

**2009**

**ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS  
(AOI'S)**

**OSO ALLOTMENT #00122**

**Casados Partnership  
Gandados Del Valle**

**CARSON NATIONAL FOREST  
CANJILON RANGER DISTRICT**

/s/Craig L. Newman for

**Wayne Yonemoto,  
Acting Detailed District Ranger**

4/20/2009

**Date**

# Annual Operating Instructions

## AUTHORIZATION

You are permitted to graze 250 head of cattle for the grazing season of 6/05 to 10/20; you are authorized to graze the following in 2009:

**Table 1 - Permitted & Authorized Use – Casados Partnership**

<i>Number of Cattle Permitted</i>	<i>Number of Cattle Authorized</i>	<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Grazing Period</i>
250	80	Hondo	06/05 to 10/20
250	170	Canjilon	06/05 to 08/13
250	170	Mogote/Cano	08/14 to 10/20

No pasture is scheduled for rest this year as drought management. Insure that you are managing utilization standards and move your cattle before you reach standards.

You are permitted to graze 900 sheep for the grazing season of 6/01 to 9/30; you are authorized to graze the following in 2009:

**Table 2 - Permitted & Authorized Use – Ganados Del Valle**

<i>Number of Sheep Permitted</i>	<i>Number of Sheep Authorized</i>	<i>Pasture</i>	<i>Grazing Period</i>
900	900	Hondo	06/01 – 06/20
900	900	Canjilon	06/21 – 07/05
900	900	Mogote	07/06 – 07/20
900	900	Cano	07/21 – 08/04
900	900	Mogote	08/05 – 08/20
900	900	Canjilon	08/21 – 09/05
900	900	Mogote	09/06 – 09/20
900	900	Hondo	09/21 – 09/30

Dry conditions may cause utilization rates to be reached sooner than the planned dates. Please insure that you help in moving the cattle. It's critical that utilization rates are maintained as a part of drought management. Movement decisions will be made in cooperation with you and based on the utilization of key forage species and key areas as outlined in the Annual Operating Instructions.

You must continue salting practices to draw the cattle away from the meadows. It is in your best interest to fully distribute your cattle throughout the entire range. We monitor at the key areas and if these areas are fully used then you will be moving your cattle ahead of schedule and perhaps headed home sooner than your ending or off date you should also move your salt blocks often so as not "beat" out salt areas.

The routing schedule described above can be changed by the District Ranger when unforeseen circumstances such as lack of water or overuse occurs within the pasture. You may propose changes of pastures outside of the above routing schedule in

coordination with this office. A written justification should be submitted by the permittee ten days prior to proposed change date to this office before a proposal to change the above routing schedule will be acted upon by the District Ranger. The decision made by the District Ranger will be based upon the condition of the range, recommendations of the range staff, and the needs of the permittees.

If you decide to move your cattle off of the grazing allotment early or put on reduced numbers resulting in less head months grazed than the amount paid for, you may want to apply for a credit/refund of unused grazing fees. In order to do so, you will need to apply in writing for the credit within two weeks of incurring the credit/refund or by November 1 2009, which ever comes first. This keeps the numbers fresh in everyone's mind and allows for Ranger approval and more accurate accounting of grazing fees the following season.

All cattle should be moved off the allotment by the last day of the grazing season. The last day of the grazing season is not the day to open gates and allow cattle to drift home. We understand that a few cows will be hard to catch. We ask that you make a concerted effort and let us know if you have any cows left on the grazing allotment after the end of the grazing season.

## **ALLOWABLE USE**

The scheduled rotation, grazing season, and livestock numbers are indicated in Table 1 and Table 2 of this Annual Operating Instructions. Adjustments in numbers, rotation schedule, or season of use will be made if allowable use standards are met or exceeded. To achieve the desired allowable use, it is important to have proper livestock distribution. The maximum overall allowable use for the entire grazing season is:

Ponderosa pine, grasslands, aspen and mixed conifer – 20% - 40%

## **2009 Allotment Objectives**

1. Authorized reductions in time and numbers of livestock may influence flexibility of livestock management in the deferred grazing system.
2. Management goal is to improve consistent communication/documentation of actual use to USFS. USFS is requesting record of actual use, are to be submitted to the USFS at the end of the 2008 grazing season, 10/08.
3. Maintain or improve current range condition of Oso grazing allotment by fence maintenance, herding, riding, salting and good stewardship practices.
4. It is highly recommended that the 2008 rotation schedule follow a one herd deferred grazing system.
5. Oso permittees will allow only the numbers, kind and class of livestock on the allotment during the period specified in Part 1 hereof or the annual Bill for Collection, including any modifications made as provided for in Section 8 (c). Part 3 item 4. Permittees will notify the District Ranger at least 5 days before livestock enter National Forest Service lands.

