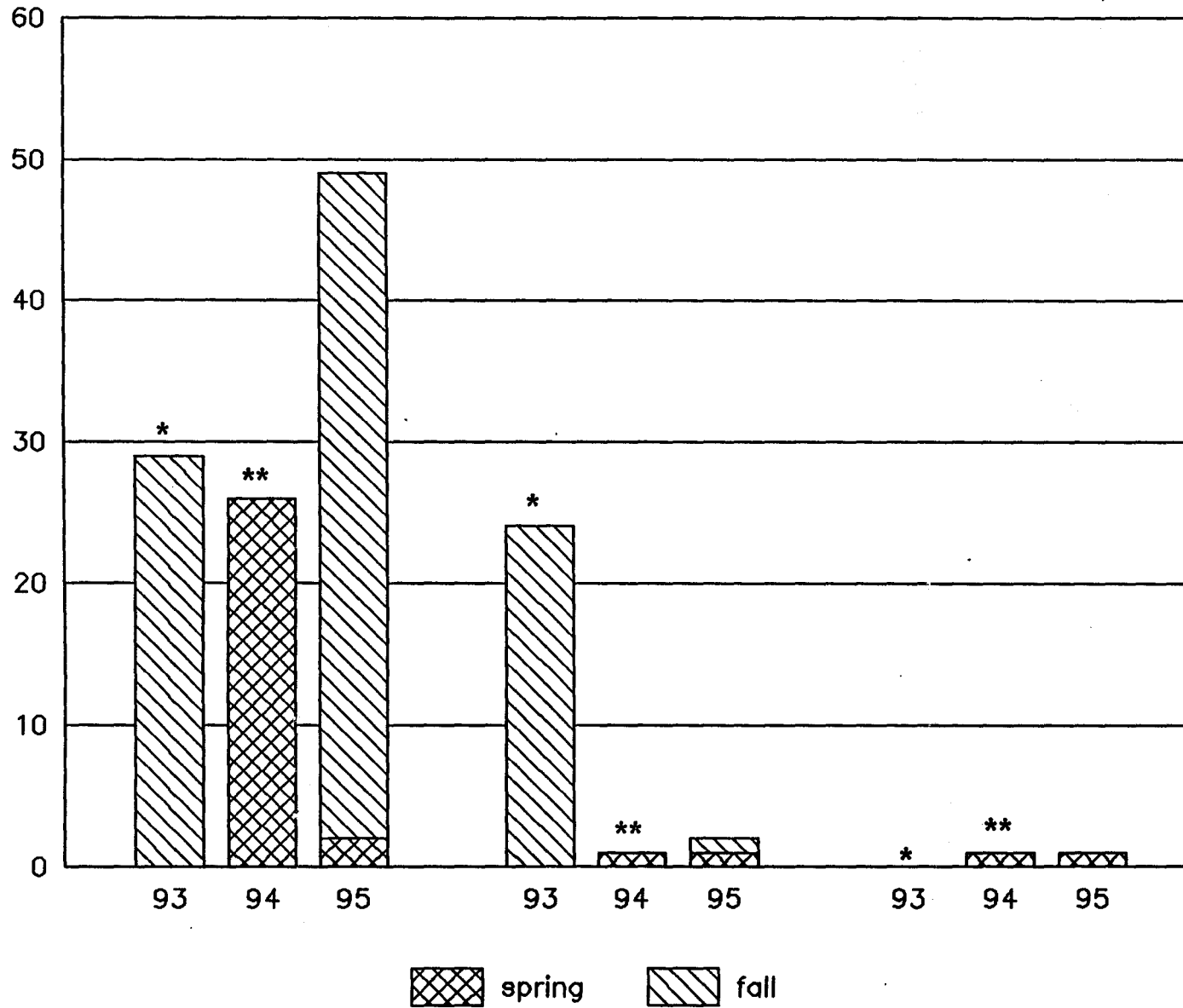
FORM CLASS 1986-1995



□ Buckhorn Key + Cottonwood Key ◇ Wire Lakes Key △ Other Tuleadad

Figure 4

BUCKHORN 3-WAY EXCLOSURE utilization

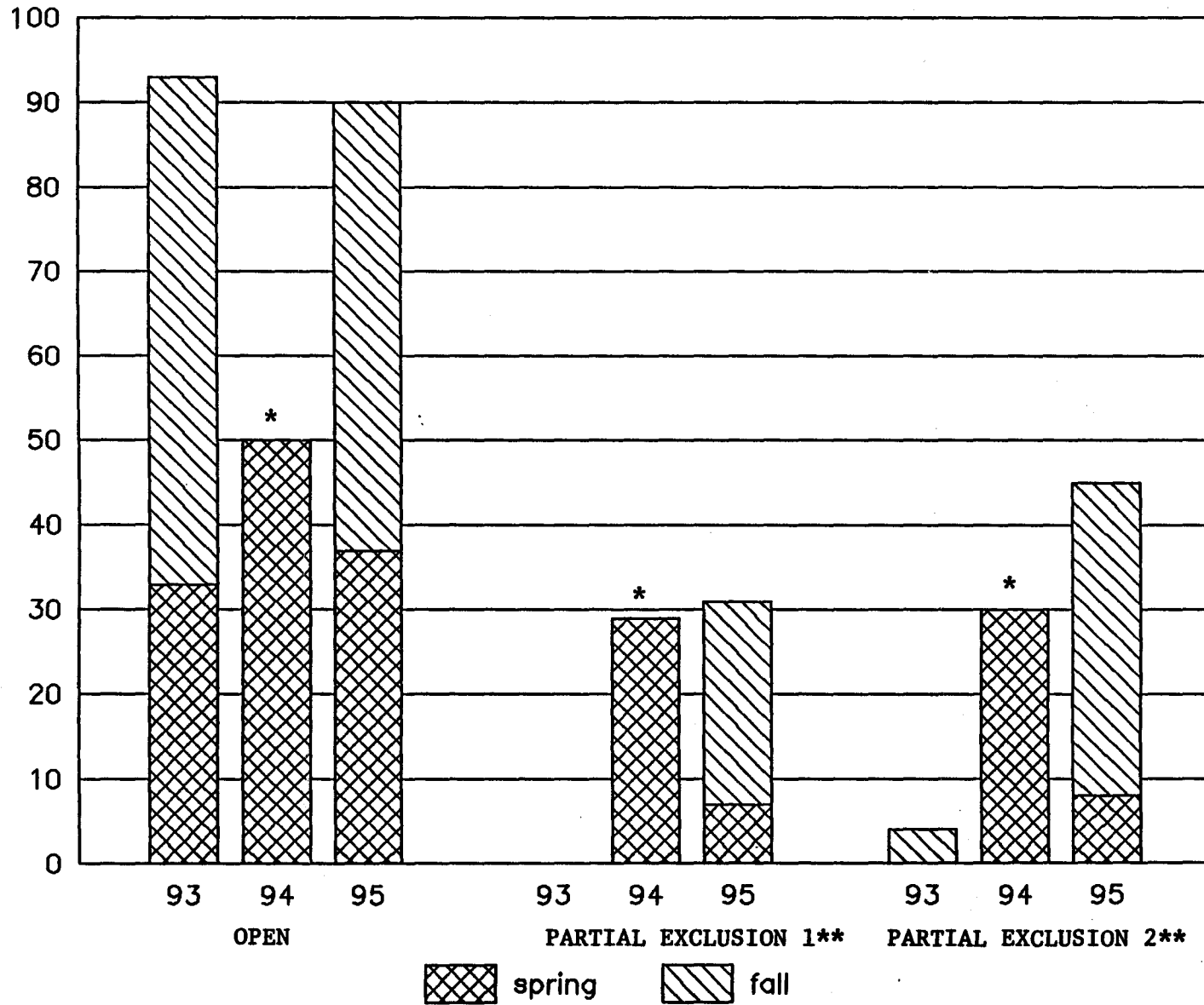


*No data in spring 1993
**No data in fall 1994

Figure 6

COTTONWOOD 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

utilization



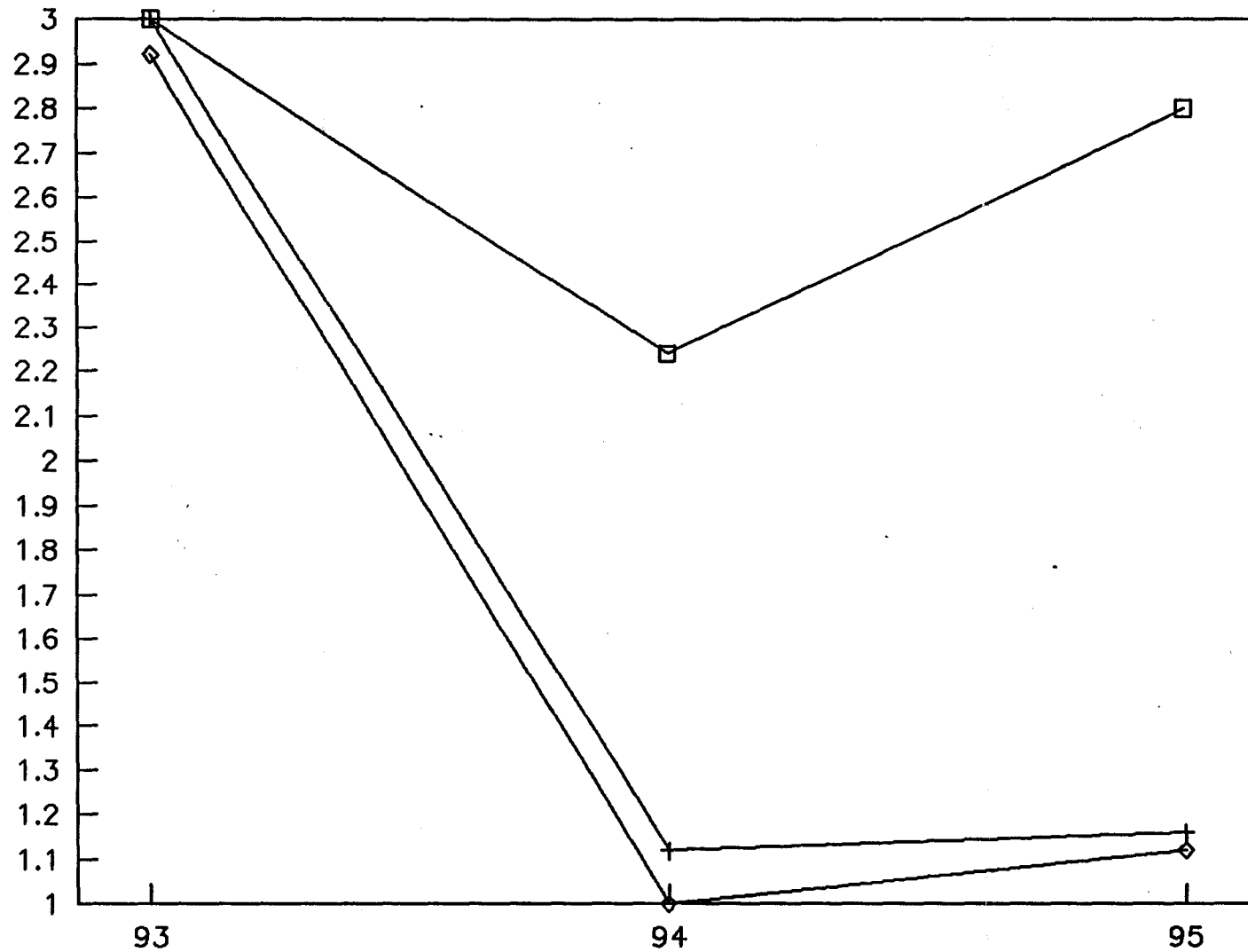
*No data in fall 1994

**The total exclusion section has not been completed

Figure 5

BUCKHORN 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

form class 1993 - 1995

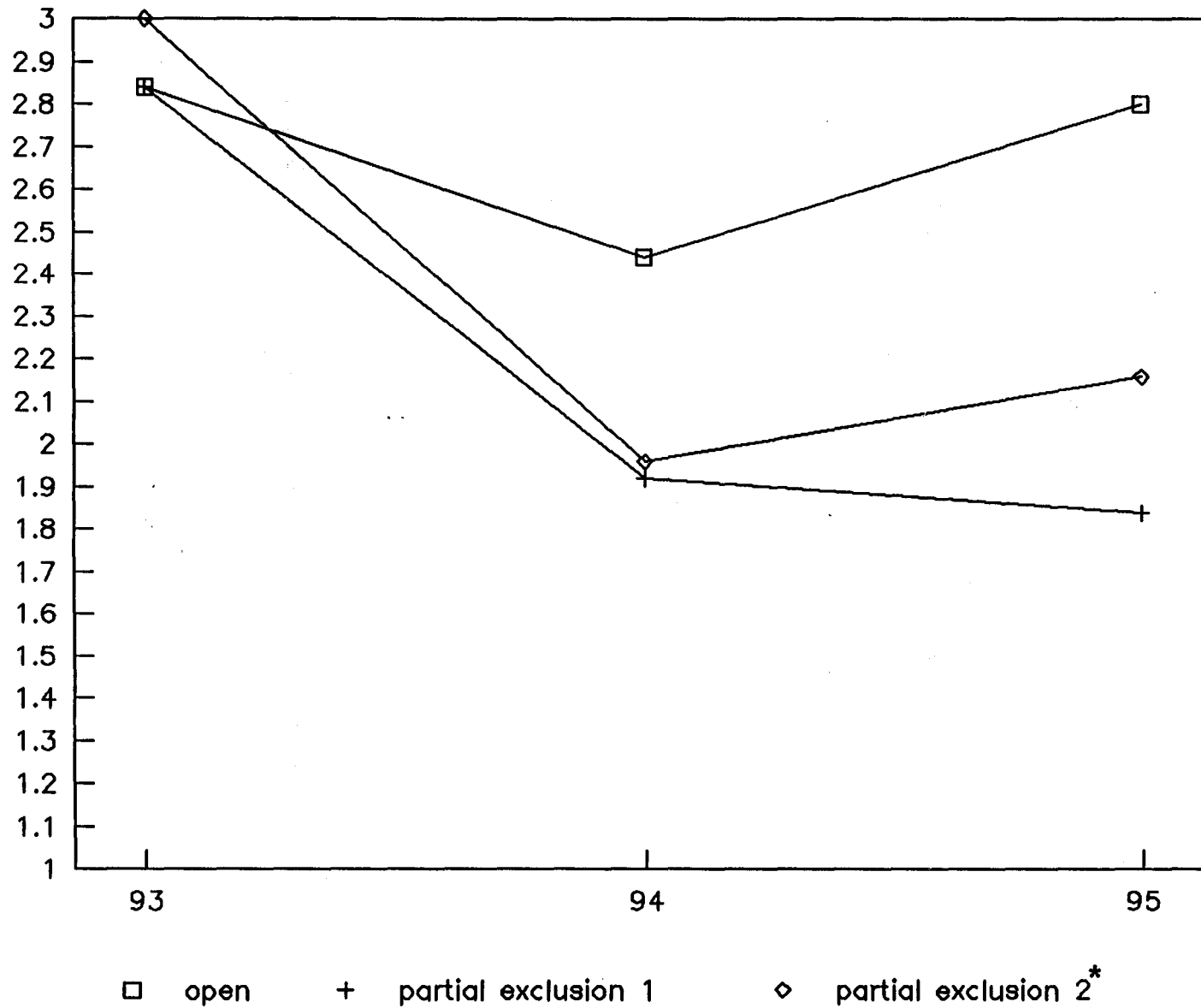


□ open + partial exclusion ◇ total exclusion

Figure 7

COTTONWOOD 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

form class 1993 - 1995



* The total exclusion section has not been completed

TULEDAD ALLOTMENT
Proposed Plan of Use for 1996 Grazing Season
2/16/96

Overall goals for management of the Tuledad Allotment in 1996 are to:

- (1) Improve riparian habitat conditions in and around Boot Lake, by providing total rest from livestock use.
- (2) Promote recovery of areas burned within the North Pasture in 1994 and 1995, by providing total rest from livestock use.
- (3) Reduce fine fuels, decrease the risk of catastrophic fire, and ensure no more than slight use by cattle and sheep prior to July 15 on bitterbrush in the Cottonwood Mountain and Buckhorn key bitterbrush areas; and sheep use prior to July 1 in the Wire Lakes key bitterbrush area.
