



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern Region 3
Carson National Forest
Tres Piedras
Ranger District

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File Code: 2210

Date: March 23, 2006

Apache Livestock Association
O.R. & Mona Maupin
P.O. Box 536
Romeo, CO 81148

Dear Mr. Maupin,

Your **2006 Annual operating Instructions document** is attached. Please review your grazing permit and become familiar with permit requirements before the grazing season.

Priority for maintenance should be placed on water developments and fences. All existing water developments should be functional prior to livestock entering the allotment. All assigned allotment fences must be maintained prior to livestock entering the allotment, and also during the season.

A permittee monitoring program should be in place prior to the entry date. The placement and reading of rain gages within the allotment is recommended as a consideration in the development of your monitoring program. We would encourage you to keep an actual use record of your livestock, a journal of climate and watershed conditions and a description of noteworthy observations made while conducting routine business on the allotment. Information of a historical nature is also important and should be recorded.

Please keep a record of your maintenance costs, water hauling costs, stock losses, etc. We will be requesting this information along with your actual use record when we compile our use report at the end of the grazing season.

We look forward to working with you this season. If you have any questions regarding the Annual Operating Instructions, please do not hesitate to contact Luciano Sandoval or Wayne Yonemoto.

Sincerely,

ERNESTO HURTADO
District Forest Ranger

Encl

2006 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

APPACHE ALLOTMENT 651

CARSON NATIONAL FOREST

TRES PIEDRAS RANGER DISTRICT

I. INTRODUCTIONS

The Apache Annual Operating Instruction (AOI) meeting was held on March 3, 2006 at the Conejos Peak Ranger District Conference Room in La Jara, Colorado at 10:00am. Apache Permittees attending the meeting included Andrew Abeyta, Charles Bagwell, Jim Bagwell, Lee Bagwell (Association Secretary/Treasurer), Benjamin Breslin, Norval Huffaker, Ike Maupin (Association President), Randy Schofield (permittee range monitor) and Gary Vigil. Representing the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) were Luciano Sandoval and Wayne Yonemoto.

The Annual Operating Instructions are decision documents and are made part of the Term Grazing Permit. The following items are guidance criteria that were discussed in order to address proper use of the Apache Allotment.

II.WEATHER REPORT

Attendees to the meeting discussed weather conditions on the Apache Allotment. The Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) is currently being used by the Tres Piedras Ranger District (TPRD) Range program as a guide to determine the weather status of our area. SPI values of positive 1.0 (Moderately Wet) or more for 12 consecutive months-indicates end of drought. The 12-month SPI through the end of February 2006 for our region was -0.74 to + 0.74 (near normal). SPI data indicates that the four month period ending in February was (Very Dry) with values of -1.99 to -1.25. SNOTEL data indicate that nearby major snow courses currently have significantly lower than normal snow pack. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecasts above average temperatures and below average precipitation, through May 2006.

III. REPORT CARD

A. Review of End of Growing Season Report

The 2005 monitoring information has indicated that forage production on most of the Apache pastures was fair to good. By using the ocular utilization estimate method, the following utilization statistics were derived.

<u>Pasture</u>	<u>End of Grazing Season</u>	<u>End of Growing Season</u>	<u>Riparian Standards</u>
Apache-	—	30%	Yes
Osier/Watershed-	—	24%	Yes
Bonito-	—	32%	Yes
Cruces/Toltec -	—	25%	Yes

B. AOI Compliance

- Excess use from the Cumbres Allotment was minimized due to the improved state-line fence.
- The Bonito/Cruces-Toltec Fence was not erected while cattle were in the Bonito Pasture.
- A definite improvement in condition of the Beaver Creek Riparian Area near the east entrance to the Bonito Pasture from the 2004 growing season.
- Riparian areas within the Apache Allotment met the 4" minimum stubble height standard some did so by a narrow margin.
- Completion of the reconstruction or upgrade of the State-line fence.

IV. 2006 MANAGEMENT ADJUSTMENTS

A. 2006 Management Plan

It was discussed that the 2006 AOI has been edited to have permitted and actual data. The document will reflect:

Table 1		2006		2006 APACHE PERMITTEE INFORMATION	
APACHE PERMITTEES	PERMITTED #'S OF c/c or e/l	AUTHORIZED #'S OF c/c or e/l	ACTUAL #'S OF c/c or e/l		
Andrew Abeyta	385 e/l	366 e/l			
Charles Bagwell	257	249			
G. Lee Bagwell	256	248			
Norval & Jackie Huffaker	76	73			
O.R. & Mona Maupin	77	74			
Michael Sanchez	118	115			
Ben & Carla Breslin	59 (non use)	0			
TOTAL FOR e/l	385	366			
TOTAL FOR c/c	843	759			
5% e/l REDUCTION 10% c/c REDUCTION TO ADDRESS RESOURCE PROTECTION		Association permits allow some flexibility in individual authorized numbers as long as the total actual number does not exceed the total authorized number.			
Kanter, Deb		Hydrology Trainee		758-6253	

B. 2006 ANNUAL AUTHORIZED USE REQUEST

Apache Permittees have agreed to a 10% voluntary reduction of cow/calf and 5% reduction in ewe/lamb numbers. The reductions will address the current drought conditions which exist though out most of the region. However, if favorable range conditions are found to exist during range readiness inspections, adjustment will be made to the entry date and/or stocking rate accordingly. Permittees will notify Forest Service officials when authorized cattle are placed or removed from the allotment after the authorized entry date.