## FORAGE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The proper utilization of forage is a critical factor in livestock management on the Oso Allotment. We will be checking levels of use during the grazing season. We will be visiting the allotment to ensure that utilization levels are within recommended levels. This year we may establish photo points and/or measure stubble height within key areas on key grass species to determine utilization. Grazing Association directors and permittees are invited to accompany Forest Service range staff in the field while these range condition evaluations are being made. Within the Oso Allotment the key grass species will be:

**Table 3 - Key Forage Species**

<i>Pasture Name</i>	<i>Key Forage Species</i>	<i>Utilization Guidelines</i>	<i>Stubble Height</i>
All Pastures in Oso Allotment	Arizona Fescue Kentucky Blue Mountain Muhly Ari/Thurber Fescue Oat Grasses	20-40% For all Species	6-8" 2-4" 4-6" 6-8"

## MONITORING

Both the Forest Service and the permittee are responsible for monitoring use and stubble height on the allotment to ensure that proper use levels are not exceeded. If areas within a pasture or the pasture as a whole begin to approach the identified stubble heights, actions will be taken to limit additional forage use. We are especially concerned with use levels in riparian areas and canyon bottoms where livestock tend to concentrate use on palatable feed. We have identified key areas to be monitored on this allotment (we provided a map last year). The primary grass species on this allotment and approximate stubble heights associated with 20-40% use are as outlined above.

Forage use level should be monitored periodically by permittees to aid in determining when livestock should be moved between pastures. Forest Service personnel will be checking within each grazed pasture during the scheduled grazing period. If use within that key area is approaching allowable stubble heights then the remaining key areas will also be monitored and the pasture inspected to determine overall use patterns. This information will be used to determine if cattle need to be re-distributed within the pasture or removed from the pasture.

The Forest Service may conduct inspections on the grazing allotment during the on-going grazing period as time and personnel availability allows. Monitoring items such as distribution patterns, range readiness, cattle numbers, forage use levels, salting practices, and condition of improvements will be evaluated. The range readiness inspection will determine whether range vegetation and soils are ready for grazing. The permittees are encouraged to participate in these inspections.

**Table 4 2008 END OF SEASON MONITORING**

Pasture	Date	Species	Utilization 20-40% STD	Stubble Height	Standard
Canjilon	10/22/2008	Thurber Fescue	35.0%	5.7"	6-7"
		Western Wheatgrass	36.8%	5.5"	3-4"
Cano	10/31/2008	Kentucky Bluegrass	52.3%	1.9"	2-4"
		Arizona Fescue	24.1%	4.3"	4-6"
Hondo	10/20/2008	Thurber Fescue	26.0%	6.6"	6-7"
		Western Wheatgrass	40.1%	4.8"	3-4"
Mogote	10/23/2008	Thurber Fescue	23.7%	6.9"	6-7"
		Squirreltail	38.0%	5.3"	4-5"

Table 4 lists last year's utilization rates. Cano pasture had some over utilization of the Kentucky bluegrass. This may have been due to some over use from cattle from the neighboring allotment or incidental elk use. Utilization measurements were taken late in the fall and ungulates will continue to graze on Kentucky bluegrass as it's the last species to go dormant. We may need to check utilization rates earlier in the season to determine if cattle or wildlife are creating this situation.

## **IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance of existing range improvements is critical to the proper management of your allotment. In order for rotation schedules to work, all fences must be in good condition. As usual all fences, in the pasture you will be using first, must be up and functioning. Then, before you move your cattle to the next pasture, the fences in that pasture must be maintained and in good condition prior to cattle being allowed to enter the pasture. It is in your own best interest to let the range staff in the district office know if the neighboring allotment fences are not being properly maintained as early reporting can help you keep your cattle in the proper pastures. As you know the livestock grazing program has come under the scrutiny of the environmental public. It is critical that we demonstrate the ability to manage your livestock. This means that the cattle should be in the pastures scheduled for grazing during the times they are scheduled to be there.

## **SPECIAL MITIGATION MEASURES**

In order to conform with Amendment of Forest Plans and the final U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "Biological Opinion for Ongoing Livestock Grazing Activities on Allotments" which determine a No Affect and/or May affect Not Likely to Adversely Affect on your allotment, the following conditions must be met

### **Forage Utilization:**

Forage use by grazing animals will be maintained at or above a condition which assures recovery and continued existence of threatened and endangered species. In order to attain this standard, the above site specific key areas and key forage utilization standards have been developed for the Oso Allotment.

**Mineral Supplements/Salt Blocks:**

Mineral supplement/Salt block sites will be regularly rotated to reduce trampling and grazing impacts to vegetation. Please insure salting is more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to water and try to avoid salting in highly productive areas to encourage good distribution throughout the allotment