- (4) Provide rest from both sheep and cattle use in the Tuledad and Worland Seedings, and rest the majority of the North Pasture from cattle use, except Snake Lake which will be used early only.

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions are a part of the annual grazing authorization for 1996:

1. **Grazing Schedule.**

Table 1 outlines the grazing schedule for cattle use in 1996.

Table 2 outlines the grazing schedule for sheep in 1996.

2. **Management Requirements.**

(a) **Livestock Turnout.**

* Sheep are scheduled to be turned out March 26.

* Cattle are scheduled to be turned out April 15. Cattle may be authorized to turnout up to two weeks earlier (April 1) if monitoring indicates that the soils are dry enough and the vegetation has grown enough to support livestock use without damage to the resources.

(b) **Key Bitterbrush Areas.**

* Key bitterbrush areas are limited to 15% utilization of available bitterbrush by livestock at the end of the grazing season.

* Permittees will need to monitor livestock use on bitterbrush closely throughout

the grazing period to ensure that the 15% allowable use of bitterbrush is not exceeded.

* As livestock use of bitterbrush approaches 10%, permittees will need to remove livestock from the key areas within 5 days.

* Any animals returning to the key bitterbrush areas will be promptly removed. Animals which chronically return to the key bitterbrush areas will be removed from the Tuledad Allotment.

(c) Key Riparian Areas.

* Key riparian areas in the South Pasture include Chalk Spring, Express Canyon, Four Lakes and Burnt Lake. Allowable use of these riparian areas is 50% of herbaceous vegetation or 4 inches or residual vegetation (stubble height).

* The majority of riparian areas in the North Pasture will be rested in 1996. Snake Lake is the only riparian area which will be. Allowable use of Snake Lake is 50% of herbaceous species, 45% of woody species, or 4 inches residual vegetation.

* Boot Lake will be totally rested from all livestock use.

(d) Post-burn Management.

Livestock will be herded away from 1994 and 1995 burned areas.

(e) Aspen Management.

Sheep will not be bedded or salted in or near aspen stands.

3. Monitoring Schedule.

Refer to **Table 3.**

4. Range Improvements.

(a) Maintenance.

- (1) Boundary Fence -- Tuledad permittees and adjacent allotment permittees.
- (2) Barber Creek BLM/Modoc National Forest Boundary Fence -- Tuledad permittees.
- (3) Barber Creek Enclosure Fence -- BLM.
- (4) Bare Creek Enclosure Fence -- Tuledad permittees and BLM (BLM will lock gates as cattleguards are present to provide for public access).
- (5) Bud Brown Enclosure Fence -- BLM.

(b) New Construction.

The permittees will construct the Ant Spring Enclosure Fence.

