

Glenwood Ranger District

Gila National Forest

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2008

Dry Creek Allotment #407

Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
District Range Staff

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
District Ranger

Agreed to By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Permittee

# Annual Operating Instructions

## I. INTRODUCTION

These Annual Operating Instructions document your discussion with George Douds on November 7, 2007. The permitted stocking for the 2008 grazing season on the Dry Creek Allotment is as follows:

### Term Permitted Livestock Numbers

Number and class of livestock	Dates
275 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01 – 02/28
5 Horses (Saddle)	03/01 – 02/28

### Dry Creek Allotment Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Number and class of livestock authorized	Dates Authorized
150 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01/2008 – 02/28/2009

### Dry Creek Allotment Annual Authorization for 2008

Number and class of livestock authorized	Dates Authorized
147 Cattle-Cow/calf	03/01/2008 – 02/28/2009
2 Horses (Saddle)	03/01/2008 – 02/28/2009

You wanted to apply for 275 cattle and 5 horses. Due to the uncertainty of finishing the environmental analysis process before the end of the fiscal year, district personnel will consult with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) on permitted numbers. Once consultation is finished you may submit a supplemental application and I will consider the application. Upon acceptance of the application and payment being posted at lockbox you may proceed to graze the additional livestock.

### Dry Creek Allotment Annual Authorization for 2008

Class of Livestock	Rotation Schedule	Pasture
Cow/Calf	11/15/07 – 04/30/08	#5 (Dry Creek, North)
Heifers/Steers	11/15/07 – 02/28/08	Bobcat
≈ 40 Heifers	01/15/08 – 04/30/08	Sundial
Cow/Calf	04/30/08 – 07/30/08	Road Strip
Cow/Calf	08/01/08 – 11/01/08	Steer
Cow/Calf	11/01/08 – 12/15/08	Estes ( for weaning)
Cow/Calf	12/15/08 – 04/01/09	#4 (Dry Creek, Lower Little Dry)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	#3 (Dry Creek, Sheridan)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	#6 (Dry Creek, North Upper)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	#7 (Dry Creek, South Upper)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Cedar Breaks
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Sandrock
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Jug (Holding)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Gravel Pit (Holding)
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Horse
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Headquarters
Cow/Calf	Not Grazed in 2008	Holding 1

The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. If there is a need to deviate from the above pasture rotation schedule by more than 15 days, you must notify the District Ranger of the proposed change in the pasture rotation date and the reason for the change. A deviation from the above schedule of more than 15 days must be approved by the District Ranger verbally or in writing. The District Ranger must be notified 5

days prior to the time livestock enter or leave the Forest if the placing on or removal of livestock is not planned in the above schedule, and more than 10 head are being moved.

## **II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK**

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

## **III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE**

Last year in preparation for grazing cattle this grazing year, you cleaned many erosion control structures and stock tanks on the east side of Highway 180. This year you have maintained and reconstructed the majority of the range developments on your allotment. Your investment in the allotment is exemplary.

Prior to reconstructing existing or constructing new range improvements you need to sign a permit modification to authorize the work. Advanced notice is required to allow the district to get the necessary clearances and paperwork generated.

You have requested permission to maintain following tanks, Lost (210), Cedar Breaks (262) and Gravel Pit (194). The district will notify you when the necessary clearances have been obtained.

You may apply for a free use post and stay permit for the maintenance of fences and corrals on your allotment.

## **IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District is planning to allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.
2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers; dates of entering and leaving pastures, shipping dates and cattle losses (grown stock and calves). This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.
4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal prior to, or at the time, the livestock are taken off the allotment. You will be required to provide your Social Security number in order for a refund to be processed.

A \$25 administrative fee will be charged for any additional bills for collection that are sent to you due to either late payment or for split billing on seasonal allotments. This fee will be collected to pay for the cost associated with issuing an additional bill for collection. There is no administrative fee for the normal "split billing" on yearlong allotments.

It is necessary for you to write the bill number on your check prior to submitting it to the lockbox. This is necessary to insure that your payment is credited to your account.

