

**2007 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
SANTOS ALLOTMENT 636  
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST  
TRES PIEDRAS RANGER DISTRICT**

**I. INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVES**

The Santos Annual Operating Instruction meeting was held on February 20, 2007 at Tres Piedras Ranger District from 11:00-12:00pm. Santos permittee, Antonio Manzanares attended the 2007 AOI meeting. Forest Service representatives were Wayne Yonemoto and Anna Dominguez.

The Annual Operating Instructions are hereby made part of the Term Grazing Permit. Carson Forest Annual Operating Instructions are posted on the Carson Forest Web site.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/carson>, Natural resources, Range, District, Allotment. Annual Operating Instructions contain items that are guidance criteria addressing proper use of the Santos allotment. Permittee is advised to review terms and conditions stated on their permits that were completed after NEPA decision in 1998.

**II. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

**A. Weather Report**

2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan for the Santa Fe and Carson National Forest will be referred to during 2007 grazing season. The plan stresses communication, permittee involvement, monitoring, range administration, and reference to the Standard Precipitation Index addressing adaptive management during near normal, drought and drought recovery conditions. Permittee is recommended to have a drought contingency plan.

Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) will be used to define drought conditions following the 2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan for the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests. SPI values are available from the Western Regional Climate Center at [www.wrcc.dri.edu](http://www.wrcc.dri.edu). The following are indicators in determining drought conditions. Conditions will be determined by the size of the negative number, the larger the negative number, the more severe the drought. Example: SPI values of -0.70 or less for the past month signal drought conditions. SPI values of positive 1.0 or more for the past 12 months signal the end of drought. The following are the 1 and 12 month SPI through the end of January 2007.

1-month SPI through the end of January 2007 is -0.74 to 0.74 (near normal conditions)

12-month SPI through the end of January 2007 is -0.74 to 0.74 (near normal conditions)

Tres Piedras precipitation records are referenced in recommendation for Annual Authorized Use. Allotment stocking should adjust with effective precipitation patterns. 2006 spring production was stunted due to spring drought conditions, summer rains allowed for cool season green up and good warm season production. 2007 spring effective precipitation is unknown at this time. 2007 spring and summer precipitation patterns will determine adaptive management actions with the objective to maintain/improve forage resources (proper use).

Weather conditions influence forest fire occurrence and permittee is recommend to have a fire contingency plan for livestock management. 2007 Fire season is forecasted to be normal.

**Report wildfires to:** Tres Piedras Ranger Station at (505) 758-8678 or Carson Dispatch at (505) 758-6208 or (505) 758-6209.

### **B. Review of 2006 spreadsheet, inspection reports and End of Season Report**

Due to the dynamic influences on resource condition an annual spreadsheet (adaptive management tool) compiling /summarizing chronological allotment management and resource conditions is completed. The spreadsheet helps identify/document management objectives for each quarter section so that livestock can be used as a grazing tool to maintain-enhance range conditions. The spreadsheet:

- Documents permitted, authorized, and actual livestock management data
- Documents current and prior year's objective per pasture so that it can be easily referenced.
- Documents qualitative Grazing Response Index, to consider early elk utilization prior to livestock entry and permittee involvement and growing season conditions
- Refers to allotment inspections reports and monitoring studies
- Considers climate data to describe end of season forage condition.
- Estimates production/vigor
- Documentation of end of season utilization standards for USFS administrative requirements
- Spreadsheet information is then summarized in an End of Season Report that is considered in following year adaptive management.

Santos allotment was authorized a 28% reduction on 2/14/06. Actual use of livestock was 51% reduction in HM voluntarily taken by permittee from 4/18/06 to 5/28/06 with staggered use due to drought conditions. Summer rains received in July and August allowed for cool season recovery and good warm season production. Adaptable management head month calculation was used to calibrate reduction in HM for the Santos allotment. Permittee requested use of the remaining head months in the winter/dormant season. Use of the remaining head months were authorized based on the 9/12/06 end of season inspection. A field inspection was completed on 1/4/07 to determine authorization of additional use of Santos allotment through the end of February 2007. Additional time on the allotment was authorized through the end of February.

Utilization standards of 40% of spring production and dormant season were met by authorized livestock throughout the allotment. Excessive trespass, unauthorized use and wildlife contribute to unknown forage utilization throughout the allotment. Continued excess use by TCLP authorized cows has been observed from October 06-January 07. High density of roads and 11 gates allow excessive use to continue. Estimated production/vigor of forage was moderate for cool seasons and moderate high for warm seasons due to the pattern of precipitation received in the summer.

### **C. 2007 Range Readiness**

Inspection of 2007 range readiness meeting attendance is strongly recommended to review range conditions on 4/2/07 at 9:00 A.M. at Wheatgrass corral. Evaluation of range readiness conditions will determine what adaptive management adjustments is needed addressing proper use.