Table 1 - CATTLE USE 1996

	MAX #'s	EST. SEASON	USE CRITERIA	RESOURCE OBJECTIVES
BALD MOUNTAIN				
	700 cattle	4-15 to 7-15	-60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush -45% use woody riparian species	-Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush -Retain vigor and reproduction on woody riparian vegetation -Retain residual herbaceous riparian vegetation
NORTH PASTURE				
Snake Lake	700 cattle	4-15 to 7-15	-60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush -50% use Snake Lake meadow -45% use woody riparian species	-Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush -Retain residual herbaceous riparian vegetation -Retain vigor and reproduction on woody riparian vegetation
North Coppersmiths, Tulead Canyon, Boots Hole	Rest			
Wire Lakes Key	Rest			
Boot Lake	Rest			
SOUTH PASTURE				
Duck Flat, Rye Patch	600 cattle	4-15 to 6-1	-50% use Chalk Hill Spring -60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush	-Leave residual vegetation on Chalk Hill Spring for wildlife habitat -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush
Four Lakes Express Canyon Burnt Lake	600 cattle	5-1 to 9-30	-50% use Express riparian -60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush	-Leave residual vegetation on riparian systems for wildlife habitat -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush
Buckhorn Key	300 cattle	6-1 to 7-15	-15% use bitterbrush -60% use key perennial herbaceous	-Reduce fine fuels to minimize the risk of catastrophic fire -Minimize use on bitterbrush to retain maximum amount of bitterbrush for wildlife -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Reduce herbaceous vegetation in key bitterbrush stands to minimize late season livestock use in key bitterbrush areas and to reduce competition of herbaceous vegetation with bitterbrush seedlings.
COTTONWOOD MOUNTAIN PASTURE				
	200 cattle	6-1 to 7-15	-15% use bitterbrush -60% use key perennial herbaceous -50% use Bryant Spring	-Reduce fine fuels to minimize the risk of catastrophic fire -Minimize use on bitterbrush to retain maximum amount of bitterbrush for wildlife -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Leave residual vegetation on riparian systems for wildlife habitat
SEEDINGS				
Tulead	Complete Rest			
Worland	Complete Rest			
EXCLOSURES				
Bud Brown	Complete Rest			
Bare Creek	Complete Rest			
Barber Creek	Complete Rest			

Table 2 -- SHEEP USE 1996

	MAX #'s	EST. SEASON	USE CRITERIA	RESOURCE OBJECTIVES
BALD MOUNTAIN				
	1000 sheep	3-26 to 10-15	-60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush -45% use woody riparian species	-Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush -Retain vigor and reproduction on woody riparian vegetation -Retain residual herbaceous riparian vegetation
NORTH PASTURE				
Snake Lake	1000 sheep	3-26 to 10-15	-60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush -50% use Snake Lake meadow -45% use woody riparian species	-Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush -Retain residual herbaceous riparian vegetation -Retain vigor and reproduction on woody riparian vegetation
North Coppersmiths, Tulead Canyon, Boots Hole	2000 sheep	3-26 to 8-1 and 9-1 to 10-15	-No use on burned areas	-Allow both herbaceous and woody vegetation in Copper Fire and 1994 wildfire areas to recover -Retain vigor of all perennial species
Wire Lakes Key	1000 sheep	3-26 to 7-1	<15% use bitterbrush	-Minimize use on bitterbrush to retain maximum amount of bitterbrush for wildlife. -Retain vigor of all perennial species
Boot Lake	Rest			
SOUTH PASTURE				
Duck Flat, Rye Patch	2000 sheep	3-26 to 7-15	-50% use Chalk Hill Spring -60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush	-Leave residual vegetation on Chalk Hill Spring for wildlife habitat -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush
Four Lakes Express Canyon Burnt Lake	2000 sheep	4-1 to 8-1 and 9-1 to 10-15	-50% use Express riparian -60% use key perennial herbaceous -45% use bitterbrush	-Leave residual vegetation on riparian systems for wildlife habitat -Retain vigor of all perennial species -Retain vigor and reproduction of bitterbrush
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Tulead	Complete Rest			
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EXCLOSURES				
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Barber Creek	Complete Rest			

Table 3 -- Monitoring Schedule.

RESOURCE	TYPE OF MONITORING	TIMING	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Pre-season	Soil Moisture Plant Growth	April 1-15, later as needed	BLM
Bitterbrush	Utilization	Spot check through season	Operators BLM
Bitterbrush (transects)	Utilization Form Class Age Class Mortality	Late spring Fall	BLM
Riparian	Utilization	Spot check through season	Operators BLM
Riparian (transects)	Utilization Structure	Late spring Fall	BLM
Aspen Mountain brush	Utilization Reproduction	Spot check through season	BLM
Upland grasses	Utilization	Spot check through season	Operators BLM
Upland grasses (transects)	Utilization	Summer Fall	BLM

To: Area Manager, Stokke
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Subject: Bitterbrush data from Tuledad Allotment
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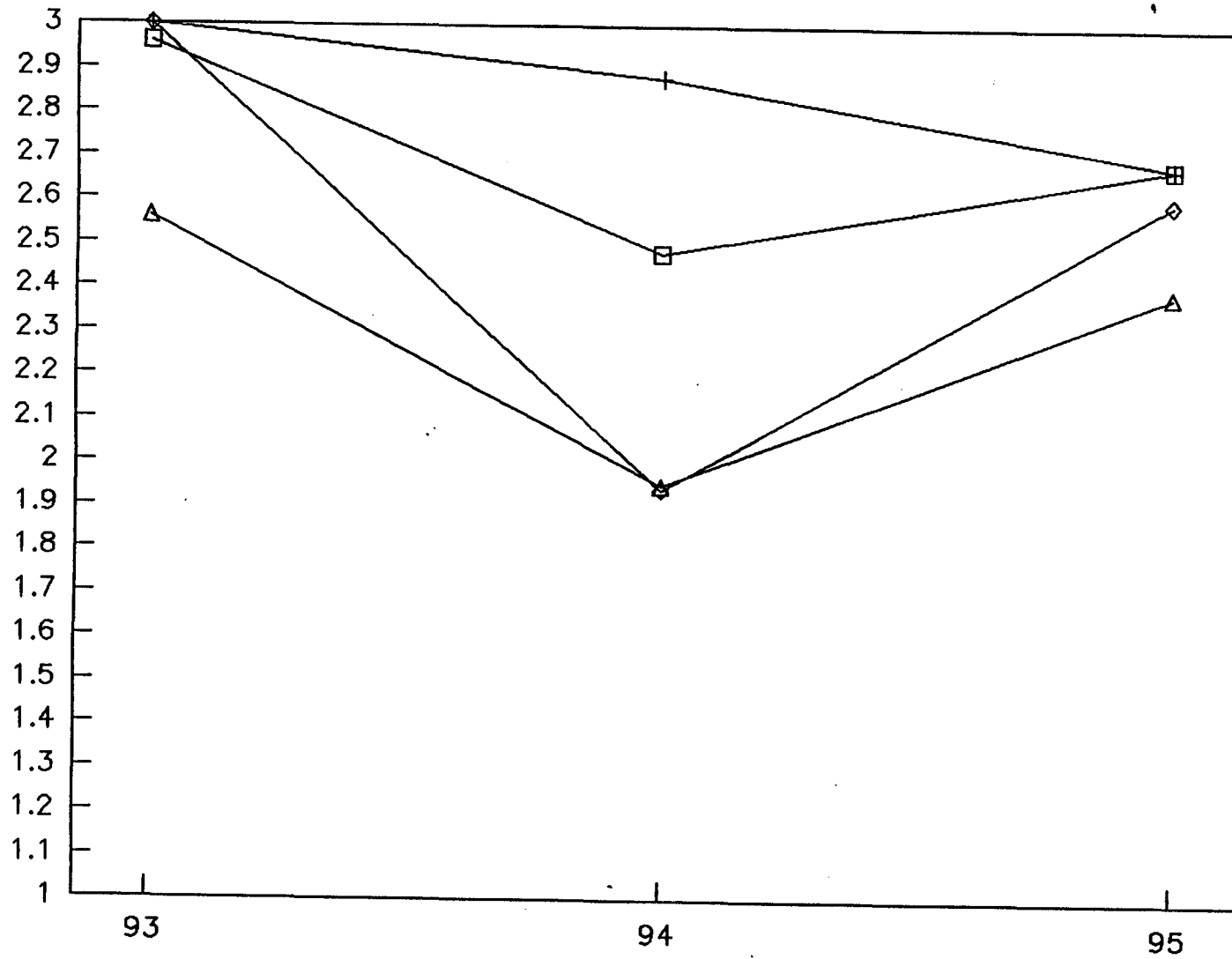
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Figure 2

