2004

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS (AOI'S)

NUTRIAS ALLOTMENT #00114

Tony Esquibel

CARSON NATIONAL FOREST
CANJILON RANGER DISTRICT

_____ _____

Cipie Maez, Acting District Ranger **Date**

Annual Operating Instructions

AUTHORIZATION

You are permitted to graze 110 head of cattle for the grazing season of 7/01 to 10/30, you are authorized to graze the following in 2004:

Table 1 - Permitted & Authorized Use

Number of Cattle Permitted	***Number of Cattle Authorized***	***Pasture***	***Grazing Period***
110	85	Banco	07/01 – 08/16
110	85	Pelada	08/17 – 09/27
110	85	Minita	09/28 – 10/30
		Lomita	REST

If the current drought conditions continue you may be required to remove your cattle from the forest earlier than expected. This decision will be made in cooperation with you and based on the utilization of key species and key areas as outlined in the Annual Operating Instructions.

You must continue salting practices to draw the cattle away from the meadows. 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 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.

ALLOWABLE USE

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

Ponderosa pine, aspen, and mixed conifer - 20% avg, not to exceed 40%

FORAGE UTILIZATION STANDARDS

The proper utilization of forage is a critical factor in livestock management on the Nutrias 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 permittees are invited to accompany Forest Service range staff in the field while these range condition evaluations are being made. Within the Nutrias Allotment the key grass species will be:

Table 2 - Key Forage Species

Pasture Name	***Key Forage Species***	***Stubble Height***
All Pastures in Nutrias Allotment	Arizona Fescue	6”-7”
	Thurber Fescue	6”-7”
	Kentucky Bluegrass	2”-4”
	Red Top	4”-6”
	Sedges	3”-5”

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 cattle 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 30-40% 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.

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. 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 Nutrias Allotment.

Mineral Supplements/Salt Blocks:
Mineral supplement/Salt block sites will be regularly rotated to reduce trampling and grazing impacts to vegetation. Cutting salt blocks in half before distributing them on the range is an easy way to avoid having to move them, as they get used before they need to be moved.

Please make arrangements with Cipie Maez or Andrea Jones to count and inspect your cattle prior to putting them in the forest.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL

District Ranger decisions regarding issuance, denial, or administration of grazing and livestock use permit may be appealed in accordance with 36 C CFR 251, Subpart C. The following standard paragraph is included in this Annual Operating Instruction for the purpose of ensuring that you are aware of your appeal rights.

This Annual Operating Instruction (AOI) is hereby made a part of your Term Grazing Permit. The instructions included as part of this AOI are subject to appeal in accordance with 36 CFR 251. Appeals must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 251.88 "Filing Procedure" and 36 251.90, Content of Notice of Appeal", filed with the Reviewing Officer Martin Chavez, Carson National Forest, 208 Cruz Alta Road, Taos, New Mexico 87571, within 45 days of the date of this decision with a copy simultaneously sent to the

Deciding Officer, District Ranger, Travis Moseley, Canjilon Ranger District, P. O. Box 469, Canjilon, New Mexico 87515. The Notice of Appeal must include sufficient narrative evidence and argument to show why this decision should be changed or reversed (36 CFR 251.90).

I will appreciate if you contact me and together we try to resolve disagreements before you file any Notice of Appeal. 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 the 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 cattle alike.

Actual Use Information
Name of Allotment
2004 Grazing Season

Table 3 - Grazing Season

Pasture	*Planned Livestock Number & Class*	*Planned Use*		*Actual Use*		*Remarks*
		Date on	*Date Off*	*Date on*	*Date Off*	

Table 4 - Losses

Livestock Class	*Poisonous Plants*	*Predators*	*Other*	*Total Losses*

Additional Comments

Utilization Information
Name of Allotment
2004 Grazing Season

Pasture	*Head Months (HMs)*	*Allowable Utilization (percent)*	*Date Monitored*	*Observed Utilization*