### **D. 2007 Grazing Fee and Annual Authorized Use Request**

The livestock grazing fee for grazing year 2007 is \$1.35 c/c and \$.27 e/l on National Forests. The reduction in grazing fees is due to increase in the cost of production attributed to higher fuel prices, high loan rate, and equipment expenses, which offset slight increases in prices received, and forage

values attributed to private grazing land leasing rates. 2007 Unauthorized use of National Forests is \$4.10 for livestock and \$.82 for sheep and goats.

Annual Authorized use request form was completed billing 750 e/l, from 4/11/07-6/5/07. Range readiness inspection is scheduled on April 2 at 9:00 am. Range Readiness inspection will determine adaptable management according to resource conditions.

The 2007 authorized livestock and grazing season are no guarantee that grazing can occur for the tentative rotation. Low resource conditions may require alterations in rotations or removal from the allotment.

**Table 1-Santos 2007 permitted/authorized/actual data**

<b>Santos Permittee, Permitted season and number 4/11-6/5 , 56 days, 900 e/l, 1657 HM, 497 AUM</b>	<b>2007 Authorized 4/11-6/5, 56 days 750 e/l , 1380 HM, 414 AUM</b>	<b>2007 Actual</b>
Antonio Manzanares		
<b>Total</b>		

**E. Tentative Rotation Schedule**

All allotment rotation plans are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances such as lack of water or low forage production. Range readiness inspection will confirm availability of water and adjust 2007 tentative rotation schedule if needed. 2007 rotation schedule will be determined at range readiness inspection. Santos most important objective is to follow a 2 camp per quarter of the allotment. Camps should be moved every 7-10 days during the growing season, 10-12 days in the dormant season or when key forage height requirements are met. It is the responsibility of the permittee to ensure proper distribution of sheep addressing utilization standard of 40% of annual production. Allotment management will continue to use adaptable management addressing drought conditions and following Tres Piedras Sheep grazing instructions, Appendix to 2007 AOI.

**Table 2-2007 Pasture rotation**

<b>Tentative rotation of pastures</b>	<b>Range of days Min-GOAL-Max</b>	<b>2007 Actual rotation and days</b>	<b>2007 Carson Forest standard of utilization at end of season based on ocular method</b>
NW area	7 days		
NE area	14-24 days, depending on resource. Scattered bands		

SE area	7-14 days, depending on resource. Scattered bands		
SW area	7 days		
NW area	7 days		

**F. Monitoring references and Utilization standards**

The following list describes priority monitoring data of the Santos allotment addressing proper use.

1. Santos spreadsheet
2. Elk utilization prior to livestock entry date-Inspection reports, documented on spreadsheet
3. Fence conditions-Deferred maintenance list
4. SPI , weather forecast and water availability- weather record, Deferred maintenance list
5. Soil moisture depth and temperature-Inspection reports
6. Production cages, Parker, and permittee key areas, reviewed with methods listed on the Tres Piedras Monitoring Plan
7. Key forage list per pasture-AOI obtained from 1970 blue line map
8. key areas reviewed if accessible-Inspection reports
9. Existing stubble heights on key species--Production/Vigor of key species per pasture at range readiness and end of season

Below is a table of key species with stubble heights requirements for pasture entry. It is stressed that stubble heights of key species and utilization are two different ecological concepts. Stubble height is related to:

The effect of grazing on the physiological response of individual plant-vigor

The effect of residual vegetation in protecting the soil from wind or water erosion.

Utilization will be estimated with the USFS Ocular estimate method by class.

**Table 3-Santos key species requirements**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>Pasture Key Species requirements for entering pastures</b>	<b>Range Readiness 4/2/07</b>	<b>End of season 10/X/07</b>	<b>Estimated production vigor</b>
	NW area, sections 20, 21, 29			
Cage	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Permittee	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Parker	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
	NE area, sections 27, 26, 34, 35			
Cage	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Permittee	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Parker	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
	SE area, sections 3,2,10,11			
Cage	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Permittee	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Parker	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
	SW area, sections 33,4,9			
Cage	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Permittee	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			
Parker	Crested Wheatgrass 6+” Western Wheatgrass 6+” Blue gramma 1.5”			

Early elk utilization and drought conditions can stunt forage production effecting permitted grazing time and contribute to % utilization at the end of the season. Permittee is recommended to have a contingency plan due to early elk utilization. If elk have utilized the pasture prior to livestock entry

and the remaining forage availability is low, other areas entry and exits dates may be effected. Allotment spreadsheet has been organized to document these dynamic factors influencing production and vigor of forage. Analysis of quantitative/qualitative spreadsheet data is a reference for estimating if standard of utilization at the end of the growing season was met. Utilization is not to exceed 40 % of annual forage production at the end of the year. Riparian utilization standard is 4” stubble height of the annual available forage. The few riparian areas identified in Santos have been intermittent in the past near normal precipitation years influencing the 4” standard stubble height. Updated maps are necessary to clearly identify riparian areas referencing soil type and existing species composition.