BITTERBRUSH

FORM CLASS 1992-1995

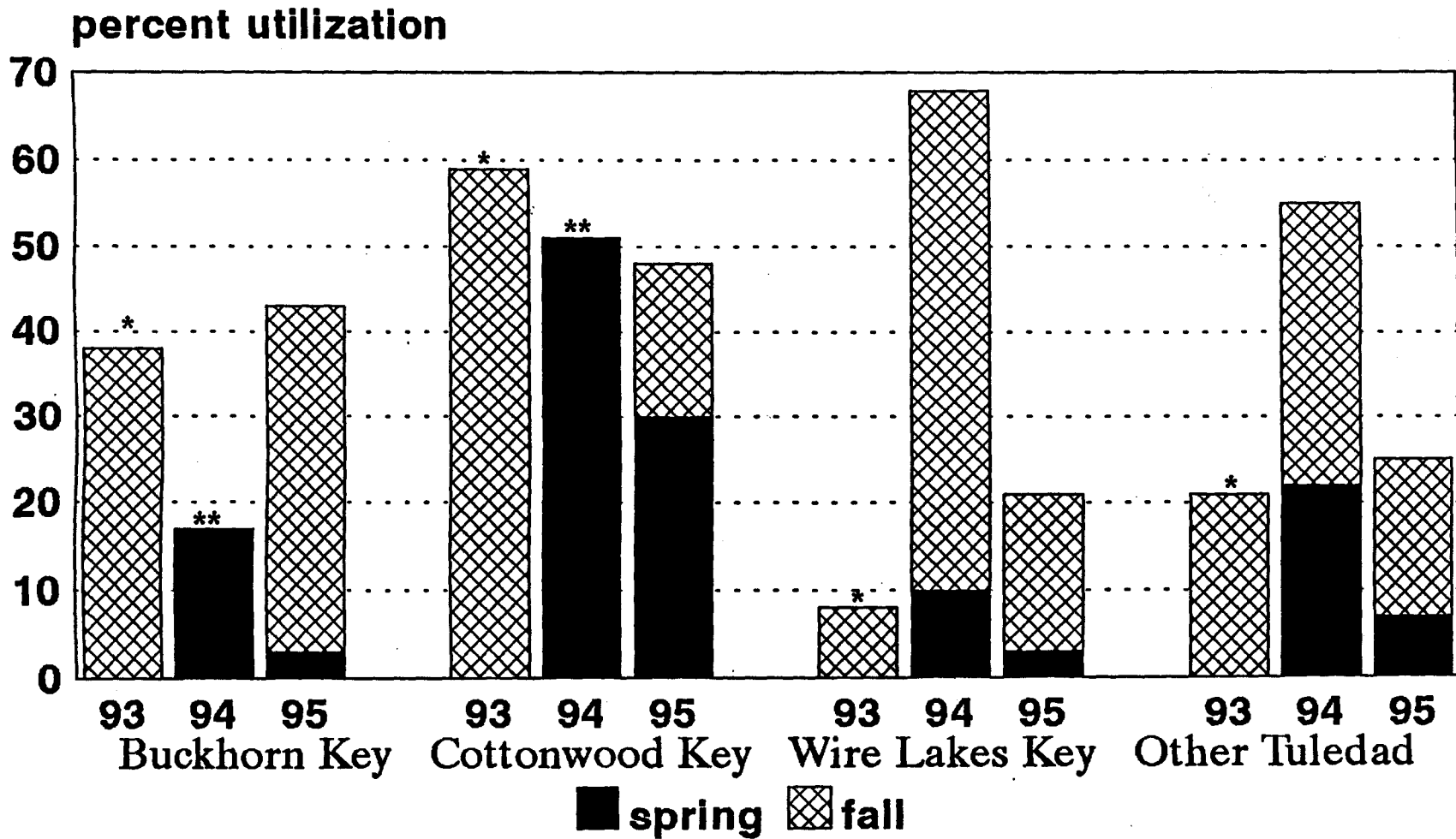


□ Buckhorn Key + Cottonwood Key ◇ Wire Lakes Key Δ Other Tuledad

Figure 1

BITTERBRUSH UTILIZATION

1993 - 1995



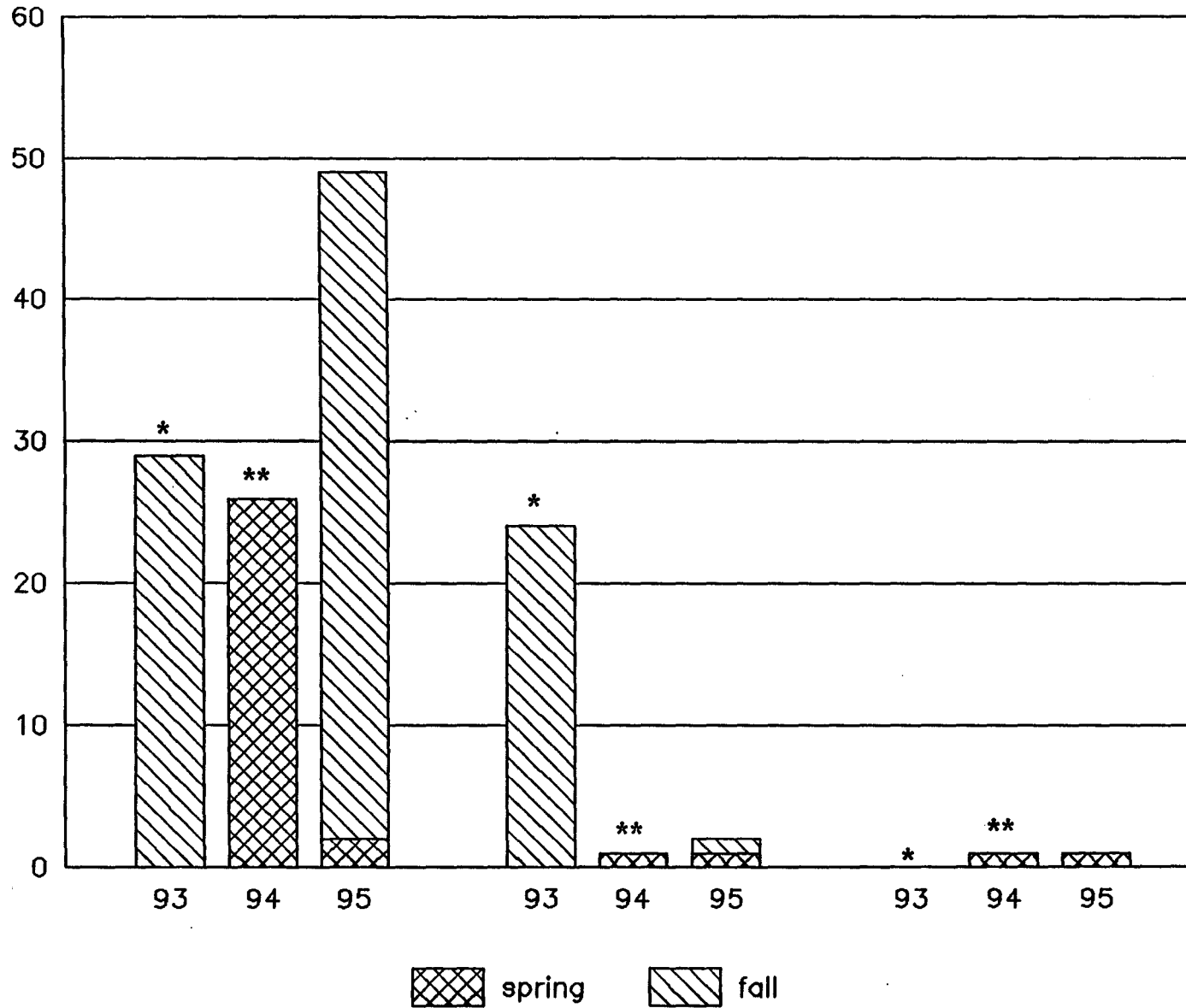
* No data in spring

** No data in fall

Figure 4

BUCKHORN 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

utilization

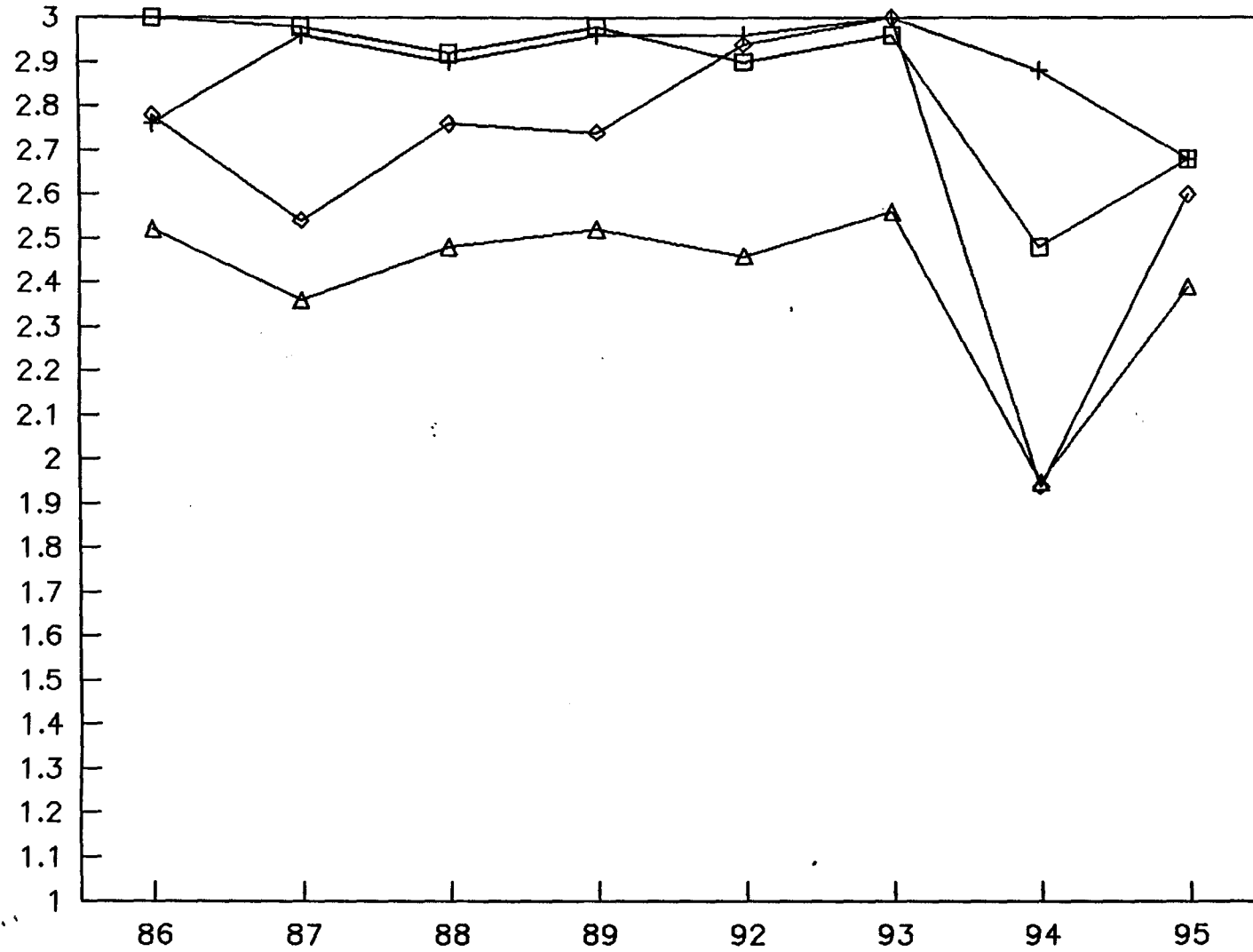


*No data in spring 1993
**No data in fall 1994

Figure 3

BITTERBRUSH

FORM CLASS 1986-1995

