

**2004 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
SANTOS ALLOTMENT 636  
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST  
TRES PIEDRAS RANGER DISTRICT**

**I. INTRODUCTIONS**

The Santos Annual Operating Instruction meeting was held on February 13, 2004 10am-11am at the Tres Piedras Ranger District. Attendees were Santos Permittee Antonio Manzanares, Forest Service representatives were Wayne Yonemoto, Anna Dominguez, Luciano Sandoval, and Keith Rush.

**II. OBJECTIVES**

The Annual Operating Instructions are decision documents and are made a part of the Term Grazing Permit. The following items are guidance criteria that was discussed addressing proper use of the Santos allotment.

**III. WEATHER REPORT**

It was discussed that the Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) is a way of measuring drought and is negative for drought and positive for wet conditions. The SPI is a probability index that only considers precipitation. To be considered out of the drought the SPI has to be near normal conditions for 12 months consecutively. The following are the current and 12 month SPI from February 2004.

1-month SPI through the end of February 2004 is +1.25 to +1.99 near normal

12-month SPI through the end of February 2004 is -1.24 to -0.75 moderately dry

It was discussed that allotment stocking should adjust with prevailing drought conditions.

**A. Fire**

Forest Service reported that much of the interior West is expected to experience above normal fire potential during 2004. The Southwest is the driest area of the West and fire season is expected to start early and has the potential to be comparable to 2002. The combination of hot-dry June and long-term drought could mitigate the benefits from a wet winter and spring.

**Report any wildfires to:**

Tres Piedras Ranger District	505-758-8678
Taos Zone dispatch	505-758-6208
	505-758-6209
	505-758-6352

**IV. 2003 REPORT CARD**

**A. Review of 2003 Production/Utilization data**

Production/utilization documentation was reviewed with Mr. Manzanares. 2003 actual information will be confirmed over the phone at a later date.

**B. Review of 2003 Inspection Reports**

2003 allotment inspection reports were reviewed. The reports document growing season conditions and forage production which reflect moderate-high vigor. These conditions allowed for fall utilization by Mr. Manzanares.

Elk herds were observed on the allotment throughout the winter.

## **V. 2004 AOI CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

### **A. AOI Modifications**

The 2004 Authorized Use information will be summarized to reflect: Permitted numbers/season, Authorized numbers/season, Actual numbers/season, and Rotation schedule. This documentation will be an appendix to the 2004 AOI since it is updated at the end of the grazing season.

### **B. 2003 Grazing fee**

The livestock-grazing fee for 2004 grazing year is 29 cents for sheep and goats on the National Forests. The fee increase are due to the increase in the forage value index (FVI), beef cattle price index (BCPI) and the 2003 prices paid index (PPI) for both National Forests and National Grasslands.

Unauthorized use on the National Forests is \$4.41 per AUM for cattle and 88 cents for sheep and goats.

### **C. Tentative Rotation Schedule**

Tentative Rotation Schedule was addressed and Mr. Manzanares reported altering rotation year to year depending on resources and past grazing patterns. A copy of allotment soils map will be used to document movement of the herd during the grazing season. General areas of the allotment will continue to be described as East open areas and West sagebrush.

### **D. 2004 Annual Authorized Use Request**

Based upon 2003 information 2004 Annual Authorized Use Request Form was completed reflecting a 10% reduction towards resource protection and an entry date 4/11/04.

## **VI. MONITORING**

### **A. 2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan**

It was discussed that the 2003 Rangeland Management Action Plan for the Santa Fe and Carson National Forest that was issued at the 2003 AOI will be referred to for the 2004 grazing season. The plan stresses communication, monitoring, range administration and permittee involvement.

### **B. Range Readiness**

Range Readiness Field meeting is scheduled for **March 31, 2004**. Field Meeting will be confirmed at a later date.

### **C. Utilization Standards**

The importance of utilization standards was briefly discussed. Bottomlands and uplands are not to exceed 40% of the annual available forage.

### **D. Monitoring Information**

Monitoring information will contain the following:

Weather update, Standard Precipitation Index (SPI)

Soil moisture depth

Water availability

Production/utilization cages

Key site map of the Allotment

Key forage list

**E. NEPA schedule**

NEPA has been completed on Santos Allotment in 1998. An AMP will be completed and presented during 2004 Range Readiness. The next tentative schedule for Santos NEPA is 2008.

**VII. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS**

The entire cost of improvements and maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, allotment boundary, and other range structural improvements must be maintained prior to the permittee going on the allotment. When allotments are in non-use the permittees are still responsible for maintenance.

**A. Project Status**

1998 Permittee Proposal 2 new sheep corrals

1998 Permittee Proposal new water developments

1998 Permittee Proposal vegetative treatments

1998 Permittee Proposal seeding section 2

**B. Maintenance**

A discussion occurred on the maintenance of the TCLP boundary fence and how it contributes to the unauthorized use in Santos allotment. Permittee reported maintenance on gates to prevent unauthorized use from neighboring allotment in 2003. Hunting and wood harvesting traffic contribute to the unauthorized gates and roads in the area. Verification of fence maintenance responsibility has to be confirmed.

**C. Operational Costs**

Operational costs were not submitted.

**VIII. PERMITTEE MANAGEMENT CONCERS**

**A. Elk Population**

Mr. Manzanares was informed of the NMGF/USFS meeting to be held March 4, 2004 to discuss management.

**B. Unauthorized use**

Unauthorized use by neighboring allotments is an ongoing concern by Mr. Manzanares. The clarification of fence maintenance responsibilities will help address the issue in the future.

**IX. 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 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 Tres Piedras District Forest Ranger, who was 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.

I would appreciate the opportunity to try to resolve disagreements with you. Therefore, please contact me before you file a notice of appeal. I value your experience and knowledge of the allotment. If we cannot reach an agreement, you may exercise your appeal rights. This will insure that we both understand the reasons for each others position regarding any issues. I look forward to working with you this season. I am confident that together we will work effectively to manage the range resources in a manner that reflect good stewardship for the land and livestock alike.

ERNESTO HURTADO  
District Forest Ranger

**2004 SANTOS  
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
APPENDIX**

Santos allotment

Permitted date/#

4/11-6/5

Antonio Manzanares 900 e/1

Authorized date/#

4/11/04

810 e/1

Actual date/#

Rotation Schedule

East, open area

West, sagebrush

Estimated days

4/11-5/01

5/01-6/05

Actual days