### **III. DEFERRED MAINTENANCE**

Deferred maintenance assigned in your Term Grazing Permit requires annual maintenance that is to be completed prior to placing livestock in the pasture. Allotment boundary fences must be maintained before the entry date.

The cost of maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Maintenance means returning the improvement to its original functioning working order and using the equivalent material. Additional technical maintenance information and specification guides can be found on the Natural Resource Conservation Service web site at: <http://www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/fotg/intro3.html>. When allotments are in non-use, permittee is responsible for maintenance of allotment improvements referred to in deferred maintenance list. Construction of new improvements or reconstruction of existing projects must have the approval of the District Ranger.

A working deferred maintenance list has been completed as a management tool addressing the following management objectives:

- Update/correct corporate data to produce accurate new maps
- Update/correct I-web data base reference numbers for future merge with Arc-GIS, NEPA process.
- Organize data addressing communication with permittee and managers
- Pasture attributes are organized according to type, condition, and maintenance needs
- Document maintenance responsibility
- Reference to watering point condition
- Planning of maintenance with technical assistance from NRCS following an AMP
- Develop maintenance strategies with seasonal conditions

The deferred maintenance list is referenced to prioritize annual maintenance which are listed on the AOI in project status section below.

#### **A. 2006 Deferred Maintenance Priorities**

- During 2006 fence materials from the non-functional sage brush improvement in the SE area were partially removed to be used in northern allotment boundary fence and future corral in the NE corner of section 29, FR 285L. Materials are stored on the USFS compound.
- Permittee requested to be informed about noxious weed inventory and treatment on Santos allotment.

**B. 2007 Deferred Maintenance Priorities**

- Cost research of a temporary corral was researched by Antonio Manzanares. The cost is too excessive. It was decided to construct a fence corral in the NW area using fence materials from the non-functional sage-brush improvement project in the SE corner of the allotment. USFS has to complete a CE for proposed project.
- Allotment inspection reports reflect excessive use by TCLP is occurring in the Santos allotment for several years. Wood harvesters and hunters contribute to maze of roads and numerous gates off of FR 2510 contributing to excessive use. Cattleguards have been prioritized in the arroyo by Bailey tank and allotment boundary FR551. Other alternatives discussed were TCLP employing a rider from October to December to keep cattle in the TCLP allotment.
- Corrections to existing boundary maps with E. Pinon. USFS administrative correction is on-going.

**C. Travel Management Rule**

USFS Travel Management Plan was discussed. The travel management rule requires each Forest Service administrative unit or Ranger District to designate those, roads trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use. On November 2, 2005, the Forest Service announced final management regulations governing OHV's and other motor vehicle use on national forests and grasslands. On June 8, 2006, Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth approved the agency's schedule for implementation of the travel management rule. The schedule will guide local efforts over the next four years to designate those roads, trails and areas open to motor vehicle use. Range permittee guidelines will be developed and will be part of allotment planning in the future. More information is available on the Carson NF web page at:

[http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/carson/recreation/travel\\_mgmt/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/carson/recreation/travel_mgmt/index.shtml). A Travel Management meeting will held in Tres Piedras March 21, 3007 from 6:00P.M. to 9:00 P.M. for an additional opportunity to provide comments to USFS regarding:

- Roads or motorized trail that you would like to see remain open as part of the designated system
- Roads or motorized trail that you would like to see closed
- Access routes you believe are necessary to access range improvements and description of how you have been accessing these improvements
- Roads or motorized trails you would like to see closed to the public but where you could retain adequate access for range operations and maintenance of you range-related facilities.

**VIII. APPEAL RIGHTS**

Range managers were informed in January 07 that if an allotment has current NEPA, then appeal language is not needed on the AOI. Allotments with current NEPA operate within the guidelines of the NEPA decision therefore; appeal language has been omitted from Santos 2007 AOI. The opportunity to appeal management was when the NEPA decision was made. If the allotment has a new permittee appeal rights still follow the NEPA decision.

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 BENJAMIN ROMERO  
 District Ranger

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 Date

Attachment: Appendix

## Appendix

### Grazing Permittee Instructions for Sheep Operators on Tres Piedras Ranger District

1. Review the term grazing permit and become familiar with the terms and conditions prior to the grazing season.
2. Only livestock branded as shown on your application are permitted to enter the National Forest. The Forest Service (FS) and the permittees will agree to the counting locations, date, and time. Entering the allotment before your authorized entry date is not allowed until livestock are counted.
3. A Crossing Permit is required whenever livestock enter the National Forest. Crossing the District to/from a grazing allotment is only allowed within the authorized season.
4. Livestock found on other unauthorized allotments or in areas without prior authorization will result in the issuance of a Notice of Noncompliance that may impact your term permit.
5. The Annual operating Instructions (AOI) pasture rotation dates are tentative. Therefore, you must consult with the District Office two weeks before the AOI tentative scheduled rotation dates for discussion and approval of the actual move dates and any AOI adjustments.