5. Short Age Calf Policy: Any short-aged calves (calves less than 6 months old on December 31) must be removed from the National Forest by April 1, or you will need to apply for and pay grazing fees for these animals from April 1 to the time they are removed from the National Forest. Calves that are 6 months old or older on December 31 need to be paid for starting January 1.

## 6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of energy supplements on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplements is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved.
  - b. Feeding of hay on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be **certified weed free** hay and you must provide the proper documentation.
  - c. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks or blue tubs on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.
  - d. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use. To aid in the gathering and moving of livestock salt may be placed near water or in corrals within one week of scheduled move date.
7. Livestock are to be excluded from the San Francisco River and from Spruce Creek and Big Dry Creek above the confluence of both creeks.

## V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

The Allotment Management Plan for this allotment may need some updates to meet Forest Plan standards and guidelines. At the present time, direction for management on this allotment will be documented in these Annual Operating Instructions. The scheduled date for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is 2008. Range data collection is complete and the data will be analyzed during in 2008. At this time it does not appear that a decision is likely before October 1, 2008. As funds, time and personnel are available your environmental analysis will be completed.

## VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

You indicated that you are in favor of Fire Use on you allotment. Your concerns will be analyzed at the time the fire is placed into Fire Use. The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to the AOI to accommodate fire management.

It is critical that your livestock do not get into the San Francisco River. When you stock the pastures bordering the river check the river for livestock. If livestock access the river from your allotment I will provide you with the necessary fencing material to stop access.

## VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Keep track of conditions on your allotment and make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing. The forecast for the upcoming winter and spring is dry and warm. If dry conditions continue through the summer growing season, a reduction in herd size may be recommended. If the herd size is reduced, restocking of allotments to full numbers will not take place until forage plants regain vigor.

## VIII. Utilization Monitoring of Key Areas

### Monitoring results from 2007

Pasture	Monitoring Date	Actual use	Allowable Use	Key Area
Road Strip	06/22/07	0%	0% (Not Scheduled to be Grazed)	C9, C6, P2
Sundial	05/22/07	0%	0% (Not Scheduled to be Grazed)	C5
Steer	05/22/07	0%	0% (Not Scheduled to be Grazed)	C1
Big Dry	06/22/07	5%	Conservative (31 – 40%)	C7, P8
Bobcat	06/22/07	0%	Conservative (31 – 40%)	Around Bobcat Tank
San Francisco River	01/18/08	0%	0%	San Francisco River

### Monitoring Schedule for 2008

Pasture	Monitoring Date	Allowable Use	Key Area*
Bobcat	02/07/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	Pasture
#5 (Dry Creek, North)	05/01/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	P6,
Sundial	05/01/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	Pasture
Road Strip	07/13/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	P1, C9, C6
Steer	11/06/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	Pasture
Estes	12/18/08	Conservative (31 – 40%)	Pasture

Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of use within a pasture (utilization mapping). Verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described and mapped in the following utilization categories.

Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity
Light to no-use	< 30%	Only choice plants and areas show use. There is no use of poor forage plants.
Conservative	31-40%	Choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks. Areas more than a mile from water show little use. About on third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas.
Moderate	41-50%	Most of accessible range shows use. Key areas show patch appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants showing use. Grazing is noticeable in zone 1-1.5 miles from water.
Heavy	51-60%	Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas. Palatable shrubs show hedging. Key areas show a lack of seed stalks. Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1.5 miles from water.
Severe	61 +%	Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no Stubble height. Shrubs are severely hedged. There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage. Areas over 1.5 miles from water lack stubble height.

Holechek, J.L. and D. Galt. 2000. Grazing Intensity Guidelines. Rangelands 22(3), pg 11-14.

If the utilization guideline for the pasture is exceeded on 30% or more of the pasture in any year, livestock will be immediately removed from the pasture. Within a pasture, areas found to exceed allowable use will become key areas for monitoring the following year. The AOI for the next year will be adjusted to correct livestock management practices (distribution, number, timing, salt and water availability, etc.) that may have led to the overuse.

In the event that 30 percent or more of the pasture exceeds the set allowable use in a grazing year, that area will be required to be less than or equal to allowable use the next year. If that same area, or a substantial portion of the same area, exceeds allowable use in two consecutive grazing years the entire pasture will be rested for one calendar year and stocking will be adjusted to balance with forage supplies. If the same area of a pasture exceeds allowable use in two years out of five, the stocking rate and management plan will be adjusted to balance with forage supply.

