

**2004 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
LAGUNITAS ALLOTMENT 607
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST
TRES PIEDRAS RANGER DISTRICT**

I. INTRODUCTIONS

The Lagunitas Annual Operating Instruction meeting was held on February 25, 2004 at the Conejos Peak Ranger District from 1:300-3:30pm. Lagunitas Permittees attending the meeting were Donald Larson, Dennis Moeller, Ernest Moeller, Rudy Valdez, and Vigil Valdez. Forest Service representatives were Wayne Yonemoto, Anna Dominguez, and Luciano Sandoval. An agenda was issued at the meeting.

II. OBJECTIVES

The Annual Operating Instructions are decision documents and are made part of the Term Grazing Permit. The following items are guidance criteria that was discussed addressing proper use of the Lagunitas 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 consecutive months. 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 at the EOS meeting held 12/4/03. It was briefly reviewed at the 2004 AOI as well. The changes in grazing strategy to deferred rotation helped address drought recovery during the 2003 grazing season.

B. Review of 2003 Inspection Reports

Allotment inspection reports were reviewed at the EOS meeting held 12/4/03. Review of 2003 reports are used to make management adjustments for the 2004 grazing season.

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. 2004 Annual Authorized Use Request

The Lagunitas Grazing Association completed the 2004 Annual Authorized Use Request form agreeing to a voluntary 15% reduction addressing resource protection with an entry date of 6/21/04.

C. 2004 Grazing fee

The livestock-grazing fee for FY 2004 is \$1.43 per c/c AUM on the National Forests, an increase of eight cents from last year. The fee for sheep and goats is 29 cents on National Forests. The fee increases are due to the increase in the forage value index (FVI), beef cattle price index (BCPI) and the 2003 prices paid index (PPI).

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

D. Tentative Rotation Schedule

The permittees discussed tentative 2004 rotation schedule. They reviewed several proposed rotations which were determined from past rotation history. The 2004 tentative rotation schedule, documented in the AOI appendix, will be confirmed at the Range Readiness Field meeting.

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 Field Meeting

Range Readiness field meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2004. Confirmation call will be made prior to June 7, 2004.

C. Utilization standards

The importance of utilization standards was briefly discussed. Bottomlands and uplands are not to exceed 40% of the annual available forage. Utilization standards in the riparian area (green zones) will be 4" stubble height of the annual available forage. Once either one of these standards is achieved, livestock will be moved to the next pasture on the rotation schedule.

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 not been scheduled.

VII. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS

The entire cost of improvements and maintenance is the responsibility of the permittee. Assigned allotment boundary fences, unit boundary fences, 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

2002 Permittee Proposal	Reconstructed fence; FR 93 to Moeller tank estimate on 5/10/03, .6miles.
2003 Permittee +Result	Reconstructed fence; FR 93 to Moeller tank .75 miles.
2002 Permittee Proposal	Reconstructed fence; Lagunitas corral to three corners estimated .7 miles
2003 Permittee +Result	Reconstructed fence; Lagunitas corral to three corners .75 miles
2002 Permittee Proposal	Rain gauges were requested.
2003 USFS +Result	2 Rain gauges issued at 2004 range readiness

B. Operational costs

Lagunitas Grazing Association 2004 Operational costs were submitted to USFS for management purposes.

VIII. PERMITTEE MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

A. Elk Population

Permittees were informed of the NMGF/USFS meeting to be held March 4, 2004 to discuss management.

B. Unauthorized use

Unauthorized use by neighboring allotments and private lands is an ongoing concern by the Lagunitas permittees. 2004 monitoring will have an emphasis on reviewing allotment for unauthorized use.

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 reflects good stewardship for the land and livestock alike.

ERNESTO HURTADO
District Forest Ranger

**2004 LAGUNITAS
ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTION
APPENDIX**

Lagunitas Grazing Association

Permitted date/#	Authorized date/#	Actual date/#
6/16-10/5	6/21/04	
925 c/c	787 c/c	

Rotation schedule	Min---goal---Max Days	Actual days
Olguin	21---24---30	
Canon Largo	21---24---30	
South Fork	21---21---30	
Brozos/Diablo	12---19---30	
Beaver	21---24---30	