C. 2006 GRAZING FEES

The livestock grazing fees for FY 2006 are \$1.56 per cattle AUM, \$0.31 per sheep/goat AUM on National Forests. Unauthorized use on National Forests is \$4.83 per cattle AUM and \$0.97 per sheep/goat AUM.

D. 2006 TENTATIVE ROTATION SCHEDULE

Permittees reviewed the 2006 proposed rotation schedule. The allotment will be monitored closely throughout the grazing season to adjust days on the rotation schedule.

Table 2 TENTATIVE ROTATION SCHEDULE				
PASTURE ROTATION	RANGE OF DAYS PER PASTURE	PROJECTED DATES ON THE PASTURE	ACTUAL # OF DAYS AND DATES ON THE PASTURE	REASON FOR ADJUSTMENT
	Min. - Max.	From - To		
Apache	13 - 17 - 19	6/16 - 7/2		
Bonito	22 - 32 - 42	7/3 - 8/3		
Cruces/Toltec	15 - 20 - 25	8/4 - 8/23		
Osier/Watershed	22 - 32 - 42	8/24 - 9/24		
Apache	3 - 6 - 9	9/25 - 9/30		
	TOTAL DAYS 107 (6/16 to 9/30)			

E. Utilization Standards

The utilization levels on bottomlands and uplands are not to exceed 40% of the annual available forage. The standard utilization level in riparian areas (green zones) is a 4” stubble height remaining of the annual available forage. Once either of these standards is met, livestock will be moved to the next pasture on the rotation schedule.

F. Monitoring Methods

2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan for the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests were issued to permittees. The objectives of the strategic plan continue to be a high priority and emphasize collaboration, rangeland health, range-land monitoring and permittee involvement.

Monitoring methods that will be used on the Apache Allotment are:

- Range readiness, the allotment will be inspected tentatively on 6/10/05 in order to determine the status of range conditions and to make adjustments to the projected stocking rate and entry date for the 2005 grazing season if necessary. Permittee involvement is encouraged.
- Production cages on every unit.
- Parker 3 step
- Rapid Assessment Method (RAM)
- Stubble height measurements
- Permittee photo points
- Grazing Response Index (GRI)
- Ocular estimate method

G. NEPA Schedule

NEPA is scheduled for completion in 2007.

H. Management Objectives

- Protect all of the riparian areas on the allotment with emphasis on the Cruces Basin in order to meet riparian forage stubble height standards. Consistently herd livestock out of riparian areas and use salt and possibly protein supplements (Crystalyx) to lure livestock to the uplands.
- Move sheep camp on a regular basis to minimize the impacts inherent with having a sheep camp in the same location for extended periods of time.

V. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements and maintenance are the responsibilities of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, unit boundary fences, and other structural improvements must be maintained prior to permittee entry onto the allotment. When allotments are in non-use the permittees are still required to maintain improvements. The following are improvements which require special attention during the 2005 grazing season.

- Heavy maintenance on the Bonito/Cruces fence
- A stretch of Forest Road 87 between the Apache/Osier cattleguard and the T.A. Grant road requires much maintenance work.
- Attention to maintain the improved state-line fence in its present condition in order to prevent the exchange of livestock between the Cumbres and Apache Allotments.

Table 3 Proposed Projects

Table 3 Proposed Projects	
Old Proposed Projects	Status
State-line fence reconstruction or upgrade	Reconstruction completed in 2005. Inspection and approval pending
New Proposed Projects	Status
Improved pedestrian entrance to Cruces Basin from the Lagunitas' Beaver Pasture. Also the placement of a manufactured metal gate at the entrance to the Cruces Pasture.	Discussion of how an improved pedestrian entrance such as a walk-through in conjunction with an 8 ft. metal gate for horse traffic might alleviate this gate being left open by visitors to the wilderness and help prevent cattle from leaving the allotment from this area.
Reconstruction of the Bonito/Cruces fence	Approved by Forest Service. The CE process will begin at the onset of field season.
Construction of permanent pole structures in the Apache an Osier Pastures to assist in the loading of livestock on to stock trailers out in the open range.	Locations for these structures must be found and marked for the CE process to begin.

APPEAL RIGHTS

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. 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 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 the Forest Supervisor, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta, Taos, New Mexico 87571, within 45 days of the date of this decision. A copy of the notice of appeal must be filed simultaneously with the Tres Piedras District Ranger, who is the deciding officer, and the address for mailing the appeal copy is Tres Piedras Ranger District, P.O. Box 38, Tres Piedras, New Mexico 87577.

Before you file a Notice of Appeal, I would ask that you contact me and together we could try to resolve any disagreements. I value your experience and knowledge of the allotment and appreciate the opportunity to discuss your concerns. If we cannot reach an agreement, you could exercise your appeal rights. Our discussion would ensure that we both understand the reasons for each of our positions regarding any issues. I look forward to working with you this season. I am confident that we will work effectively together to manage the resources in a manner that reflects good stewardship of the land and cattle.

ERNESTO HURTADO
District Forest Ranger