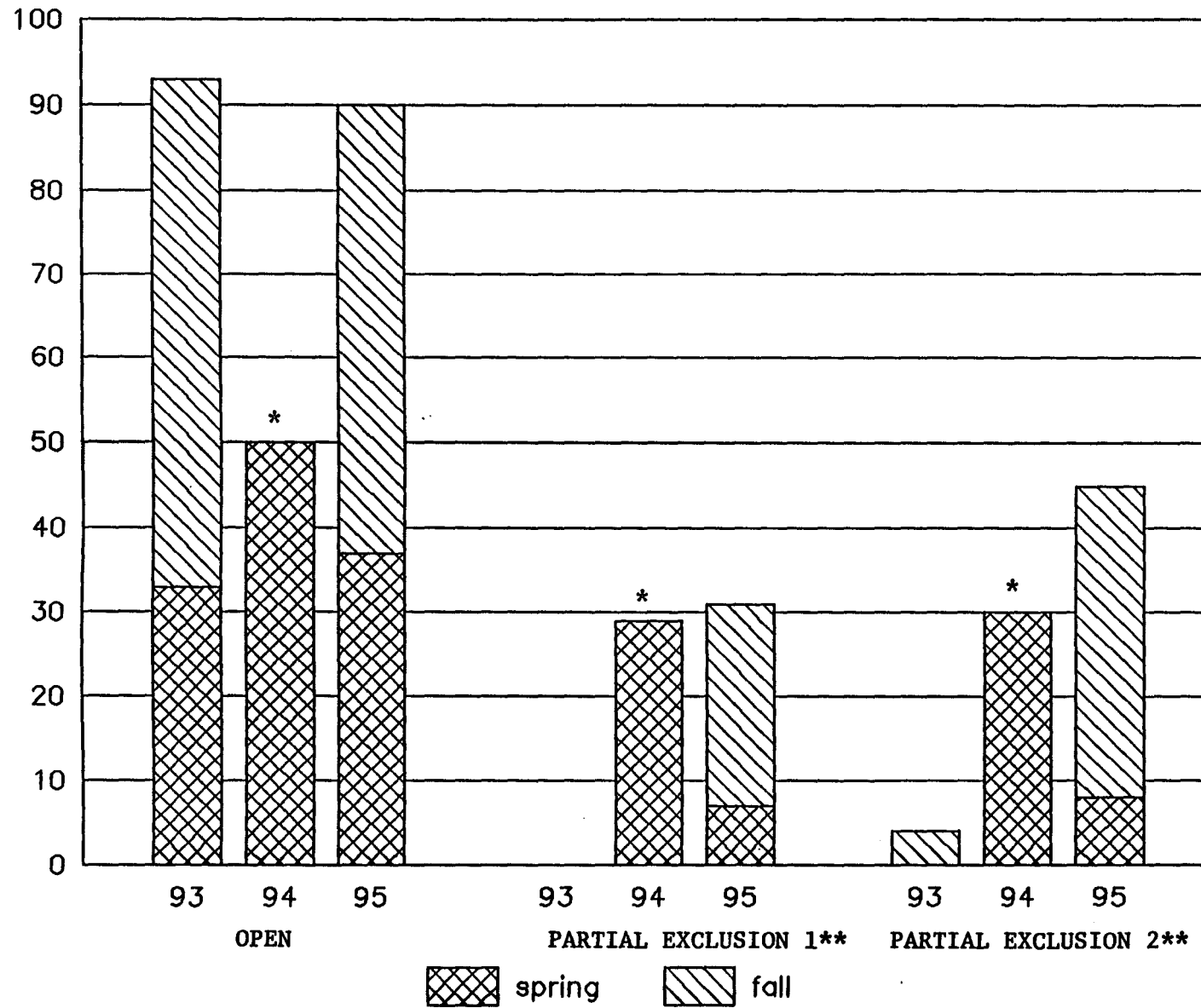


□ Buckhorn Key + Cottonwood Key ◇ Wire Lakes Key Δ Other Tuledad

Figure 6

COTTONWOOD 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

utilization



*No data in fall 1994

**The total exclusion section has not been completed

Figure 5

BUCKHORN 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

form class 1993 - 1995

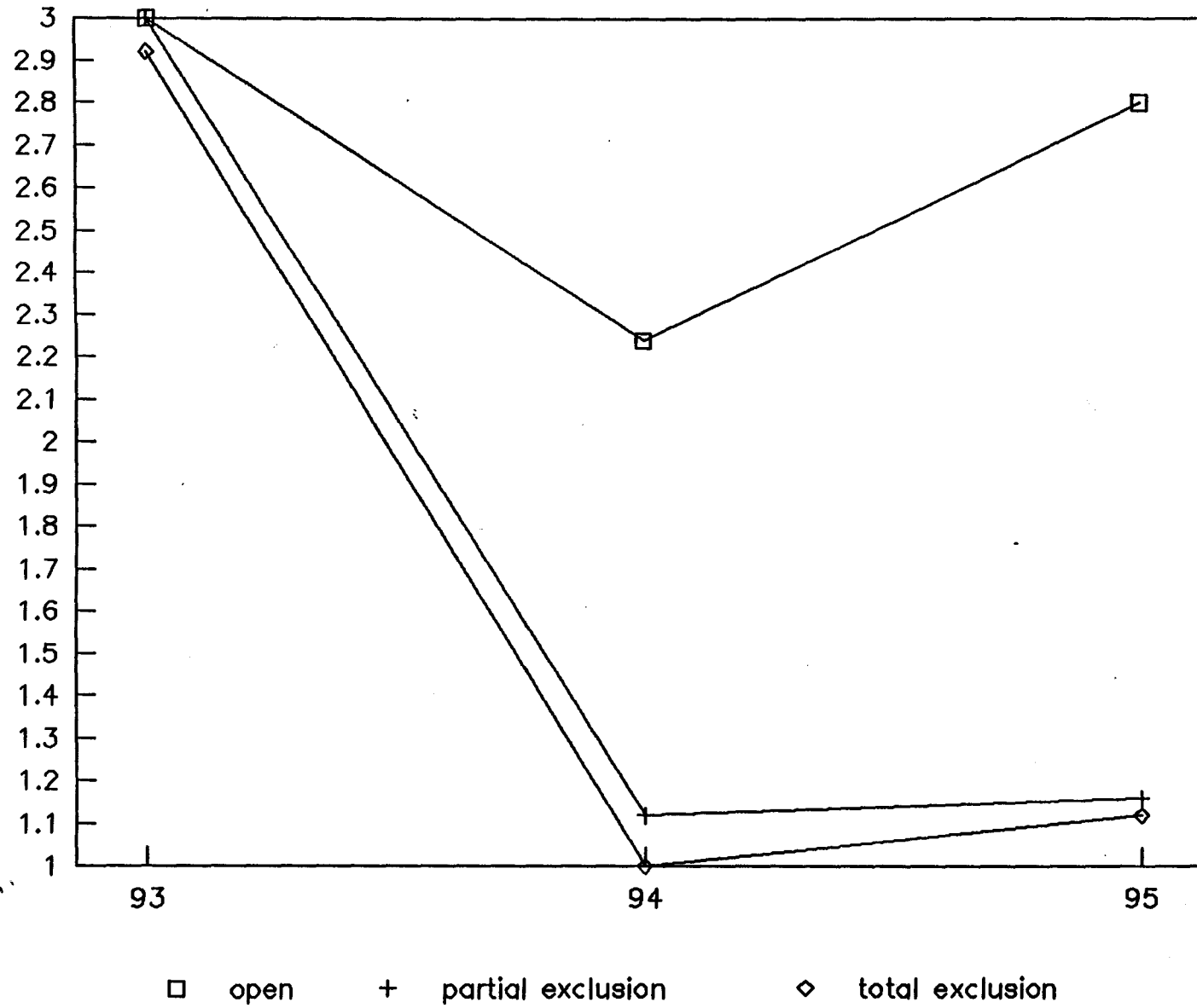
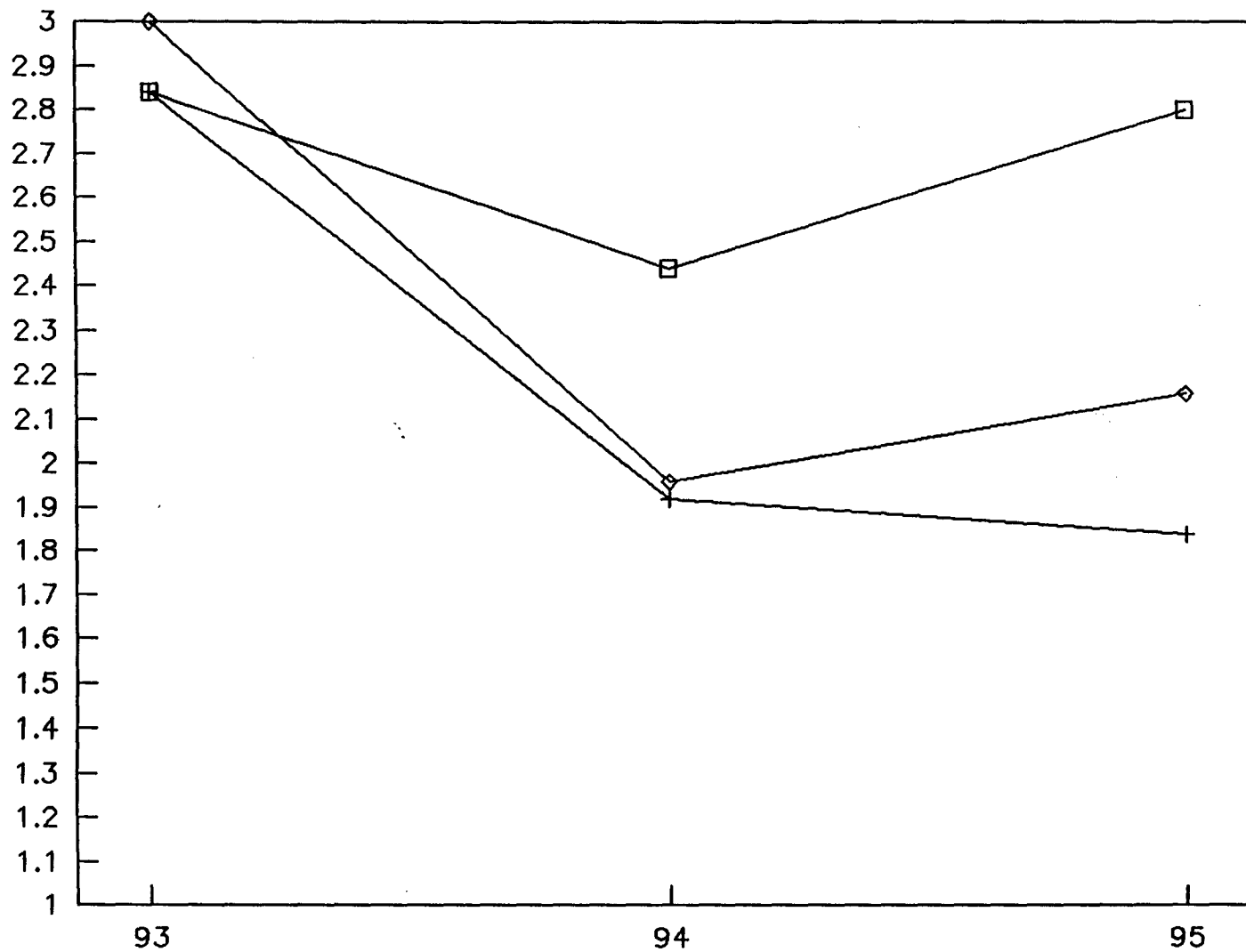


Figure 7

COTTONWOOD 3-WAY EXCLOSURE

form class 1993 - 1995



□ open + partial exclusion 1 ◇ partial exclusion 2*

* The total exclusion section has not been completed



**COMMISSION FOR THE
PRESERVATION OF WILD HORSES**

255 W. Moana Lane

Suite 207A

Reno, Nevada 89509

(702) 688-2626

March 4, 1996

Ms. Susan Stokke
Surprise Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
602 Cressler Street
P.O. Box 460
Cedarville, CA 96104

Subject: Tuledad Allotment

Dear Ms. Stokke:

Thank you for the encouraging letter concerning future management of the Surprise Resource Area. We support the multiple use decision approach for determining the appropriate management levels for wild horses. This approach would have certainly avoided the differences of the Commission with the Bureau concerning Tuledad, High Rock, Wall Canyon and Nut Mountain Decisions.

We appreciate the resource oriented leadership you have provided us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Barcomb".

CATHERINE BARCOMB
Executive Director