



File Code: 2210

Date: December 2, 2005

Canadian River Cattle Company LP  
David H. Nutt  
ATTN: Tim Hutson

Dear David,

This letter will serve as an amendment to your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2005-grazing season (until 2/28/06) in accordance with Jerry Turner's (Range Technician) conversation with your ranch manager Don Gatlin 12/1/2005. In the future, when you identify a need to change the rotation schedule in your AOI by more than 15 days, please contact Collin Ewing at this office at least two weeks in advance so that the district has time to conduct monitoring and assess your request.

**Annual Operating Instructions (AOI)**

**Allotment:** Negrito/Yeguas

**Permittee:** Canadian River Cattle Company LP

1. **Authorization:** Authorized to graze the following in 2005:

Number and class	Dates Authorized
360 Cattle (cow/calf)	10/1-2/28
10 Horses	10/1-2/28

2. **Management:**

Pasture	Time Frame	Comment
Chimney, and Sign Camp Pastures	10/1-11/1 (65 head- heifer operation)	
Rainy Pasture	10/1-10/31 (295 head)	
Airstrip Pasture and Rainy Holding	11/1-11/30 (all cattle)	
Chimney, and Sheep Basin pastures	12/1-2/28 (up to 65 heifers)	
Perry Mesa, Telephone, and Middle Pastures	12/1-2/28 (all cattle)	



Please notify us of cattle movements onto and off of the allotment, as well as refinements that may be needed to enhance the management system.

### 3. **Utilization Standards and Monitoring:**

Allowable use is the percentage of use that will be allowed on key grass and browse species. This use will be measured in the key monitoring areas for the **Negrito/Yeguas** Allotment. The scheduled rotation, grazing season, and livestock numbers are indicated in Section 1 of these Annual Operating Plan/Instructions. **Adherence to utilization levels is mandatory and should be the limiting factor in adjusting grazing management.** Adjustments in numbers, rotation schedule, or season of use will be made if allowable use standards are met. Cattle will be moved to the next scheduled pasture or off the allotment when these forage utilization standards are met. The option to return livestock to a pasture that has received adequate plant re-growth will be considered if all resource objectives can be met.

The maximum allowable use levels set for the **Negrito/Yeguas** Allotment will be **35%**; in addition stubble heights should not be less than an average 2.5 inches on blue and hairy grama. Stubble heights should not be less than 5 inches on sideoats grama, and no less than 5 inches on mountain muhly. Use levels will be monitored in key areas. The location of these is currently being verified. You are welcome to join us as we establish the permanent monitoring transects for gathering the stubble height data. Attached is a copy of our tentative monitoring plan for the **Negrito/Yeguas** Allotment for the 2005 grazing season. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Collin Ewing at the office (505) 533-6231.

As per consultation for on-going grazing with the US Fish and Wildlife Service all livestock will be partially excluded from the Mainstem Negrito Creek and South Fork Negrito Creek within the Negrito/Yeguas Allotments by herding. Livestock will also be partially excluded from perennial reaches within North Fork Negrito Creek by herding. If a measurable use of 10% by livestock is observed the livestock will no longer have access to the pastures that contain North Fork, South Fork, or Mainstem Negrito Creek.

The **Negrito/Yeguas** Allotment includes Mexican Spotted Owl Protected Activity Centers (PAC). In these PAC's the following activities are restricted during the breeding season of the Owl (March 1-August 31): livestock concentrations or trailing, fence construction and maintenance, and livestock salting.

If utilization is found to exceed 35% and/or stubble height requirements at any time during the use period on any one key area, livestock must be removed from the key area, restricted area, pasture or allotment.

### 4. **Range Improvements:**

**Fences:** It has come to my attention that many of the fences on the allotment are in need of reconstruction or heavy maintenance. David, good fences are very important to a rest-rotation grazing system such as yours. Please review the fences on your allotment and be prepared to discuss at the validation meeting which fences will be reconstructed in 2006.

Please maintain the fence between Sign camp and Sheep Basin pastures to a functional status.

**Water:** Advance planning is needed for authorizing tank cleaning so surveys can be scheduled during the summer months. If the pipelines and troughs are beyond reasonable repair, we are willing to work with you to replace them. Please protect natural springs and areas with riparian type vegetation. Drainage bottoms, creeks, springs, and cienegas, where water is available, are most susceptible to livestock concentrations.

In accordance with the Goodding's Onion Conservation Strategy, no new livestock structures, no placement of salt, no active trailing of livestock through occupied sites will be allowed. The occupied sites in Yeguas Allotment are in Sections 18 and 19 of Township 9S, Range 17W in the drainage running north and south approximately 1 mile southeast of Old Cabin Spring.

5. **The Annual Operating Instructions** are a part of the Term Grazing Permit as provided for in Part 3, Section 8. They comply with the standards and guidelines found in the Forest Plan. They also comply with the Endangered Species Act as found in the Biological Assessment and/or on-going grazing consultation for the **Negrito/Yeguas** Allotment. Any additional information collected during the year may be incorporated into the annual operating instructions.

This decision is subject to administrative review, pursuant to 36 CFR 251; and any appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.90 (see enclosed copy of 36 CFR 251 regulations). In accordance with 36 CFR 251.84, if you file an appeal, I am willing to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have with my decision. If you file an appeal, you may request an oral presentation in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.97). Additionally, if you file an appeal, you may request a stay of my decision in the appeal or at any time prior to closing of the appeal record (36 CFR 251.91).

A notice of appeal must be filed with Marcia R. Andre, Forest Supervisor, Gila National Forest, 3005 E. Camino del Bosque, Silver City, New Mexico, 88061-7863, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with Rogers M. Steed, District Ranger, Reserve Ranger District, at P.O. Box 170, Reserve, NM 87830.

Please feel free to contact Collin Ewing or myself if you have any questions.

/s/ROGERS M. STEED  
ROGERS M. STEED  
District Ranger

Cc:

Don Gatlin  
Reserve, NM 87830