Monitoring of utilization on woody riparian will be conducted in the areas below and concurrently with the associated pasture. (See Table Below)

Pasture	Reach description	Herbaceous Riparian Allowable Use	Wood Riparian Allowable Use
Big Dry	Big Dry Creek, from the box down to the Highway 180 bridge.	Conservative (31 – 40%)	25% riparian woody sprouts and saplings heavily hedged in a reach 0%
Big Dry	Big Dry Creek, from the confluence of Spruce Creek and Spruce Creek down to the box.	Conservative (31 – 40%)	25% riparian woody sprouts and saplings heavily hedged in a reach
Big Dry	Spruce Creek and Big Dry Creek above the confluence with Spruce Creek.	0%	0%
Big Dry	Little Dry Creek, entire reach to the Highway 180 bridge.	Conservative (31 – 40%)	25% riparian woody sprouts and saplings heavily hedged in a reach
Pastures that border the river.	San Francisco River bordering grazed pastures.	0%	0%

Livestock are excluded by natural barriers from Spruce Creek and Big Dry Creek above the confluence of Spruce Creek and Big Dry Creek. If allowable use is exceeded on 30% or more of the riparian reach within the pasture, livestock will be removed from the pasture. If that same reach, or a substantial portion of the same reach, exceeds allowable use in two consecutive grazing years the entire pasture will be rested for one calendar year and stocking will be adjusted to prevent overuse of the riparian reach. If the same reach of a pasture exceeds allowable use in two years out of five, the stocking rate and management plan will be adjusted to prevent overuse of the riparian reach.

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District to obtain approval of change(s). Advanced notice of change is requested so that field inspections can be conducted. Verbal approval of changes will be followed with a letter documenting the change. Failure to follow the instructions provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).

## VIII. APPEAL RIGHTS

This Annual Operating Instruction 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 attached 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 **Richard E. Markley, Forest Supervisor, 3005 E. Camino del Bosque, Silver City, NM 88061**, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with **Pat Morrison, District Ranger, Glenwood Ranger District, P.O. Box 8, Glenwood, NM 88039**.

Open and positive communications concerning all AOI content is encouraged. Feel free to contact George Douds or me if you have any questions or concerns.

TITLE 36 - - PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC PROPERTY

CHAPTER II - - FOREST SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PART 251 - - LAND USES - - Table of Contents

Subpart C - - Appeal of Decisions Relating to Occupancy and Use of National Forest System Lands

Sec. 251.90 Content of notice of appeal.

- (a) It is the responsibility of an appellant to provide a Reviewing Officer sufficient narrative evidence and argument to show why a decision by a lower level officer should be reversed or changed.
- (b) An appellant must include the following information in a notice of appeal:
  - (1) The appellant's name, mailing address, and daytime telephone number;
  - (2) The title or type of written instrument involved, the date of application for or issuance of the written instrument, and the name of the responsible Forest Service Officer;
  - (3) A brief description and the date of the written decision being appealed;
  - (4) A statement of how the appellant is adversely affected by the decision being appealed;
  - (5) A statement of the facts of the dispute and the issue(s) raised by the appeal;
  - (6) Specific references to any law, regulation, or policy that the appellant believes to be violated and the reason for such an allegation.
  - (7) A statement as to whether and how the appellant has tried to resolve the issue(s) being appealed with the Deciding Officer, the date of any discussion, and the outcome of that meeting or contact; and
  - (8) A statement of the relief the appellant seeks.
- (c) An appellant may also include one or more of the following in a notice of appeal: a request for oral presentation (Sec. 251.97); a request for stay of implementation of the decision pending decision on the appeal (Sec. 251.91); or, in those States with a Department of Agriculture certified mediation program, a request for mediation of grazing permit cancellation or suspensions pursuant to Sec. 251.103.

[54 FR 3362, Jan. 23, 1989; 54 FR 13807, Apr. 5, 1989, as amended at 54 FR 34510, Aug. 21, 1989; 64 FR 37846, July 14, 1999]