### Management on the Range

1. The management objective is to obtain proper use throughout the grazeable portions of the range according to the management requirements of the Carson Forest plan.
2. Use the open herding system of handling sheep for better effect on the range and the sheep. The herder should hold the lead sheep instead of pushing the rear, and train the sheep to spread out and graze contentedly, instead of following the natural tendency of certain leaders in the band to move ahead too rapidly. Practice the open herding system of grazing in order to minimize the trailing and driving directly to and from water sources. Trailing and bunching the sheep should be avoided as much as possible. The herder would bed the sheep in a different location each night, except under exceptional circumstances, and never bed the sheep at camp (which is moved ever 7 days). Reusing the bed grounds contributes to the spread of disease and parasites. Proper use will be determined by the percent of forage used within key area sites. With proper livestock distribution, a uniform pattern of use would occur. Utilization levels would vary between 20% and 40% (percent dry weight) in pasture key areas, and within the overall pasture's pattern of use.
3. Riding, herding and good salting practices will help. Sheep should be moved to less utilized areas and heavier use should be avoided in the bottoms/meadows/openings that contain more desirable herbage.
4. When proper use levels are reached within each pasture, livestock grazing must end and livestock must exit. An early allotment exit would result in a partial refund/credit of the grazing payment. The grazing of more than one pasture at a time must be approved by the District Ranger.

## **Camp Operation**

1. Move camps at least every 7 days. Locate camps to avoid contaminating water supplies. Remove trash and garbage. Leave the camp site clean and use good sanitation practices. Bury all human waste and locate latrines at least 100 feet from surface water.

## **The Herder**

1. The herder will be expected to deal with unexpected emergencies and make day to day decisions. The herder should report conditions and observations that are vital to the sheep operation. The herder must know the allotment boundary and various property boundaries within the allotment in order to avoid unauthorized use or excess use. When applicable, information on adjoining bands of sheep and their routing/bedding will be shared with permittees and their herders.

## **Salting**

1. Salt must be placed in each pasture prior to cattle entering the pasture. Salt shall be located at least 0.5 miles to 1.0 miles away from streams, spring, earthen dam stock tanks and other sources of water in order to improve the livestock distribution within the pasture. Salt must be placed to minimize damage to vegetation and soil, within the tree line instead of the middle of openings, in drainages/riparian or near roadways. Regular salt ground sites must not be established.

## **Range improvement projects**

1. Range Improvement Projects assigned in your Term Grazing Permit require annual maintenance that is to be completed prior to placing livestock in the pasture unit. Allotment boundary fences must be maintained before the entry date and interior fences must be maintained before cattle enter the pasture.
2. Acceptable maintenance means returning the improvement to its original functioning working order and using the equivalent material. Particular attention, labor and time must be given to gates within the allotment to make certain that they are serviceable and can be opened and closed easily. The FS does not furnish materials or cost-share for maintenance projects.
3. All lay-down fences should be let-down no later than October 20, or as soon as possible after livestock leave the allotment and adjoining allotments.
4. Construction of new improvements or reconstruction of existing projects must have the approval of the District Ranger. During the AOI meeting and throughout the year suggestions for proposed projects are accepted.

## **Special Attention Items**

1. Written authorization from the District Ranger is required for vehicle travel in road closure areas. All cross-country travel where allowed must not cause ruts or down-cutting in the soil surface. Cross-country vehicular travel when the ground is wet is prohibited. This written authorization is only for vehicle travel necessary for your livestock operation on you allotment. Prudent use of this authority is asked when and where general public use is concentrated. All permittees are encouraged to stay off roadways closed to vehicular travel during hunting seasons.

2. All temporary camps and corrals made or used by permittees or their riders will be cleaned up (left in a sanitary condition) and all materials/trash will be removed from the sites. Temporary camp/corral locations should be discussed with the FS prior to setting up the camp.
3. Riders will be permitted 4 horses or mules per rider for work within the allotment. No untrained horses, colts or stock will be allowed.
4. Ear tags will be provided initially to new permittees on allotments that are tagged. After initial allocation of tags, 10 percent will be provided per grazing season.
5. Please notify the District Ranger with any observations of stray livestock on the National Forest Lands (regardless of the time of year).
6. Move any dead animals to rest no closer than 300 feet from water or roadways.

**Report wildfires to: Tres Piedras ranger station at (505 758-8678 or Carson Dispatch at (505) 758-6208 or (505) 758 6209.**

If you have any questions please contact the Tres Piedras Ranger District office.